

# Parliament of Victoria

## The 2022 Victorian state election

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No. 2 | May 2023

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Research Paper

Parliamentary Library & Information Service

# Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overview of results</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Figures</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Tables</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1   Background: the 59th Parliament and Victoria on election eve</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>Overview of 59th Parliament</i>	9
<i>2019–20 Black Summer bushfires</i>	9
<i>COVID-19</i>	10
<i>Health system challenges</i>	11
<i>Elections in other jurisdictions</i>	12
<i>Liberal leadership spills</i>	13
<i>Labor’s challenges</i>	14
<i>Death of Queen Elizabeth II</i>	16
<i>Electorate redistributions</i>	16
<i>Member retirements</i>	17
<i>Pre-election crises</i>	18
<b>2   Campaign</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>100 days from the election</i>	20
<i>A referendum on Dan Andrews</i>	20
<i>A move away from the major parties?</i>	21
<i>Donation laws</i>	23
<i>Preferences and alignments</i>	24
<i>Integrity matters and campaign breaches</i>	26
<i>An ‘ugly’ campaign</i>	26
<i>Campaign launches</i>	29
<i>Leaders’ debate</i>	30
<i>Narracan</i>	31
<b>3   Policy Matters</b>	<b>32</b>
<i>Overview</i>	32
<i>Policy programs in brief</i>	32
<i>Major policy debates</i>	35

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<b>4   Polling</b>	<b>39</b>
<i>Labor’s comfortable lead</i>	39
<i>Possible hung parliament?</i>	41
<b>5   Social media advertising</b>	<b>42</b>
<i>Measuring advertising spending</i>	42
<i>Facebook and Instagram</i>	43
<i>Google and YouTube</i>	44
<b>6   Results</b>	<b>46</b>
<i>Voter turnout</i>	46
<i>Legislative Assembly</i>	46
<i>Narracan</i>	55
<i>Legislative Council</i>	55
<b>7   Post-election wash-up</b>	<b>61</b>
<i>Party reactions</i>	61
<i>No teal wave, decline of independents</i>	64
<i>Media introspection</i>	65
<i>Voting reform</i>	67
<b>8   Outgoing and incoming Members</b>	<b>68</b>
<i>Members who left Parliament before the 2022 election</i>	68
<i>Incumbent Members not returned at the 2022 election</i>	69
<i>Incoming Members</i>	70
<b>9   Women in Parliament</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>10   The new Andrews ministry</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>11   Further results</b>	<b>74</b>
<i>Legislative Assembly</i>	74
<i>Legislative Assembly – Historic results</i>	82
<i>Legislative Council</i>	82
<b>Reference List</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>86</b>

# Summary

This paper overviews the 2022 Victorian election, held on 26 November 2022. It summarises the 59th Parliament, election lead-up, campaign, key policy debates, news coverage, polling, social media advertising and post-election wash-up.

## Legislative Assembly

- **Labor** won a third consecutive term of government, claiming 56 of the 88 Legislative Assembly seats, one more than at the 2018 state election. Labor won 37 per cent of the primary vote, a 5.8 per cent decline on its 2018 result.
- **Daniel Andrews** is set to become the longest serving Victorian premier since Henry Bolte if he remains in office until the 2026 state election.
- The **Liberal Party**'s representation declined from 21 to 19 seats in the lower house, while the **Nationals** gained three seats, winning all three regional districts previously held by independents.
- The **Greens** gained an extra seat in the lower house, taking their tally to four.
- For the first time since 2010 and only the second time since 1992, there are no **independents** in the Assembly.
- 87 of the 88 Assembly seats were contested at the November 2022 election, with the district of **Narracan** declared failed when a candidate died a week before the election. A supplementary election was held for the district in January 2023.

## Legislative Council

- **Labor** won 15 of the 40 seats in the Legislative Council, three fewer than at the 2018 election.
- The **Liberal Party** won 12 seats, two more than in 2018, and **Nationals** won two seats, an increase of one.
- The **Greens** won four seats in the Council, their best result since 2014.
- The **crossbench** remained the same size at 11 seats. Legalise Cannabis Victoria won two seats, while Democratic Labour, Liberal Democrats, Shooters, Fishers and Farmers, One Nation and Animal Justice each won one seat.

## Trends

- One-third of the Parliament was turned over, with 32 Members retiring or not winning preselection prior to the 2022 election and a further 17 changes in seats on polling day.
- A record 1,194 candidates stood for election—a 35 per cent increase on 2018.
- The trend towards pre-polling continued, with half of Victorians voting before election day.
- A fall in voter turnout saw 87.13 per cent of electors casting votes for the Assembly and 88.23 per cent for the Council, compared to 90 per cent in both houses in 2018 and 93 per cent in 2014.

## Policies

- Health, public integrity, cost of living and energy were the major themes of the election, although there were criticisms the campaign lacked 'big ideas'.
- COVID-19 did not feature as a major issue despite dominating the 59th Parliament.
- Labor focused on health and reviving the State Electricity Commission.
- The Liberal campaign focused on hospital building projects and gas production funded by scrapping Labor's Suburban Rail Link project.

# Overview of results

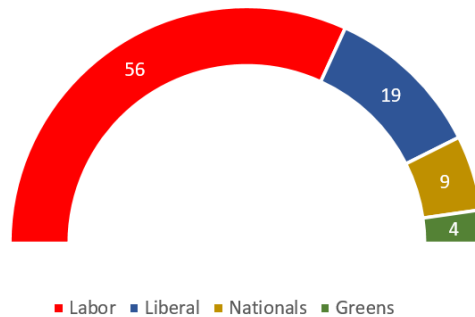
The following charts and tables show the proportion of first-preference votes received by the parties that won seats in Parliament and the composition of the Parliament’s two chambers following the 2022 state election:

**Table A - Legislative Assembly, proportion of first-preference vote received by party\***

Party	Labor	Liberal	Nationals	Greens	Others
% of primary vote	37.0	29.6	4.8	11.5	17.1

\*Figures do not include results from Narracan supplementary election in January 2023.

**Figure A - Legislative Assembly, seat results\***

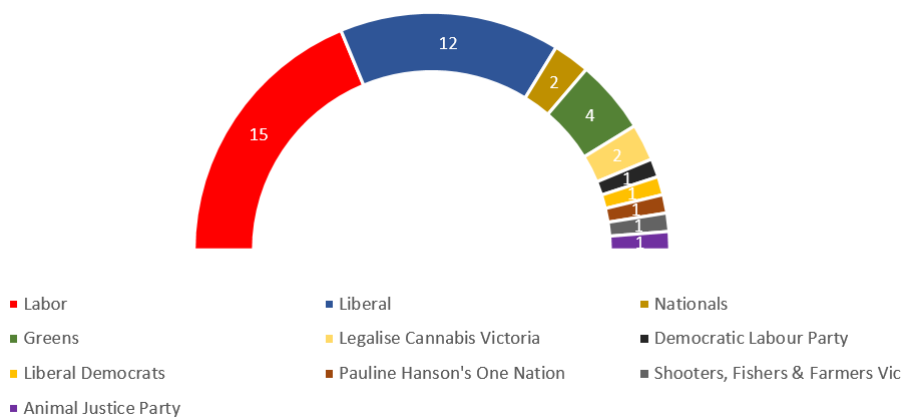


\*Liberals results includes Narracan won at a supplementary election in January 2023.

**Table B - Legislative Council, proportion of first-preference vote received by party**

Party	Labor	Liberal	Nationals	Greens	Animal Justice	DLP	Legalise Cannabis Victoria	Liberal Democrats	One Nation	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers	Others
% of primary vote	33.0	16.97	12.48	10.32	1.51	3.50	4.08	2.63	2.05	2.05	13.46

**Figure B - Legislative Council, seat results**



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## Figures

Figure A	Legislative Assembly, seat results
Figure B	Legislative Council, seat results
Figure 3.1	PBO summary of election commitment values by party and policy area:
Figure 4.1	Roy Morgan and Resolve Strategic polls, Victoria primary vote, July 2020–Nov 2022
Figure 4.2	Roy Morgan two-party-preferred, July 2020–November 2022
Figure 4.3	Resolve Strategic preferred premier, June 2021–November 2022
Figure 4.4	Polling results—one month before the election on 26 November 2022
Figure 5.1	Examples of Daniel Andrews’s Twitter account
Figure 5.3	Intensity of Google advertising per postcode, per major party
Figure 6.1	Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Broadmeadows
Figure 6.2	Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Kororoit
Figure 6.3	Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Hawthorn
Figure 6.4	Preference distribution across nine rounds of vote counts, Mildura
Figure 6.5	Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Richmond
Figure 6.6	Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Mornington
Figure 6.7	Election preference flow in Northern Victoria Region, 2022
Figure 7.1	Melbourne metropolitan newspaper front pages on election day, 25 November
Figure 11.1a	Legislative Assembly—Margin (%) per seat won by Labor
Figure 11.1b	Legislative Assembly—Margin (%) per seat won by Liberal, Nationals and Greens

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## Tables

Table A	Legislative Assembly, proportion of first-preference vote received by party
Table B	Legislative Council, proportion of first-preference vote received by party
Table 5.2	Top 15 keywords used in Facebook and Instagram advertisements
Table 6.1	Legislative Assembly—overall party results
Table 6.2	Two-party-preferred vote, 2022
Table 6.3	Legislative Council 2022 election results summary
Table 6.4	Legislative Council results by region
Table 9.1	Women in Victorian Parliament
Table 9.2	Composition of Victorian Parliament by gender and chamber
Table 9.3	Women in Victorian Parliament by party
Table 9.4	Comparison of Australian parliaments by gender (as of 23 January 2023)
Table 11.1	Primary vote results—Legislative Assembly, all districts
Table 11.2	Nominal matching of 2022 and 2018 Legislative Assembly electoral districts
Table 11.3	Legislative Assembly—Two-party-preferred swings (%) from 2018 to 2022
Table 11.4	Legislative Assembly—Elections 1992–2022, primary vote won (%)
Table 11.5	Legislative Assembly—Elections 1992–2022, seats won
Table 11.6	Legislative Council—Elections 1992–2022, primary vote won (%)

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## Introduction

The Victorian Branch of the Australian Labor Party (Labor) won a third term of government at the 2022 Victorian state election, held on 26 November 2022. It is only the second time in Victorian political history Labor has won three consecutive state elections (previously in 1982, 1985 and 1988). Labor has won all but three Victorian elections since 1982. In April 2023, Premier Daniel Andrews became Labor's longest serving Victorian premier, surpassing John Cain Jnr (1982 to 1990). If he serves to the 2026 election, Andrews will be the longest serving Victorian premier since Sir Henry Bolte.

Labor's victory came amid mixed results. Only 87 of the 88 Assembly seats were contested at the November 2022 election, with the district of Narracan declared failed when a candidate died a week before the election. A supplementary election was held for the district in January 2023. While increasing its share in the Legislative Assembly from the 55 it won in 2018 to 56 of the 88 seats, Labor's primary vote fell from 43 to 37 per cent. The swing against Labor did not translate into gains for the Liberals, which lost two seats, reducing their lower house share from 21 to 19 seats, including Narracan.

Predictions of a close-run election did not eventuate, nor did a repeat of a 'teal wave' as occurred at the federal election six months earlier. The biggest gains, rather, were made by the Victorian Greens and the Nationals. The Greens won the inner-city seat of Richmond from Labor and made gains in several metropolitan seats. Independents challenged closely in several districts but failed to win a seat for only the second time since 1992. The Nationals regained Mildura, Morwell and Shepparton, all previously held by independents, increasing the party's share from six to nine seats in the lower house, offsetting the losses of its Coalition partner.

The Liberals enjoyed greater success in the Legislative Council, winning 12 of the 40 upper house seats, two more than in 2018. The Nationals won two seats (one more than 2018). Labor lost three upper house seats, shaving its share in the Council to 15 seats. The crossbench remained the same size with 11 Members. The Greens won four seats—its best result since 2010—with Legalise Cannabis Victoria winning two seats and the Democratic Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, Pauline Hansen's One Nation and the Animal Justice Party one seat each.

While these results largely preserved the status quo in Victorian politics, they masked considerable turnover within the Parliament. More than one-third of the 128 Members across both houses elected at the 2018 election did not return after the 2022 election, including half of the Legislative Council. Prior to polling day, 32 Members had either retired or not been preselected. A further 17 Members were not returned to their seats in the election. A record 1,194 candidates stood for election. The election campaign was widely described as 'ugly' (see Chapter 2), with several outlets touting the election as a 'referendum on Dan Andrews' and his personal efforts in navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. Ironically, the pandemic featured little in the campaign debates.

This paper summarises the 2022 Victorian election and outcomes. It provides an overview of the 59th Parliament and election lead-up, including COVID-19 politics, leadership and integrity issues, retirements and preselections, and flood and cost-of-living crises—all of which shaped the election and changes in the composition of the 60th Parliament. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the campaign, policies, polling, social media, results, and overviews of how the parties and media reflected on their election performance. Outgoing and incoming Members, women in Parliament, the Andrews ministry and further results conclude the paper.



# 1 | Background: the 59th Parliament and Victoria on election eve

## Overview of 59th Parliament

Labor, led by Daniel Andrews, was returned to government for a second term at the November 2018 election with an increased majority of 55 seats in the Legislative Assembly and 17 seats in the 40-seat Legislative Council. A total of 198 bills were passed and received royal assent over the next four years.<sup>1</sup> While COVID-19 dominated the 59th Parliament, prior to 2020 several other issues seemed likely to shape the parliamentary cycle.

Policing, environment, trade, infrastructure and Indigenous self-determination were the major issues in the first year of the 59th Parliament. In late 2018, the High Court rejected a Victoria Police request to maintain the confidentiality of an informer, Lawyer X, leading the newly elected government to appoint a Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants.<sup>2</sup> Victoria's trade relationships with China also caused controversy. First, China's banning of imported Australian recyclable refuse led to wider questions about Victoria's privatised recyclable management infrastructure.<sup>3</sup> Second, in late 2018 Victoria signed a memorandum of understanding on the Chinese Government's Belt and Road Initiative, an agreement later disallowed under legislation specially passed by the Morrison Commonwealth government in 2020.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, the first year of the 59th Parliament also witnessed significant advances in the relationship between Victoria's Traditional Owners and the Victorian Parliament, including the creation of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and the introduction of legislation for a treaty process. Elections for the First Peoples' Assembly occurred in September and October 2019, and the body first met in December 2019. In March 2021, the Yoorrook Justice Commission was created, Australia's first truth-telling body, while the *Treaty Authority and Other Treaty Elements Act 2022* established an independent Treaty Authority to help the Government negotiate treaties with Victoria's First Nations peoples. By the end of 2022, Victoria was the only Australian jurisdiction to have enacted the voice, truth and treaty elements of the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart.<sup>5</sup>

## 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires

From mid-2019 until the end of that year, serious bushfires had been burning across parts of northern and eastern Australia. In mid-December, fears that fires would spread to Victoria were realised in the Gippsland and Great Alpine areas and near the Murray River, causing significant damage to farms and tourism businesses. Thousands of residents and visitors were advised to evacuate the state's north-east, including a dramatic army rescue from the beaches of Mallacoota on New Year's Eve. The bushfires coincided with intense easterly weather systems that choked metropolitan areas with thick smoke. The 2020 fire season was also the first to involve the new Fire Rescue Victoria authority.

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<sup>1</sup> Parliament of Victoria (2022) 'Legislative Assembly Statistics: 59th Parliament', Parliament of Victoria website.

<sup>2</sup> N. Economou (2019) 'Victoria, January to June 2019', *Australian Journal of Politics & History (AJPH)*, 65(4) (December 2019), pp. 666–67; N. Economou (2020) 'Victoria, July to December 2019', *AJPH*, 66(2) (June 2020), p. 337.

<sup>3</sup> Economou (2020) 'Victoria, January to June 2019', *AJPH*, op. cit., pp. 667–68.

<sup>4</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2021) 'Victoria January to June 2021', *AJPH*, 67(3–4) (September–December 2021), p. 571.

<sup>5</sup> J. Latimore (2022) 'Victoria marks history-making final steps in treaty process', *The Age*, 20 October.

## COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic dominated the 59th Parliament. Reports of the new virus surfaced in January 2020, and on 11 March 2020 the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 as a pandemic. The federal Government closed national borders, preventing foreign nationals, including international students, from entering Australia. On 16 March, the Victorian Premier declared a ‘state of emergency’ under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2010*, giving the health bureaucracy extraordinary powers to issue social restrictions, the most severe of which were known as ‘lockdowns’. Contentiously, state governments also closed internal borders, preventing the movement of citizens within Australia.<sup>6</sup> Metropolitan Melbourne was subject to six lockdowns between May 2020 and October 2021, with restrictions differing in severity between metropolitan and regional areas. Melbourne was in lockdown a total of 262 days, reportedly making it one of the most locked down cities in the world (but not ‘the most’, as an ABC RMIT Fact Check clarified).<sup>7</sup> Daily new cases peaked in January 2022, with 51,144 cases on 7 January, a consequence of the relaxation of restrictions in the lead-up to Christmas 2021. By 10 March 2023, Victoria had registered over 2.8 million cases and 7,370 deaths.<sup>8</sup>

### *Politics and inquiries*

Throughout 2020 and 2021, Victorian political debate centred largely on the Labor government’s handling of the pandemic. As in other jurisdictions, Victoria’s response was scrutinised for its preparedness, the efficacy of its quarantine programs, issues in aged-care facilities, the legalities of snap shutdowns (especially North Melbourne and Flemington public housing in July 2020), the balancing of health and economic concerns, and mandatory vaccine requirements.<sup>9</sup> In July 2020, the Victorian Government announced an inquiry into its hotel quarantine program. Conducted by judicial officer Jennifer Coate, the inquiry led to the resignation of Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos. In December 2020, the Victorian Ombudsman reported the public housing lockdowns breached residents’ human rights.<sup>10</sup> Separately, in April 2020, the Victorian Parliament’s Public Accounts and Estimates Committee established an inquiry into Victoria’s response to the pandemic, delivering its final report in February 2021.<sup>11</sup> In March 2021, the Premier was injured and took three months leave of absence.<sup>12</sup>

### *Public protest*

In September 2021, Melbourne witnessed growing public discontent with lockdowns. Street protests led to 235 arrests. Some protesters were arrested for allegedly assaulting police and for drug and weapon offences. Protesters occupied the Shrine of Remembrance, crossed West Gate Bridge and threatened Parliament House.<sup>13</sup> A second round of protests followed in November 2021, as the Labor government sought to pass pandemic specific legislation. The

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<sup>6</sup> H. McLean and B. Huf (2020) ‘Emergency Powers, Public Health and COVID-19’, *Research Paper*, no. 2, Melbourne, Victorian Parliamentary Library.

<sup>7</sup> N. Miller (2021) ‘Proud or mad? Melbourne’s marathon lockdown becomes the world’s longest’, *The Age*, 3 October; RMIT ABC Fact Check (2022) ‘Matthew Guy says Melbourne was the world’s most locked-down city. Is that correct?’, *ABC News*, 21 November.

<sup>8</sup> Victorian Government (2023) ‘Victorian COVID-19 data’, Victorian Government Coronavirus website, retrieved 16 March.

<sup>9</sup> S. Russell (2020) ‘Lack of preparation blamed for virus deaths’, *Letters, The Age*, 23 December; N. Economou (2020) ‘Victoria July to December 2020’, *AJPH*, 67(2) (December 2020), p. 364.

<sup>10</sup> N. Economou (2020) ‘Victoria July to December 2020’, *AJPH*, 67(2) (December 2020), op. cit., p. 366; Victorian Ombudsman (2020) *Investigation into the detention and treatment of public housing residents arising from a COVID-19 ‘hard lockdown’ in July 2020*, Victorian Ombudsman website.

<sup>11</sup> Public Accounts and Estimates Committee (2021) *Inquiry into the Victorian Government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic*, final report, Melbourne, the Committee, February.

<sup>12</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2021) ‘Victoria January to June 2021’, op cit., p. 571.

<sup>13</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2022) ‘Victoria, July to December 2021’, *AJPH*, 68(2) (June 2022), p. 328.

proposed laws attracted criticism from the opposition and some legal practitioners. Crossbench Legislative Council Members whose support was needed to pass the legislation received death threats for negotiating with the Government. The legislation ultimately passed the Parliament. Anti-lockdown and anti-vaccine protests resumed, with some protesters parading a makeshift gallows and nooses in front of Parliament House, with several non-government Members attending the rallies.<sup>14</sup>

## Economic recovery

Managing the economic and social impacts of lockdowns was a major challenge facing the Government through the 59th Parliament. Gross state product fell by 1.9 per cent in 2019–20 and by 0.4 per cent in 2020–21. Victoria was the only state to experience an economic contraction in the second year of the pandemic. Underemployment was 8.3 per cent before the pandemic in December 2018 and reached 14.9 per cent by September 2020. By August 2022, it was 5.8 per cent, suggesting a rebound in Victoria's economic recovery from pandemic restrictions. A range of assistance measures were provided to businesses and individuals unable to work due to lockdowns. These measures, together with significantly reduced tax revenues, resulted in significant increases in government debt, more than double what was forecast for 2019–20. As Victoria came out of lockdowns in early 2022, consumer spending in regional areas surged well above pre-pandemic levels. However, with the slow return of tourists and continuing work-from-home arrangements, metropolitan areas continued to lag.<sup>15</sup> The post-Christmas spike in Omicron variant cases threatened to derail the state's economic recovery.<sup>16</sup> Many businesses continued to face worker shortages, as did schools with large numbers of teachers unable to attend work having contracted COVID-19.<sup>17</sup>

## Health system challenges

In early 2022, Victoria's health system also faced challenges with worker shortages due to the spread of Omicron. Gaps in staffing impacted the effectiveness of the state's emergency call system. In January 2022, a 'Code Brown' was issued in Victoria, meaning hospitals could prioritise services and cancel existing leave arrangements of staff.<sup>18</sup> Australian Defence Force personnel supported paramedics and ambulances.<sup>19</sup>

This event spotlighted a more general crisis in Victoria's health system, with reports of hospitals unable to accommodate patients and using makeshift bedding in tents or corridors.<sup>20</sup> The Victorian Government responded in the May 2022 budget, themed 'Putting Patients First', by committing \$4.2 billion for the healthcare system. Yet these issues were compounded in September 2022 when a report by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management highlighted the triple-zero response system's inadequacy, finding 33 deaths were tied to—if not caused by—delays or lengthy ambulance waits.<sup>21</sup> Premier Andrews apologised for the deaths, having already pledged \$333 million in funding for the triple-zero response system in the May budget in response to a separate review by former Victoria

<sup>14</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2022) 'Victoria, July to December 2021', *AJPH*, 68(2) (June 2022), p. 328.

<sup>15</sup> N. Towell (2022) 'Spending soars in Victoria's regions, but sleepy CBD is holding state back', *The Age*, 7 February.

<sup>16</sup> J. Gordon (2022) 'Omicron could derail state's economic recovery a third time', *The Age*, 11 January.

<sup>17</sup> T. Barnes and S. Doidge (2022) *Scarring effects of the pandemic economy*, Melbourne, Australian Catholic University.

<sup>18</sup> T. Jacks, M. Cunningham and M. Pascual Juanola (2022) 'Code brown called for Victorian hospitals under pressure from COVID-19', *The Age*, 18 January.

<sup>19</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2022) 'Victoria January to June 2022', *AJPH*, 68(4) (December 2022): p648.

<sup>20</sup> A. Dow (2022) 'Shocking images a familiar story in a hospital system in crisis', *The Age*, 18 August.

<sup>21</sup> Inspector-General for Emergency Management (2022) *Review of Victoria's emergency ambulance call answer performance: COVID-19 pandemic-related 000 demand surge*, IGEM website, August 2022; A. Smethurst, A. Dow, M. Pascual Juanola and A McMillan (2022) '33 deaths now linked to Victoria's triple-zero, ambulance crisis', *The Age*, 3 September.

Police Commissioner Graham Ashton. Meanwhile the Coalition pledged to upgrade the triple-zero IT system and match the Andrews government's May 2022 budget announcement.<sup>22</sup>

## Elections in other jurisdictions

### *State elections*

Three state elections and a federal election were held across Australia in the two years before the 26 November 2022 Victorian state election:

- In October 2020, the Queensland Labor government, led by Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk was returned for a third term, winning 52 of the 93 lower house seats.
- In March 2021, WA Labor, under Premier Mark McGowan, won a second term of government in the Western Australian state election with a comprehensive victory, securing 53 of the 59 lower house seats.
- In March 2022, Labor, led by Peter Malinauskas, ousted Steven Marshall's incumbent Liberal government in the South Australian state election, with a two-party-preferred (2PP) swing of 6.5 per cent.

Commentators speculated that in Queensland and Western Australia, incumbent governments benefited from the COVID-19 crisis, holding power at a time when the electorate sought stability. By contrast, by December 2022 South Australia was emerging from lockdowns. While three-quarters of SA voters submitted postal votes, commentators believed fatigue from COVID-19 politics was a significant factor for the change of government.<sup>23</sup> Some editorials suggested this result had important lessons for the forthcoming federal and Victorian elections.<sup>24</sup>

### *Federal election: May 2022*

COVID-19 politics were a less significant factor in the May 2022 federal election than anticipated. The three-term Coalition government, then led by Scott Morrison, were defeated by the Anthony Albanese-led Australian Labor Party. While securing a two-party-preferred swing of only 3.66 per cent, Labor won 77 of the 156 seats in the House of Representatives, as the Liberal-National Coalition lost 17 seats. The Coalition's loss was largely attributed—including in a Liberal Party post-election analysis—to the unpopularity of Morrison.<sup>25</sup> In the lead-up to the federal election, some pundits speculated whether Premier Andrews, having presided over the longest COVID-19 lockdowns in Australia, might be a drag on support for federal Labor in Victoria seats.<sup>26</sup> It proved otherwise, with the Coalition losing two of its 'blue-ribbon' seats to Labor in Victoria, Chisholm and Higgins, and a further two, Goldstein and Kooyong, to independents Zoe Daniel and Monique Ryan respectively.

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<sup>22</sup> P. Sakkal and S. Ilanbey (2022) '[Andrews apologises for triple-zero delay deaths, cites 'unprecedented' pandemic](#)', *The Age*, 6 September; S. Ilanbey, M. Cunningham and T. Jacks (2022) '["They knew the system was failing": Grieving mum welcomes ESTA overhaul](#)', *The Age*, 19 May; (2022) '[Victorian opposition unveils state election pledges on police and triple-0 response times](#)', *ABC News*, 16 September.

<sup>23</sup> R. Puddy (2022) '[SA election result a warning that incumbency is not as safe as it once was now we're living with COVID-19](#)', *ABC News*, 20 March.

<sup>24</sup> Editorial (2022) '[Editorial: Morrison and Andrews could learn a thing or two from SA election rout](#)', *The Age*, 21 March.

<sup>25</sup> M. Read (2022) '[The nine reasons the Liberal Party thinks it lost the election](#)' *Australian Financial Review (AFR)*, 22 December.

<sup>26</sup> P. Sakkal (2022) '[Is Andrews a drag on federal Labor's vote in the outer suburbs?](#)', *The Age*, 30 April; P. Durkin (2022) '[Labor may be more vulnerable in Victoria than widely believed](#)', *AFR*, 5 May; P. Durkin (2022) '[Why old mate Andrews could hurt Albanese](#)', *AFR*, 28 April.

## ‘Teal wave’

Zoe Daniel’s and Monique Ryan’s victories were part of a group of independent candidates, loosely labelled as ‘teals’, whose successes across metropolitan electorates were a major theme of the federal election. Climate 200, a lobbying firm established by businessman Simon Holmes à Court, together with a groundswell of community support in vulnerable seats, enabled several community-backed candidates to win key ‘blue ribbon’ seats in Melbourne and Sydney long held by the Liberals. ‘Teal’ would become the Macquarie Dictionary Committee’s Choice Word of the Year for its meaning of someone with ‘ideologically moderate views’ supporting ‘strong action in relation to the environment and climate change’ and ‘integrity in politics’.<sup>27</sup>

These results were tipped to have implications for the Victorian state election, especially for incumbent Liberal state MPs in Melbourne’s inner south-east. The federal seats of Kooyong, Higgins and Goldstein encompassed state districts Kew, Hawthorn, Malvern, Prahran and Caulfield, prompting speculation teal candidates would strongly contest incumbent Liberal Party Members in these seats at the state election. The federal result also triggered internal debate about the Liberal Party’s focus. Immediately after the federal election, Member for Kew Tim Smith, who had already announced he would not be contesting the 2022 state election (see below), said the Liberal Party should ‘stop obsessing with the woke concerns and obsessions with the inner-urban elites’ but target outer suburbs.<sup>28</sup>

## Liberal leadership spills

With the election just over a year away, in September 2021 the Victorian Liberal Party took action with a change of leader, replacing Michael O’Brien with Matthew Guy.<sup>29</sup> As early as March 2021, following the wipe-out state election in Western Australia, some Liberals were concerned a similar result might eventuate in Victoria, prompting Brad Battin to challenge O’Brien on 16 March 2021.<sup>30</sup> Battin was convincingly defeated<sup>31</sup>, but rumours of leadership change continued. O’Brien’s approval ratings as preferred premier dropped during the most testing months of the pandemic, despite growing criticisms of Premier Andrews.<sup>32</sup> In September, Guy, who had led the Liberals at the 2018 election, challenged O’Brien and won back the party leadership. This change was reflected in polling in October 2021: Andrews’s vote as preferred premier fell from 50 to 45 per cent and Guy improved on O’Brien’s rating, taking it from 24 to 32 per cent. However, there was no clear change in overall electoral support for the Coalition.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile, Guy refined his public presentation, referring to himself in campaign material as ‘Matt’ rather than ‘Matthew’.<sup>34</sup>

## Colleagues fall

Several major changes in personnel followed Matthew Guy’s return to party leadership. Long-serving Legislative Council Member Edward O’Donohue, who was already planning to

<sup>27</sup> Macquarie Dictionary (2022) ‘Macquarie Dictionary Word of the Year’, Macquarie Dictionary website, 28 November.

<sup>28</sup> N. Yim (2022) ‘Tim Smith: Liberal Party should forget inner-cities’, *The Australian*, 29 May; Z. Ghazarian (2022) ‘Victorian January to June 2022’, *AJPH*, 68(4) (December 2022), pp. 644–649.

<sup>29</sup> S. Ilanbey, P. Sakkal and A. Smethurst (2021) ‘Returned Liberal leader Matthew Guy promises party reset, focus on pandemic recovery’, *The Age*, 7 September.

<sup>30</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2021) ‘Victoria January to June 2021’, *AJPH*, 67(3–4) (September–December 2021), p. 572.

<sup>31</sup> (2021) ‘Victorian Liberals vote to stick with Michael O’Brien after ‘stupid’ attempted leadership spill’, *The Age*, 16 March.

<sup>32</sup> A. Smethurst (2021) ‘Opposition its own worst enemy’, *The Age*, 3 September, p. 27; A. Smethurst (2021), ‘O’Brien outlines poll strategy to insiders’, *The Age*, 3 August, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2022) ‘Victoria, July to December 2021’, *AJPH*, 67(2) (December 2022), pp. 324–25.

<sup>34</sup> Bridget Rollason (@bridgerollo) (2022) ‘A re-brand for the Opposition Leader? @MatthewGuyMP is now “Matt Guy” on Facebook @abcmelbourne #springst’, Twitter, 15 August.



retire from politics at the 2022 election, decided to expedite his departure. O'Donohue retired in December 2021. His vacated seat in Eastern Victoria Region was taken by Cathrine Burnett-Wake, although Burnett-Wake would lose preselection for the 2022 election six months later to Renee Heath.<sup>35</sup>

Guy's leadership was also tested. In October 2021, Member for Kew Tim Smith crashed his car into a house while driving under the influence of alcohol.<sup>36</sup> A significant party figure who was central to Guy's return, Smith was seen by some as a potential future leader. Smith resigned from his post as Shadow Attorney-General and declared he would never drink again, but maintained he had the support of his constituents. However, the party room was against him, and Guy declared Smith would not sit on the front bench of any Liberal Party Guy led.<sup>37</sup> Guy advised Smith not to recontest the election. Initially declaring he would 'consider' his future, Smith soon after announced he would not recontest.<sup>38</sup>

Further departures from the Liberal Party followed in May 2022, when long-serving Council Member Bernie Finn was expelled from the party for posting on Facebook that abortion should be banned. Finn continued to sit on the crossbench, later announcing he would be running as a candidate for the Democratic Labour Party in the November election.<sup>39</sup>

## Labor's challenges

Labor faced its own internal challenges in the lead-up to the November 2022 election. Continuing corruption allegations tested Daniel Andrews's leadership and popularity, turning 'integrity' into a key election issue. The so-called 'red shirts scandal', dating back to the 2014 election, seemingly came to an end in February 2019 when Victoria Police declared no evidence existed to sustain fraud charges against the 23 Labor MPs or any of the staff cited in the Ombudsman's report into the misuse of parliamentary funds. Similarly, Victoria Police said no case could be established over the allegations of 'rotting' levelled at the Liberal Party by the Government in mid-2019.<sup>40</sup> The issue was revived once more in February 2022, when Adem Somyurek, who had quit Labor the previous year (see below), passed a resolution in the Legislation Council to again refer the matter to the Ombudsman. In July 2022, the Ombudsman reported there was no evidence and declared the issue closed.<sup>41</sup>

### *Branch-stacking allegations and investigation*

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, a different set of allegations of misappropriated funds linked with branch stacking emerged in June 2020.<sup>42</sup> An *Age-60 Minutes* investigation, based on surveillance camera footage at an electorate office where key meetings took place, alleged improper behavior of Somyurek, who was then the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Small Business and was a factional operator in the right-wing of the party.<sup>43</sup> The investigation also recorded Somyurek describing colleagues in language labelled

<sup>35</sup> L. Hobday (2021) 'Veteran MP Edward O'Donohue to quit parliament early amid return of Matthew Guy', *7News*, 11 September; S. Ilanbey (2022) 'Renee is not her family': Guy defends new Liberal candidate, *Age*, 31 July.

<sup>36</sup> R. Willingham (2021) 'Victorian Liberal MP Tim Smith won't recontest his seat following drink-driving incident', *ABC News*, 7 November.

<sup>37</sup> (2021) 'Victorian Liberal leader Matthew Guy tells Tim Smith not to contest next election after drink-driving car crash', *ABC News*, 2 November.

<sup>38</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2021) 'Victoria July to December 2021', *AJPH*, 68(2) (June 2021), p. 324.

<sup>39</sup> S. Deery, M. Clarke and B. Grebert-Craig (2022) 'Bernie Finn expelled from Victorian Liberals after party motion', *Herald Sun*, 24 May.

<sup>40</sup> N. Economou (2019) 'Victoria, January to June 2019', *Australian Journal of Politics & History (AJPH)*, 65(4) (December 2019), op. cit., pp. 668.

<sup>41</sup> Victorian Ombudsman (2022) *Time to end Red Shirts investigation, says Ombudsman*, Victorian Ombudsman website, 28 July.

<sup>42</sup> N. Economou (2020) 'Victoria, January to June 2020', *AJPH*, 66(4) (December 2020), pp. 674–75.

<sup>43</sup> N. McKenzie, S. Ilanbey and J. Tozer (2020) 'F\*\*k the premier': Labor's secret tapes reveal industrial scale stackathon, *Age*, 15 June.

‘misogynistic’ and ‘wicked’.<sup>44</sup> At the Daniel Andrews’s request, the ALP national executive suspended and temporarily ran the Labor Victorian branch, with former Victorian Premier Steve Bracks and former federal minister Jenny Macklin appointed to conduct a review of the Victorian branch.<sup>45</sup> The national executive planned to exclude Somyurek from the party, but Somyurek resigned first and subsequently sat in the Legislative Council as an independent.<sup>46</sup> Two other Members implicated in the journalists’ inquiry—Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation Marlene Kairouz and Assistant Treasurer Robin Scott—also resigned from the ministry.<sup>47</sup>

Following the news report, in October 2021 the Ombudsman and the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) commenced Operation Watts, the agencies’ first-ever joint investigation, looking into branch stacking allegations and potential misuse of public funds. Their joint report, released in July 2022, revealed ‘widespread misuse of taxpayer resources for political purposes and a “catalogue” of unethical behaviour in the Victorian branch of the Labor party’.<sup>48</sup> The Andrews government agreed to all the recommendations made in the Ombudsman-IBAC report.<sup>49</sup>

### *Pre-election overhaul*

The national executive also proceeded to overhaul Labor’s preselections for the forthcoming state election. It chose not to preselect seven sitting MPs, including three former ministers aligned with Somyurek’s right faction of the party.<sup>50</sup> Members not preselected included Scott, Kairouz, Luke Donnellan and Frank McGuire in the Legislative Assembly, and Cesar Melhem, Nazih Elasmr, Tien Kieu and Kaushaliya Vaghela in the Legislative Council. Other Members potentially implicated in the national executive’s overhaul, including upper house MPs Mark Gepp and Jane Garrett, announced they would not be contesting the 2022 election.

### *Bullying allegations*

These matters were further complicated in February 2022 when Kaushaliya Vaghela broke ranks with Labor and voted in support of Somyurek’s motion to refer the ‘red shirts’ affair to the Ombudsman. Vaghela then alleged she had been harassed by a staffer from the Premier’s office before accusing the Government of a ‘victim blaming attitude’ and of not addressing her concerns. Daniel Andrews said the issue had been dealt with and that the accused person no longer worked in his office. In March, Vaghela resigned from the party and sat as an independent in the Council.<sup>51</sup>

### *Further integrity investigations*

Labor was implicated in three further inquiries during the 59th Parliament. In 2019, IBAC launched Operation Richmond to investigate dealings involving the United Firefighters Union, which included scrutiny of the Premier’s conduct.<sup>52</sup> In May 2022, it was reported the Premier was interviewed in private hearings as part of Operation Sandon, an investigation into

<sup>44</sup> A. Colangelo (2020) ‘“Words matter”: Minister responds to Somyurek’s misogynistic tirade’, *The Age*, 15 June.

<sup>45</sup> N. Economou (2020) ‘Victoria January to June 2020’, *AJPH*, 66(4) (December 2020), op. cit., p. 675; N. Economou (2021) ‘Victoria July to December 2020’, *AJPH*, 67(2) (December 2021), op. cit., p. 363.

<sup>46</sup> Editorial (2020), ‘ALP must get to root of Somyurek scandal’, *The Age*, 16 June, p. 20.

<sup>47</sup> S. Hutchinson (2020) ‘Paving the way’, *The Age*, 17 June, p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> A. Ore (2022) ‘Victorian MPs urged to implement integrity reforms before state election after scathing IBAC findings’, *The Guardian*, 20 July.

<sup>49</sup> D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *Sweeping integrity reforms for Victoria*, media release, 20 July.

<sup>50</sup> P. Sakkal and S. Ilanbey (2021) ‘“Total bloodletting” for state Labor as seven MPs shown the door’, *The Age*, 9 December.

<sup>51</sup> (2022) *Victorian MP Kaushaliya Vaghela quits Labor after alleging systemic bullying*, *ABC News*, 7 March.

<sup>52</sup> N. McKenzie, S. Ilanbey and P. Sakkal (2021) ‘IBAC scrutiny on Andrews over firefighters’ union deal’, *The Age*, 6 October.

alleged corruption in the City of Casey.<sup>53</sup> Finally, weeks before the election in November 2022, it was reported Andrews was subject to a fourth IBAC investigation, Operation Daintree, involving two grants worth \$3.4 million awarded to the Health Education Federation (a training group established by the Labor-linked Health Workers Union) on the eve of the 2018 election.<sup>54</sup>

Operation Daintree had further implications, as IBAC was granted a gag order by the Supreme Court to prevent information derived from a leaked draft IBAC report being published by *The Age*.<sup>55</sup> IBAC proceeded to lobby the Premier for new laws that would threaten jail time for journalists who revealed details of draft investigation reports. The Premier rejected the idea.<sup>56</sup> Meanwhile, IBAC also complained publicly in October 2022 that litigation was preventing the release of several of its reports.<sup>57</sup> These claims and counterclaims emphasised public integrity as an election issue.

## Death of Queen Elizabeth II

Queen Elizabeth II died in early September 2022, ending a 70-year reign as monarch. Members of the public were invited to sign a condolence book at Parliament House from 9 to 11 September. On 13 September, all Members were re-sworn, taking oaths and affirmations of allegiance to the newly crowned King Charles III. Following the swearing in, Members in both houses spoke on condolence motions in remembrance of Queen Elizabeth II. Victoria was the only parliament in Australia requiring MPs to make pledges. Soon after, Premier Andrews committed up to \$1.05 billion to redevelop, expand and rename the Maroondah Hospital in Ringwood as the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital<sup>58</sup>. Parliament House was lit in purple at night in the lead-up to her funeral on 19 September 2022.<sup>59</sup>

## Electorate redistributions

A new round of electorate boundary redistributions began in December 2020. After submissions and public hearings in March and April 2021, the final report was released by the Electoral Boundaries Commission in October 2021 with nine districts abolished and nine new districts created. Those abolished included Altona, Buninyong, Burwood, Ferntree Gully, Forest Hill, Gembrook, Keysborough, Mount Waverly and Yuroke. The new electorates were Ashwood, Berwick, Eureka, Glen Waverley, Greendale, Kalkallo, Laverton, Pakenham and Point Cook. A total of 21.28 per cent of all electors were transferred to different districts.<sup>60</sup>

### *Districts impacted by redistributions*

In August 2022, the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) released its analysis of how the 2018 election would have played out under the revised district boundaries. It found the Coalition would have suffered a net loss of one seat after the boundary redistribution, based on the 2018 vote. Labor would have won 58 seats (not 55), the Liberal Party 19 (not 21), the Nationals 7 (not 6), the Greens 3 (3) and independents 1 (not 3). Labor would have lost

<sup>53</sup> S. Ilanbey (2022) 'Andrews reportedly probed in secret over ties to allegedly corrupt developer', *The Age*, 6 May.

<sup>54</sup> P. Sakkal (2022) 'Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews investigated by anti-corruption watchdog', *The Age*, 4 November.

<sup>55</sup> P. Hatch (2022) 'IBAC wins court case against The Age over gag order', *The Age*, 4 November.

<sup>56</sup> J. Gordon and A. McMillan (2022) 'Andrews rejects watchdog's plea for tough laws aimed at journalists', *The Age*, 6 November.

<sup>57</sup> A. McGhee (2022) 'Lengthy legal battles threaten to hold up Victoria's corruption probes', *ABC News*, 12 October.

<sup>58</sup> D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *A new Queen Elizabeth II Hospital in Melbourne's east*, media release, 18 September.

<sup>59</sup> Parliament of Victoria (2022) 'In memoriam', Parliament of Victoria website.

<sup>60</sup> Electoral Boundaries Commission (2021) *Report on the Redivision of Victorian Electoral Boundaries 2020-2021*, EBC website, October.



Bayswater and Bass—held by first-term MPs Jackson Taylor and Jordan Crugnale—but the Liberals would have been unlikely to hold Caulfield, Hastings, Ripon and the new seat of Pakenham.<sup>61</sup> See [here](#) for metropolitan and [here](#) for non-metropolitan seats.

Analysing the same data, ABC election analyst Antony Green tipped Labor would have won 57 seats, the Liberals 20, the Nationals 6, the Greens 3 and independents 2. Green chose to classify Caulfield as Liberal and to keep Mildura as independent-held (the VEC suggested that the Nationals would have won). He tipped Labor would have lost Bass and Bayswater and won Ripon and Hastings. He also said Morwell should now be considered notionally Labor.<sup>62</sup>

## Member retirements

By mid-2022 several high-profile Members had announced they would not be contesting the next election and would retire from Parliament. Together with the preselection turnover in the Labor Party and Tim Smith's forced resignation, it ensured the 60th Parliament's composition would be significantly different to the previous one (see also [Section 8](#) below).

### Labor

In November and December of 2021, a year out from the election, seven Labor Members—including two ministers—announced they would not be contesting the 2022 election. This was in addition to Jenny Mikakos, who retired in 2020. On 24 November 2021, Jill Hennessy, who as Attorney-General from 2018 to 2020 had piloted assisted dying legislation, announced she would not be seeking re-election.<sup>63</sup> The next day, Richard Wynne, Minister for Housing and the Member for Richmond since 1999, announced he would also be retiring.<sup>64</sup> Others soon followed: Danielle Green, who represented Yan Yean for 20 years; John Eren, having served in Parliament since 2002 across both chambers; Mark Gepp, who had sat in the Legislative Council since 2017; and Dustin Halse, representative for Ringwood for one term.<sup>65</sup>

On 3 December 2021, Jane Garrett, Member for Brunswick from 2010 to 2018 before transferring to the Legislative Council, added her name to this list. Garrett, once considered a potential Labor leader, had resigned as Minister for Emergency Services five years earlier in a dispute with the United Firefighters Union.<sup>66</sup> She died from cancer in July 2022, with a state memorial service held on 2 September.<sup>67</sup> Tom McIntosh was appointed to Garrett's vacated Council seat in August 2022.

In June 2022, four more senior ministers announced they would not recontest the next election: James Merlino, Martin Foley, Lisa Neville and Martin Pakula.<sup>68</sup> With these

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<sup>61</sup> R. Eddie and A. Smethurst (2022) '[New boundaries tipped to unseat Liberals](#)', *The Age*, 9 August; Victorian Electoral Commission (2022) *Methodology of estimating 2018 election results on new electoral boundaries*, VEC website, August.

<sup>62</sup> A. Green (2021) '[New Victorian State Electoral Boundaries Finalised](#)', Antony Green's Election Blog, 31 October; Antony Green (2022) '[Seat Numbers and Margins for the 2022 Victorian Election](#)', Antony Green's Election Blog, 15 September.

<sup>63</sup> C. Morgan and M. Pascual Juanola (2021) '["Life is short": Former attorney-general Jill Hennessy won't contest 2022 election](#)', *The Age*, 24 November.

<sup>64</sup> (2021) '[Senior Victorian Labor MP Richard Wynne won't recontest seat at next year's state election](#)', *ABC News*, 25 November.

<sup>65</sup> R. Willingham and staff (2021) '[Victorian Labor MPs Jill Hennessy, Danielle Green and Dustin Halse not contesting 2022 election](#)', *ABC News*, 24 November; M. Pascual Juanola (2021) '[Backbencher Mark Gepp sixth Victorian Labor MP to resign in two weeks](#)', *The Age*, 2 December.

<sup>66</sup> R. Eddie and P. Sakkal (2021) '["Shift to renewal": Victorian MP Jane Garrett to leave Parliament](#)', *The Age*, 3 December.

<sup>67</sup> A. Ore (2022) '["Million megawatt smile": Friends pay tribute to Victorian MP Jane Garrett at state memorial service](#)', *The Guardian*, 2 September.

<sup>68</sup> J. Boaz (2022) '[Victorian ministers confirm resignations from Andrews government ahead of November election](#)', *ABC News*, 24 June.

resignations, the Andrews government had lost all but three of the core ministry that managed the pandemic response, taking into account Mikakos's departure and Foley succeeding her as Minister for Health. Merlino, Deputy Premier since 2014, served as Acting Premier from March to June 2021 when Andrews was injured. He was succeeded as deputy by Jacinta Allan. A month out from the election, another minister, Jaala Pulford, announced that she would quit politics.<sup>69</sup> These retirements drained Labor of considerable experience: Merlino had represented Monbulk since 2002 and held as many as ten portfolios across his career going back to 2006; Foley had represented Albert Park since 2007 and had held seven different portfolios; Neville had long stints in the key ministries of water and police and had represented Bellarine since 2002; and Pakula, who had sat in the Council (2006–13) and Assembly (since 2013), had held multiple portfolios, including Attorney-General (2014–18).

## Liberal

The Liberals had fewer departures, but former President of the Legislative Council Bruce Atkinson (1992–2022) and former minister Gordon Rich-Phillips (1999–2022) would account for almost half the experience leaving the Liberal Party before the 60th Parliament. Atkinson was the joint longest-serving Member across both houses (along with continuing Member for Rowville, Kim Wells) and was one of two former Presidents to depart in 2022 along with Nazih Elasmr. David Morris, Neale Burgess and Gary Blackwood, all elected in 2006, retired after 16 years in Parliament. Craig Ondarchie was defeated in preselection after 12 years in the upper house.

## Nationals

In July 2022, Nationals deputy leader Steph Ryan announced she would not recontest after eight years as the Member for Euroa. Entering Parliament aged 28, Ryan had been the youngest Member in Parliament at the time and the first woman to hold a leadership position with the Nationals.<sup>70</sup> Russell Northe, once a National, would retire as an independent.

## Pre-election crises

For all the discussion over leadership leading up to the election, by late 2022 two major events significantly reshaped policy debate: floods and the cost of living.

## Floods

Flooding in the Murray, Goulburn, Campaspe and Loddon rivers inundated properties in northern Victoria throughout October 2022. Several towns were evacuated, including Shepparton, Echuca, Seymour, Rochester, Carisbrook, Wedderburn and Charlton.<sup>71</sup> By late October, two people had been killed and 35,000 homes damaged.<sup>72</sup> In Melbourne, the Maribyrnong River breached its banks, impacting housing and prompting criticism of Flemington Racecourse's levee wall, which redirected flood waters.<sup>73</sup> The VEC announced flood-affected voters could ring and record a vote over the phone.<sup>74</sup> Commentators

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<sup>69</sup> S. Ilanbey (2022) 'Another Andrews government minister quits politics, joining exodus', *The Age*, 28 October.

<sup>70</sup> (2022) 'Steph Ryan taking 'leap into the abyss' after resignation from politics', *Sky News Australia*, 7 July.

<sup>71</sup> D. Miles, J. Boaz, S. Johnson (2022) 'Residents urged to evacuate as floodwater rises in Victoria's north and central areas', *ABC News*, 13 October.

<sup>72</sup> G. McCubbing (2022) 'The high cost of living in a flood zone', *AFR*, 21 October.

<sup>73</sup> B. Doherty (2022) 'Racing Victoria chief says Flemington racetrack wall had 'unintended' flood consequences', *The Guardian*, 15 October.

<sup>74</sup> Victorian Electoral Commission (2022) *Voting options expanded for flood-affected Victorians*, media release, VEC website, 12 November.

speculated the floods would work in Labor's favour at the election due to the Premier's emergency response experience.<sup>75</sup>

## Cost of living

The floods compounded a worsening cost-of-living crisis.<sup>76</sup> Global supply chain congestion triggered rising prices as the world economy recovered from pandemic-related lockdowns. In February 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to boycotts of Russia's oil and gas supplies, increasing resource prices. In Australia, energy prices were also squeezed by outages in Victoria's aging coal-fired power plants and floods in NSW and Queensland, increasing reliance on gas and prompting the Australian Energy Market Operator to impose a gas price cap.<sup>77</sup> The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission estimated that between April and October 2022 the median annual bill of residential customers increased by around \$300, or 23 per cent.<sup>78</sup> By September 2022, fuel was 32.3 per cent higher than a year earlier.<sup>79</sup>

Housing costs continued to increase. In March 2022, one report listed Melbourne as the fifth-least affordable city in the world.<sup>80</sup> Melbourne rents were estimated to have increased by as much as 20 per cent during 2022, with vacancy rates close to record lows at 1.4 per cent.<sup>81</sup> Between December 2021 and December 2022, inflation, measured in terms of CPI, rose by 8 per cent. The national average was 7.8 per cent.<sup>82</sup> The Reserve Bank of Australia began lifting interest rates in May 2022 for the first time since November 2010 (the cash rate target had dropped from 4.75 per cent to 0.10 per cent) placing over 1 million mortgage holders 'at risk'.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> P. Durkin (2022) 'Daniel Andrews sandbags his election prospects', *AFR*, 18 October; J. Ferguson (2022) 'Deluge will aid Daniel Andrews' surge to the polls', *The Australian*, 17 October.

<sup>76</sup> R. Clun and S. Wright (2022) 'Australians 'under the pump' as floods inflame cost of living', *Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)*, 17 October.

<sup>77</sup> T. Wood (2022) '4 reasons our gas and electricity prices are suddenly sky-high', *The Conversation*, 2 June; J. Gordon (2022) 'Where did all the power go? What caused the east coast energy crisis?', *The Age*, 15 June; A. Macdonald-Smith (2022) 'Gas price 'chaos' forces caps', *AFR*, 31 May.

<sup>78</sup> Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (2022) *Inquiry into the National Electricity Market: November 2022 report*, ACCC website, 23 November.

<sup>79</sup> R. Mannam (2022) 'Australian drivers facing fuel price hike of up to 24 cents a litre as excise cut expires', *The Guardian*, 28 September.

<sup>80</sup> M. Heagney (2022) 'Sydney, Melbourne among top five least affordable cities to buy a home', *The Age*, 17 March.

<sup>81</sup> J. Malo and T. Razaghi (2022) 'Life's tough if you're a renter': Melbourne rents skyrocket to record high', *SMH*, 12 January.

<sup>82</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) 'Consumer Price Index, Australia', December Quarter 2022, ABS website.

<sup>83</sup> Roy Morgan (2022) 'Mortgage stress' increases to its highest since April 2018 with 22.6% of mortgage holders now 'At Risk', media release, 22 November.

## 2 | Campaign

### 100 days from the election

While both major parties had been making policy announcements since May, on 18 August the media turned their attention towards the election 100 days out from polling day. Writing in *The Age*, Annika Smethurst declared the election was ‘Labor’s to lose’ but also speculated there was ‘a real risk Labor will be unable to govern in its own right’. Narratives of a close-run election or hung parliament began to germinate. Pollster Kos Samaras predicted a 4 to 5 per cent swing against Labor.<sup>84</sup> On the same day, Shaun Carney wrote in *The Age* that Matt Guy’s early election pitch to halt the Suburban Rail Loop to divert funds to the health system was a wise choice.<sup>85</sup> The *Herald Sun*’s Shannon Deery thought the Coalition would need more than wise policymaking: ‘The Libs may very well need divine intervention on November 26’.<sup>86</sup>

### A referendum on Dan Andrews

Premier Andrews soon figured as a central topic of debate in the election campaign. The two-term Premier was already considered a divisive figure within state and national politics following the COVID-19 response. In 2021, detractors had given the Premier the nickname ‘Dictator Dan’, prompting a counter campaign by his supporters, #IstandWithDan. *The Age* journalist Sumeyya Ilanbey, in her biography *Daniel Andrews* (Allen & Unwin, published August 2022), claimed that while ‘friends and foes agree that Andrews has been a leader for the times’, in this election the Premier would now seek ‘to redefine his legacy’ having become synonymous with the COVID-19 response, which included fronting the media for 120 consecutive days in 2020 to provide updates on the pandemic response.<sup>87</sup>

### Repeating Kennett?

Daniel Andrews’s campaign had added significance as, if re-elected, he would become Labor’s longest serving premier in early 2023 and the state’s longest serving premier since Henry Bolte by the end of the 60th Parliament.<sup>88</sup> Some commentators drew comparisons with Jeff Kennett’s tilt in 1999 for a third term as Premier.<sup>89</sup> The *Guardian*’s Benita Kolovos described them both as ‘crash-through leaders, either loved or loathed’ and drew parallels with the pre-election departure of senior ministers in Kennett’s government ahead of the 1999 election.<sup>90</sup> In early September, the *Herald Sun* speculated Andrews might emulate Kennett losing ‘the unlosable election’.<sup>91</sup> Kennett himself became a vocal detractor of Andrews writing for the *Herald Sun* and told *Sky News* he regretted not running against him.<sup>92</sup> If Andrews were re-elected, he would become the fifth Victorian premier to pass 3,000 days

<sup>84</sup> A. Smethurst (2022) ‘Labor In front but poll risks remain’, *The Age*, 18 August 2022.

<sup>85</sup> S. Carney (2022) ‘Guy gets traction railing at loop’, *The Age*, 18 August 2022.

<sup>86</sup> S. Deery (2022) ‘How to win an election’, *Herald Sun*, 18 August 2022.

<sup>87</sup> S. Ilanbey (2022) *Daniel Andrews: The revealing biography of Australia’s most powerful premier*, Melbourne, Allen & Unwin; L. Bladen (2022) ‘Daniel Andrews by Sumeyya Ilanbey and *The Secret by Alexandra Smith* review - The rise and rise (and fall) of Daniel Andrews and Gladys Berejiklian’, *The Canberra Times*, 2 October.

<sup>88</sup> T. Colebatch (2022) ‘What drives Daniel Andrews?’ *Inside Story*, 24 October.

<sup>89</sup> S. Price (2022) ‘Time to grade our premier’, *Herald Sun*, 19 November, p. 21.

<sup>90</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) ‘Factions, new blood and Jeff Kennett: Daniel Andrews’ dilemma after losing four ministers’, *The Guardian*, 25 June.

<sup>91</sup> S. Deery (2022) ‘Shannon Deery: Similarities between 1999 and 2022 election campaigns can’t be ignored’, *Herald Sun*, 5 September.

<sup>92</sup> J. Kennett (2022) ‘Jeff Kennett: Daniel Andrews’ day of reckoning within sight’, *Herald Sun*, 22 November 2022; P. Hannaford (2022) ‘Former premier Jeff Kennett regrets not running in the Victorian election as he slams Daniel Andrews for the current state of Victorian politics’, *Sky News Australia*, 21 November.

in office after Albert Dunstan, Henry Bolte, Rupert Hamer and John Cain Jr, a feat that, in an ironic twist, would entitle him to a statue outside the Department of Premier and Cabinet building—an initiative Kennett pioneered in 1999 just before his unexpected defeat.<sup>93</sup>

## Media representations

Throughout the campaign, Daniel Andrews was portrayed in sections of the media as a polarising figure, even described as ‘stubbornly popular’.<sup>94</sup> News outlets including Sky News, *The Spectator* and the *Herald Sun* launched broadsides on the incumbent Premier.<sup>95</sup> Critics characterised Andrews supporters as followers of the ‘Cult of Dan’, a phrase coined by Andrew Bolt during the pandemic and popularised in a documentary on the Premier by Sky News Australia presenter Peta Credlin.<sup>96</sup> Supporters highlighted Andrews’s socially progressive appeal, describing him as the ‘poster boy of progressive politics’.<sup>97</sup> A week out from polling day, the *Australian Financial Review* surmised the state election would effectively be a ‘referendum on Premier Andrews’.<sup>98</sup> Benita Kolovos noted both major parties had also been happy to bank on Andrews as their election strategy.<sup>99</sup>

## Premier Andrews and traditional media

The mainstream media’s focus on Daniel Andrews contrasted with the Premier’s own media strategy, which, in Jon Faine’s words, ‘bypassed’ traditional media outlets in favour of an extensive social media campaign (see [Section 5](#), below).<sup>100</sup> Some commentators described this approach as an abrogation of the Premier’s responsibilities.<sup>101</sup> These frustrations in the media boiled over at times, such as when in an interview with ABC *Mornings*’ Virginia Trioli a month out from the election, she all but accused the Premier of evading in-depth scrutiny. Andrews in response said, ‘I’m always happy to speak with you. You absolutely know that’.<sup>102</sup> Even without courting journalists, Andrews’s campaign dominated press headlines.<sup>103</sup>

## A move away from the major parties?

The supposed electoral purchase of anti-Andrews sentiment was most reflected in a mushrooming of micro-parties in the lead-up to the election. Among the 23 parties registered for the election were the Restore Democracy Sack Dan Andrews Party and the Angry Victorians Party, who were seeking to capitalise on the protest vote against the two

<sup>93</sup> B. Knight (2022) ‘Daniel Andrews’s legacy could be immortalised in bronze, but there’s a tightening Victorian election to win first’, *ABC News*, 20 November.

<sup>94</sup> M. Simons (2022) ‘The Daniel Andrews paradox: the enduring appeal of Australia’s most divisive premier’, *The Guardian*, 30 October; A. Smethurst (2022) ‘“I don’t just want this for the win”: What’s really motivating Daniel Andrews’, *The Age*, 20 November.

<sup>95</sup> Sky News Australia (2022) *Peta Credlin investigates ‘The Cult of Daniel Andrews*, Youtube, Sky News Australia, 16 November; M. Burgess (2022) ‘The cult of Daniel Andrews’, *The Spectator*, 17 November; J. Kennett (2022) ‘Jeff Kennett: Daniel Andrews’ day of reckoning within sight’, *Herald Sun*, 22 November 2022.

<sup>96</sup> A. Bolt (2020) ‘Beware the cult of dan’, *Herald Sun*, 17 September; S. Elsworth (2022) ‘Peta Credlin’s Sky News documentary exposes cult of Daniel Andrews’, *The Australian*, 13 November.

<sup>97</sup> Editorial (2022) ‘Love him or loathe him, Dan remains dominant in Victoria’, *AFR*, 7 November; P. Strangio (2022) ‘A tale of two Melbournes’, *Australian Book Review*, August.

<sup>98</sup> P. Durkin (2022) ‘Why the Victorian election will be a referendum on Daniel Andrews’, *AFR*, 18 November.

<sup>99</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) ‘No matter who wins, both major parties have made this Victorian poll the Daniel Andrews election’, *The Guardian*, 26 November.

<sup>100</sup> J. Faine (2022) ‘In bypassing the media, Daniel Andrews controls the message’, *The Age*, 3 July.

<sup>101</sup> C. Le Grand (2022) ‘The curious case of Daniel Andrews, the disappearing state premier’, *The Saturday Age*, 25 November.

<sup>102</sup> M. Madigan (2022) ‘“Keep requesting!” Virginia Trioli calls out Dan Andrews in tense on-air exchange’, *B&T*, 18 October.

<sup>103</sup> S. Elsworth (2022) ‘Victorian election: Premier Daniel Andrews keeps Liberal opponent Matthew Guy in media shade’, *The Australian*, 20 November.



major parties and the incumbent Labor government in particular.<sup>104</sup> Art dealer Andrew King offered to bankroll up to 50 candidates to run against Premier Andrews in Mulgrave, a race that included Ian Cook, of the I Cook Foods saga.<sup>105</sup> These micro-parties reflected what commentators were predicting to be a more general move away from the major parties, as had occurred at the federal election. As was written in the *Australian Financial Review* in early November, Victorian voters were faced with a choice between a ‘disliked’ Matt Guy and a ‘divisive’ Andrews.<sup>106</sup>

## Record numbers

In addition to a record 23 registered parties, voters were also confronted with a record 1,194 candidate names crowding onto ballot papers—a 35 per cent increase on 2018.<sup>107</sup> This included 740 candidates contesting the 88 Legislative Assembly seats, well up on the previous record of 543 candidates in 2014. According to Antony Green, the average of 8.4 candidates per lower house vacancy was the highest ever recorded at an Australian election, beating the previous record of 8.0 at the 2022 federal election. There were also a record 454 candidates contesting the Legislative Council, up from the 380 candidates in 2018.<sup>108</sup>

## ‘Greenslide’?

Buoyed by gains in the May federal election, where the Australian Greens had increased their share of lower house seats from one to four, the Victorian Greens anticipated they might be the beneficiaries of major party disaffection.<sup>109</sup> As well as hoping to win extra seats in the Legislative Assembly, the Greens even raised the prospect Labor may need to rely ‘on the Greens to form a progressive minority government’ (an idea Daniel Andrews promptly rejected).<sup>110</sup> If the Greens were to hold ‘the balance of power’ in the Legislative Council, they would need to restore their upper house contingent, after losing four of the five Council seats at the 2018 election.<sup>111</sup> Nonetheless, they flagged capping rental prices, raising the age of criminal responsibility and halting native forest logging as issues they would be pushing if the situation did eventuate.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>104</sup> M. Silby (2022) ‘Twenty-three parties make the cut for the Victorian election’, *Shepparton News*, 2 November; A. Smethurst (2022) ‘Two-party system decline could open way for extreme views’, *The Age*, 26 August.

<sup>105</sup> S. Johnson (2022) ‘Why anyone who runs against Daniel Andrews for parliament will be paid \$350—but there are two conditions as poll shows swing against Labor at the Victorian election’, *Daily Mail Australia*, 5 November; Sky News Australia (2022) *Ian Cook contests the Andrews government’s ‘corruption’*, YouTube, Sky News Australia, 7 November.

<sup>106</sup> P. Durkin (2022) ‘The battle between the disliked Matt Guy and the divisive Dan Andrews’, *AFR*, 7 November.

<sup>107</sup> A. Smethurst, S. Ilanbey and L. Abbott (2022) ‘Greens’ hopes boosted as Liberals plan to preference Labor last’, *The Age*, 12 November.

<sup>108</sup> A. Green (2022) ‘Summary of Candidates and Parties Contesting 2022 Victorian Election’, Antony Green’s Election Blog, 11 November.

<sup>109</sup> R. Willingham (2022) ‘Victorian Greens prepare for a state election that’s as much about brand as policies’, *ABC News*, 1 October.

<sup>110</sup> R. Eddie (2022) ‘We are ready’: Greens celebrate outside chance of hung parliament’, *The Age*, 16 November. ; (2022) ‘No deal will be done’ with crossbench if Labor in minority government: Daniel Andrews’, *The Age*, 26 November.

<sup>111</sup> A. Ore (2022) ‘Victorian Greens set sights on Labor’s inner-city heartland ... again’, *The Guardian*, 17 November; Australian Associated Press (2022) ‘Victorian Greens launch upper house ticket’, *The Canberra Times*, 6 August.

<sup>112</sup> S. Ilanbey (2022) ‘Balance of power: What Greens will demand if there’s a hung parliament’, *The Age*, 16 November.

## ‘Teal wave’?

There was also speculation whether a Victorian ‘teal wave’ would repeat the outcome of the May federal election.<sup>113</sup> From mid-August, independent candidates began declaring their intentions to run as teal candidates. Nomi Kaltmann, founder of Australia’s Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance, announced she would run in Caulfield against the Liberal deputy leader David Southwick.<sup>114</sup> Frankston Hospital doctor and mother-of-two Kate Lardner would stand for Mornington against Liberal candidate Chris Crewther, a former federal MP who was hoping to succeed long-serving MP David Morris. Sarah Fenton, who founded an ocean swimming group during the pandemic, would contest the Labor-held seat of Bellarine, where former Minister for Police Lisa Neville was retiring. Jacqui Hawkins, who worked for former independent Indi MP Cathy McGowan, would run in Benambra.<sup>115</sup> Former Monique Ryan campaign volunteer Melissa Lowe would run in Hawthorn against Liberal leadership aspirant John Pesutto and Labor incumbent John Kennedy.<sup>116</sup>

## Donation laws

While teal candidates hoped to emulate federal results, they faced a major hurdle in new donation laws passed at the end of the 58th Parliament. In 2018, the *Electoral Legislation Amendment Act 2018* capped the donations individuals or businesses could give to political parties at just over \$4,000 in a four-year cycle, as well as banning all foreign donations and introducing new disclosure obligations. While the changes advanced election accountability and transparency, experts warned the ‘devil was in the detail’. Political scientist Joo-Cheong Tham noted the narrow definition of ‘political expenditure’ on which donations could not be spent, exempting attendance fees at events such as political dinners. Moreover, the reforms enabled all parties to receive unlimited ‘gifts’ from a party’s ‘nominated entity’. For the major parties, this meant nominating an existing trust or corporation controlling large legacy assets, such as property and shareholdings, the proceeds of which could be gifted to the party without limit. New parties were entitled to establish a nominated entity, but new donations to those entities—as opposed to existing assets—were captured under the cap limiting donations to \$4320 in any given four-year cycle.<sup>117</sup>

## Need for further reform

The new donation rules, which came into effect the day after the 2018 election, gained attention in the lead-up to the November 2022 election. In March 2022, the Centre for Public Integrity said Victoria’s donation laws needed further tightening.<sup>118</sup> Soon after, crossbench MLC Clifford Hayes moved a motion to close the ‘loopholes’ in donation laws.<sup>119</sup> Greens leader Dr Samantha Ratnam, who voted in support of the changes in 2018 but noted the loopholes at the time, complained the major parties had ‘cooked up a system that benefits them to the detriment of minor parties and independents’.<sup>120</sup> In an October 2022 report, IBAC also warned ‘gaps remain’ in Victoria’s donation architecture, especially the absence of any

<sup>113</sup> Z. Ghazarian (2022) ‘Will the teal independents be disruptors in Victorian politics?’, *The Conversation*, 3 October.

<sup>114</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) ‘Nomi Kaltmann announced as the first ‘teal’ candidate selected to run in Victorian election’, *The Guardian*, 16 August.

<sup>115</sup> A. Smethurst (2022) ‘More independent women poised to shake up Victorian election’, *The Age*, 23 August.

<sup>116</sup> C. Lucas and P. Sakkal (2022) ‘Teals announce Melissa Lowe as candidate for Hawthorn’, *The Age*, 1 September.

<sup>117</sup> J. Tham (2018) ‘It depends what you mean by ‘political donations’’, *Inside Story*, 23 May.

<sup>118</sup> Centre for Public Integrity (2022) *Integrity inadequacies: Victoria*, discussion paper, CPI website, March.

<sup>119</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) ‘Bid to overhaul Victoria’s political donation laws to target ‘backdoor’ funding and ‘loopholes’’, *The Guardian*, 30 March.

<sup>120</sup> C. Le Grand (2022) ‘Labor’s campaign funding laws build \$100m wall to keep independents out’, *The Age*, 23 September.

limits on expenditure or any declaration requirements at local levels.<sup>121</sup> A clause inserted in the law by crossbench MPs requires the Government to appoint a panel to examine spending caps within 12 months of the 2022 election.

### *Impact on independents*

Both prospective and incumbent independent MPs were sensitive to the detrimental impact the new laws would have on their campaigns. ‘Simplistic solutions could easily leave challengers at a disadvantage leading to entrenched incumbency,’ Simon Holmes à Court said of the laws in June 2022.<sup>122</sup> In September, *The Age* reported that the donation laws—together with existing parliamentary budgets made available to sitting MPs and funding administered by the VEC to candidates who received at least 4 per cent of first-preference votes at the previous election—in effect created a ‘\$100 million wall in incumbent advantages’.<sup>123</sup> Shepparton independent Suzanna Sheed said her 2014 victory had relied on generous business backing but that the new laws would ‘make it more difficult’.<sup>124</sup> One new political party, the Victorians Party, formed by a group of businesspeople disaffected by the state’s lockdowns, pulled out of the election claiming that under the rules ‘the party could not adequately fund its campaign to achieve its objectives’.<sup>125</sup>

## Preferences and alignments

### *Liberals preferencing Greens*

Focus turned to party preference alignments as the election neared. With speculation that inner-city Labor seats, including Richmond, Northcote and Albert Park, might be vulnerable to the Greens, the big news was the Liberal Party’s decision to preference Greens candidates over Labor candidates in these seats so as to eat into Labor’s majorities. The Liberals ran a prominent campaign to ‘Put Labor last’ on ballot papers,<sup>126</sup> while its strategy of preferencing the Greens ahead of Labor marked a new direction—the Liberals had routinely preferred the Greens below Labor in recent elections and had not even run a candidate in Richmond in 2018.<sup>127</sup> The strategy upset some within the Liberal Party who considered the Greens more ‘dangerous’ than Labor.<sup>128</sup>

### *Group voting tickets*

Most attention, however, centred on preference dealing among Legislative Council candidates. One of the major themes in the 2018 Victorian state election was the unlikely upper house results that followed from the group voting ticket (GVT) system. By the 2020s, Victoria and Western Australia’s upper houses remained the only jurisdictions in Australia using the system, made contentious by the practice of ‘preference deals’ negotiated between micro-parties to achieve election. (WA abolished the practice in 2021). In 2018, these negotiations returned some uncanny results in the upper house, most notably Transport Matters Party’s Rod Barton winning a seat with 0.62 per cent of first-preference votes in

<sup>121</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (2022) *Special report on corruptions associated with donations and lobbying*, IBAC website, October.

<sup>122</sup> R. Millar (2022) ‘Victoria’s donation laws could stymie teals’ march on Spring Street’, *The Age*, 1 June.

<sup>123</sup> C. Le Grand (2022) ‘Labor’s campaign funding laws build \$100m wall to keep independents out’, *The Age*, 23 September.

<sup>124</sup> R. Millar (2022) ‘Victoria’s donation laws could stymie teals’ march on Spring Street’, *The Age*, 1 June.

<sup>125</sup> P. Durkin and G. McCubbing (2022) ‘“Ditch Dan” and Pratt donations spark Victorian election questions’, *AFR*, 26 August.

<sup>126</sup> Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division) (2022) *Put Labor Last*, archived 16 February.

<sup>127</sup> A. Smethurst, S. Ilanbey and L. Abbott (2022) ‘Greens’ hopes boosted as Liberals plan to preference Labor last’, *The Age*, 12 November; A. Green (2022) ‘VIC22—the Impact of the Liberal Party’s Change of Preference Recommendation’, Antony Green’s Election Blog, 21 November.

<sup>128</sup> B. Hall (2022) ‘Top Liberals enraged over Guy’s plan to preference Greens ahead of Labor’, *The Age*, 13 November.



Eastern Metropolitan Region. Commentators and strategists speculated whether 2022 would produce a similar result.

The practices of preference dealing under the GVT system gained even greater public notoriety after the 2018 election, when it emerged self-declared ‘preference whisperer’ Glenn Druery had assisted in orchestrating preference flows—at a price—for several candidates. Druery worked with eight of the 11 crossbenchers elected to the Legislative Council by directing their preferences to one another.<sup>129</sup> With Druery again working with some micro-parties ahead of the 2022 election, pollsters predicted a similarly diverse upper house crossbench. Analyst Kos Samaras compared the prospect with a ‘Star Wars bar scene’. Antony Green said it would be ‘wild’.<sup>130</sup>

### ‘Vote below the line’

There was little appetite from the Government in the 59th Parliament to change the GVT practices. A parliamentary inquiry into the 2018 election by the Electoral Matters Committee recommended a separate inquiry into the Legislative Council voting system, but this did not go ahead. Fiona Patten introduced electoral reform legislation in 2020, calling the GVT ‘a corruption of our democratic electoral process’, but the Bill was defeated.<sup>131</sup> Premier Andrews was not drawn into a position, calling for a review first.<sup>132</sup>

With no changes to the system ahead of the 2022 election, experts and analysts called out the system and encouraged electors to ‘vote below the line’ in an effort to circumvent the preference deal arrangements.<sup>133</sup> ABC election analyst Antony Green deemed the preference deals an exploitation of the voting method, while fellow psephologist Adrian Beaumont said it undermined democracy.<sup>134</sup> Nonetheless, the proportion of below-the-line voting in upper house ballots increased to 9.4 per cent of the voting public, up from 8.8 per cent in 2018.<sup>135</sup>

### The Preference Whisperer

Druery himself became a subject of controversy throughout the 2022 election campaign. After working with the Animal Justice Party (AJP) to negotiate preferences, he was duped in a last-minute switch which ensured the AJP would receive all the preferences negotiated by Druery but then redirect them to progressive parties, something Druery only found out after registration had closed.<sup>136</sup>

Druery was further stung when a recording of his discussion with Angry Victorians Party candidates Chris Burson and Heston Russell was leaked by the pair, exposing Druery’s plans to manipulate results and boasting he had helped deny the Greens seats in 2018 to deliver the Labor government an amenable crossbench.<sup>137</sup> *The Age* condemned the voting system as

<sup>129</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) ‘It was a charade’: preference whisperer Glenn Druery falls for Animal Justice party’s Victorian election sting’, *The Guardian*, 14 November; R. Millar, B. Preiss and B. Schneiders (2018) ‘Hire me and get into parliament’: the preference whisperer’s message, *The Age*, 14 December.

<sup>130</sup> P. Durkin and G. McCubbing (2022) ‘Star Wars scene’: Daniel Andrews faces ‘wild’ upper house’, *AFR*, 10 November.

<sup>131</sup> (2022) ‘Calls for Victorian electoral reform after ‘preference whisperer’ recorded boasting of influence’, *ABC News*, 17 November.

<sup>132</sup> Sakkal (2022) ‘Not top of the list’: How Labor’s appetite for voting reform fell by the wayside’, *Age*, 18 November.

<sup>133</sup> K. Bonham (2022) ‘Vote below the line—help democracy’, *The Age*, 19 November; Colleen Lewis (2022) ‘Who to vote for and who to preference—that is the question’, University of Melbourne’s Election Watch website, 15 November.

<sup>134</sup> Staff (2022) ‘Calls for Victorian electoral reform after ‘preference whisperer’ recorded boasting of influence’, *ABC News*, 17 November; Adrian Beaumont (2022) ‘How Victorian Labor’s failure on upper house electoral reform undermines democracy’, *The Conversation*, 22 September.

<sup>135</sup> B. Raue (2022) ‘How did below-the-line voting perform in Victoria?’, *The Tally Room*, 28 January.

<sup>136</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) op. cit., *The Guardian*, 14 November.

<sup>137</sup> M. Warner and M. Johnston (2022) ‘Election fixer Glenn Druery caught out lifting the lid on manipulation of Victoria’s voting system’, *Herald Sun*, 17 November.

in ‘dire need of reform’.<sup>138</sup> Liberal Party MP Louise Staley announced the Coalition would refer Labor to IBAC for an investigation of Druery’s assertions and joined the Greens, the AJP and the Reason Party in calling for reform.<sup>139</sup>

## Integrity matters and campaign breaches

With IBAC engaged in several inquiries involving the Government, the Coalition had been campaigning throughout 2022 for an increase in funding for IBAC and greater capacity for the commission to conduct public hearings. In August, this policy campaign was undermined with reports that Matthew Guy’s chief of staff, Mitch Catlin, was being investigated for using a private business to request over \$100,000 from a Liberal Party donor—a potential breach of electoral donation laws.<sup>140</sup> A week before the 26 November election, the allegation was referred by the VEC to IBAC. Guy said the referral amounted to ‘serious interference’ in the election.<sup>141</sup>

## An ‘ugly’ campaign

### *Campaign officially begins*

November 1 marked the running of the Melbourne Cup and the official start of the 2022 campaign, as the Governor issued the writs dissolving the 59th Parliament.<sup>142</sup> In the spirit of the Spring Carnival, odds were set on the outcome of the election, with Sportsbet offering \$1.05 for Daniel Andrews to win and \$10 for Matthew Guy.<sup>143</sup> Premier Andrews began the official campaigning period not at the races but in Shepparton, where he visited FoodShare, a charity which had been the beneficiary of the Government’s recent flood relief package.<sup>144</sup> Matthew Guy opted to start his campaign in Cheltenham at a solar panel and battery storage business with a renewable energy funding announcement.

### *Gaffes and attacks*

The campaign had plenty of gaffes and personal attacks. In early November, the opposition rolled out a 1970s-style ambulance, in place of a party bus, named the ‘Ditch Dan ambulance’, underscoring the Government’s challenges with the health system. The stunt was soon discarded when Victorian Ambulance Union boss Danny Hill reminded them it was an offence under the Ambulance Services Act to use the word ‘ambulance’ on any vehicle not owned or operated by an ambulance service without written authority.<sup>145</sup> Hill was again in the news soon after for calling the Liberal Party a ‘virus’ while standing next to Andrews for a funding announcement.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Editorial (2022) ‘A voting system in dire need of reform’, *The Age*, 17 November.

<sup>139</sup> C. Schelle and P. Sakkal (2022) ‘Upper house voting reforms in demand after leaked video highlights ‘gaming’ of system’, *The Age*, 17 November.

<sup>140</sup> A. Smethurst and P. Sakkal (2022) ‘Guy’s chief of staff asked wealthy Liberal donor for payments’, *The Age*, 2 August.

<sup>141</sup> Victorian Electoral Commission (2022) *Guy/Catlin case referred to IBAC*, media release, 17 November; AAP (2022) ‘Victorian Liberals accuse electoral commission of ‘serious interference’ in election’, *The Guardian*, 18 November.

<sup>142</sup> The Honourable Linda Dessau, Governor (2022), ‘Proclamation’, *Victorian Government Gazette*, No. S 622, 1 November.

<sup>143</sup> G. Howe (2022) ‘How the bookies see the state election playing out’, *Pakenham Gazette*, 2 November.

<sup>144</sup> R. Baxendale (2022) ‘Victorian election: Risk-averse leaders shun voters’, *The Australian*, 2 November.

<sup>145</sup> A. Ore (2022) ‘Liberal campaign stunt may backfire as ‘Ditch Dan ambulance’ prompts legal questions’, *The Guardian*, 2 November.

<sup>146</sup> A. Snowden (2022) ‘Daniel Andrews unveils \$26m package in last-ditch ambulance fix’, *Australian*, 18 November.

Party staffers were revealed to be providing testimonials to Caulfield representative David Southwick in campaign ads.<sup>147</sup> A photo of a pamphlet listing Liberal candidate for Werribee Mia Shaw's achievements 'including X and Y' trended on Twitter.<sup>148</sup> The Premier copped a backhanded compliment in the CFMEU's endorsement, which stated: 'Dan might be a prick, but he's a prick who's delivering for construction workers'.<sup>149</sup> Liberal campaigners appropriated the p-word to attack Labor's mandated vaccine program.<sup>150</sup> Labor established a Facebook page in the name of Matthew Guy, labelling him 'the Liberal cuts guy' and responsible for cutting \$1 billion from Victoria's health system as a senior minister in the Baillieu-Napthine governments.<sup>151</sup> RMIT ABC Fact Check found the claim 'false'.<sup>152</sup>

Campaigning was bitter on occasions. In Wodonga, a Labor volunteer's leg was broken at a pre-polling station after an altercation with a member of the public, while Werribee police received multiple complaints after an incident involving incumbent Labor MP Tim Pallas and a rival candidate from the Freedom Party, Mark Strother.<sup>153</sup> There was also a wealth of drama in the tight Northcote election. Labor distributed flyers detailing 'bullying, discrimination, sexual assault and transphobia' in the Greens party and launched a 'Greens Facts' website aimed to discredit the Greens across the state.<sup>154</sup> Labor's incumbent Northcote Member, Kat Theophanous, took Darebin City Council to court, accusing council workers of unlawfully dismantling campaign signage.<sup>155</sup>

## Notable candidates

Several candidates made headlines, including for switching alliances. Former Liberal Member for Frankston Geoff Shaw made a renewed push for a seat in the Victorian Parliament as a candidate for Clive Palmer's United Australia Party. Kaushaliya Vaghela, having left Labor, ran for a Legislative Council seat with her New Democrats party. Former Liberal MLC Bernie Finn and former Labor MLC Adem Somyurek joined forces for the Democratic Labour Party. After quitting Derryn Hinch's Justice Party early in the 59th Parliament, and then failing to register her own short-lived Independence Party on time before the 2022 election, Catherine Cumming ran with the Angry Victorians Party.

Some candidates were notable for prior experiences. Dancer, actor and star of 1992 film *Strictly Ballroom*, Paul Mercurio was Labor's (successful) candidate for Hastings. He was also one of three Labor candidates to have appeared on *Neighbours*, with Louise Crawford (Brighton) having played two roles six years apart and Belinda Wilson (Narre Warren North) having made a cameo in a 1992 episode.<sup>156</sup> Former professional tennis player and media

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<sup>147</sup> R. Smith (2022) 'David Southwick, Liberal MP, used staffers in paid ads on social media', *News.com.au*, 10 November.

<sup>148</sup> P. Vincent (2022) 'Liberal candidate makes hilarious gaffe in a campaign brochure ahead of the Victorian election - referring to her achievements as 'X and Y'', *Daily Mail Australia*, 20 October.

<sup>149</sup> S. Deery and K. Rooney (2022) 'CFMEU ad: 'Dan might be a prick, but he's a prick who's delivering for construction workers'', *Herald Sun*, 30 October.

<sup>150</sup> M. Clarke (2022) 'The Victorian Liberal Party has taken inspiration from militant unions in its election campaign', *Herald Sun*, 8 November.

<sup>151</sup> J. Butler and B. Kolovos (2022) 'Victorian Labor loses 'Matthew Guy' Facebook page after using it for \$115,000 worth of attack ads', *The Guardian*, 20 November; J. Butler (2022) 'Facebook reinstates Victorian Labor's 'Matthew Guy' page used for election attack ads after marking it as satire', *The Guardian*, 25 November.

<sup>152</sup> RMIT ABC Fact Check (2022) 'We fact checked Victorian Labor's claim that Matthew Guy cut \$1 billion from health. Here's what we found', *ABC News*, 16 November.

<sup>153</sup> K. Smyrk and C. Marshall (2022) 'Labor Party volunteer with broken leg after altercation at Wodonga pre-polling station', *ABC News*, 15 November; H. Timms (2022), 'Tim Pallas accused of 'assaulting' candidate in Werribee', *The Australian*, 16 November.

<sup>154</sup> ALP Victoria (2022) *Greens Facts*, archived 23 November; C. Kelly (2022) 'Is Labor that desperate?': Victorian Greens say voters can see through 'dirty' flyers, billboards', *The Guardian*, 23 November.

<sup>155</sup> D. Estacourt and R. Eddie (2022) 'Court orders Darebin to stop removing Labor MP's signs', *The Age*, 24 November.

<sup>156</sup> N. Towell and K. Napier-Raman (2022) 'Soapie to Spring Street: Do good neighbours become good pollies?', *The Age*, 4 August.

pundit Sam Groth was the successful Liberal candidate in Nepean, having once pushed Roger Federer to four sets at Wimbledon.

Other candidates made headlines for less sporting reasons. The Liberal Party's Eastern Victoria Region top pick, Renee Heath, had her Liberal membership retracted following revelations about her religious views, despite it being too late to withdraw her name from the ticket.<sup>157</sup> (She would be welcomed back into the party on winning her seat.) Bernie Finn's replacement, Moira Deeming, found critics for similar reasons.<sup>158</sup> Labor defended its Richmond candidate Lauren O'Dwyer after her Indigenous ancestry was questioned.<sup>159</sup> Liberals Narre Warren North candidate Timothy Dragan was condemned for comments in relation to First Nations people, climate change and abortion rights.<sup>160</sup> Meanwhile, several Liberal-National Members faced scrutiny following reports they followed 'racy social media accounts'.<sup>161</sup>

## Name-calling

The campaign also witnessed accusations and name-calling. In early November, commentator Neil Mitchell blamed Labor for turning to personal attacks, especially on Matthew Guy.<sup>162</sup> Worse was to follow. In the campaign for Richmond, the Greens accused Labor of sexism and hypocrisy in its depiction of the Greens candidate in campaign advertising.<sup>163</sup> Premier Andrews was called upon to apologise (he refused) for accusing the Liberal Party of preferencing 'Nazis' ahead of Labor candidates in its push to 'Put Labor last'.<sup>164</sup> Mulgrave candidate Michael Piastrino was condemned for implying Premier Andrews was complicit in the 'murder' of over 800 people during the pandemic, meriting an apology from Piastrino and a rebuke from his leader.<sup>165</sup> Catherine Cumming also courted notoriety and denunciation for telling a rally at Flinders Street Station that Andrews should be turned into 'red mist'.<sup>166</sup>

## Campaign criticism

By election eve, commentators were declaring the campaign 'ugly'. *The Guardian's* Benita Kolovos described the campaign as 'hideously ugly', and Shaun Carney in *The Age* described it as having 'overwhelmingly, a feeling of desperation'.<sup>167</sup> Victorian Electoral Commissioner Warwick Gately warned poor voting booth behaviour gave 'voters more reason to abandon

<sup>157</sup> N. Bucci (2022) 'Victorian Liberal leader dumps candidate linked to conservative church a week out from state election', *The Guardian*, 19 November.

<sup>158</sup> C. King and A. Burns (2022) 'Religious right roadmap to Liberal Party control revealed as internal ructions over church groups increase', *ABC News*, 7 November.

<sup>159</sup> S. Perillo, C. Douglas and K. Rooney (2022) 'Questions raised over Labor candidate Lauren O'Dwyer's First Nations ancestry claim', *Herald Sun*, 21 November.

<sup>160</sup> C. Riches (2022) 'Victorian Liberal candidate criticised over 'disgusting' comments on First Nations people, climate, abortion', *SBS News*, 20 November.

<sup>161</sup> S. Drill, A. Middleton and M. Clarke (2022) 'More lewd Liberals nabbed in salacious social media scandal', *Herald Sun*, 15 November.

<sup>162</sup> N. Mitchell (2022) 'The campaign is turning ugly and personal—blame Labor', *The Age*, 6 November.

<sup>163</sup> B. Hall (2022) 'Greens decry Labor's 'sexist' attack advertisement in Richmond', *The Age*, 12 November.

<sup>164</sup> A. McMillan and N. McKenzie (2022) 'Ultra-conservative Liberal candidate won't sit in party room if elected: Guy', *The Age*, 19 November; E. Staszewska (2022) 'Liberals call on Daniel Andrews to identify alleged Nazi candidates, as he comes under fire for using the term', *Sky News Australia*, 21 November; C. Wilson (2022) 'Victorian Liberals preference anti-Semitic, white supremacist candidate ahead of Labor', *Crikey*, 22 November.

<sup>165</sup> N. Towell and K. Napier-Raman (2022) 'Andrews' Liberal challenger sorry for 'justice threat', *The Age*, 17 October.

<sup>166</sup> T. Cowie (2022) 'Police investigate Victorian MP over Daniel Andrews 'red mist' comments at rally', *The Age*, 20 November.

<sup>167</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) 'Victoria's state election campaign has become hideously ugly. What happened to the battle of ideas?', *The Guardian*, 18 November; S. Carney (2022) 'Election campaign veers from uninspiring to disturbingly nasty', *The Age*, 21 November.

the major parties'.<sup>168</sup> Neil Mitchell described Victorian politics as mired in 'personality politics' and headlines, not a 'contest of ideas'.<sup>169</sup> Following Cumming's 'red mist' comment, journalist Rohan Smith wrote: 'Victorians deserve better than what they are getting during a grubby election race that started as a contest of ideas and has descended into a slanging match where police have been forced to intervene'.<sup>170</sup> The Premier, too, said Victorian elections should be better and resist 'extremism' and the 'Americanisation of our politics'.<sup>171</sup> Hyperbole was hard to escape. ABC journalist Michael Rowlands briefly courted controversy after asking the Premier whether he accepted there were voters 'waiting with their figurative baseball bats wanting to punish you for the lockdowns'. Rowlands apologised, saying the campaign had already been 'ugly enough'.<sup>172</sup>

## Campaign launches

### Labor

Labor launched its campaign at Cranbourne Community Theatre on 14 November, two weeks before the election. Deputy Premier Jacinta Allan dedicated her speech to Labor's plan (announced in August) to re-establish the State Electricity Commission (SEC), setting the stage for Daniel Andrews's arrival to the podium to the 1998 club hit 'Sing it Back' by Moloko, which features the words 'bring it back'.<sup>173</sup> The SEC was also the focus of Andrews's speech, which attacked privatisation in the 1990s as a key contributor to inflating electricity prices and touted the employment, environmental and cost-of-living benefits of state-owned renewable energy.<sup>174</sup> Labor's message also centred on Andrews's personal leadership, rebuking the 'anti-Dan' sentiments. Andrews declared his leadership was 'not about doing what's popular, it's about doing what's right'.<sup>175</sup> Labor's campaign slogan was 'Doing What Matters'.

### Coalition

Energy was also the focus of the Liberal-National Coalition launch on the same day across town in Port Melbourne. Unconventionally, this was in a Labor seat.<sup>176</sup> Attendees were greeted by gate-crashing Labor volunteers dressed in lobster costumes, a reference to a 2017 controversy involving Matthew Guy. To counter, Coalition launch organisers issued 'Frequent Liar' cards to attendees, referencing the Government's involvement in integrity probes. Guy, alongside Leader of the Nationals Peter Walsh, spruiked their 'Real Solutions for All Victorians' policy platform.<sup>177</sup> Days earlier, the Coalition had announced plans to instate a new tagline on Victorian numberplates, 'Open for business'.<sup>178</sup> Guy announced a Coalition

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<sup>168</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) op. cit., *The Guardian*, 18 November.

<sup>169</sup> N. Mitchell (2022) 'The campaign is turning ugly and personal – blame Labor', *The Age*, 6 November.

<sup>170</sup> R. Smith (2022) 'Victoria's shameful, grubby election campaign descends into chaos', *News.com.au*, 21 November.

<sup>171</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) 'Police clear Victorian MP who told protesters that Daniel Andrews should become 'red mist'', *The Guardian*, 22 November.

<sup>172</sup> M. McKenzie-Murray (2022) 'A vexing question', *The Monthly*, 18 November.

<sup>173</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) 'Victoria election launch shows Labor's strategy is all about a return to (70s-style) power', *The Guardian*, 14 November.

<sup>174</sup> A. Sciberras (2022) "'Most important election in history': Leaders launch official campaigns ahead of Victorian Election', *Nine News*, 13 November.

<sup>175</sup> A. Smethurst (2022) "'I don't just want this for the win': What's really motivating Daniel Andrews", *The Age*, 20 November.

<sup>176</sup> K. Offer (2022), 'Vic Libs launch campaign in Labor seat', *The Canberra Times*, 13 November.

<sup>177</sup> Victorian Liberal-National Coalition (2022), *Real solutions for real Victorians*, Coalition policy document, Election 2022.

<sup>178</sup> P. Sakkal and A. Smethurst (2022) 'On the move: Liberals want number plates to say Victoria is 'Open for Business'', *The Age*, 10 November.



plan to ‘turbocharge’ gas production in a bid to provide ‘reliable, affordable energy’.<sup>179</sup> The focus, however, remained fixed on Daniel Andrews’s character and Labor’s record. A strained healthcare system, cost-of-living pressures and the state’s growing debt were flagged as reasons for change. Guy nonetheless appreciated he was the underdog, likening beating Andrews to ‘climbing Mount Everest without oxygen ... all in a blizzard—all backwards’.<sup>180</sup>

## Greens

The Greens’ launch was held at Collingwood venue Perry’s on 16 November, where party leader Dr Samantha Ratnam expressed hope that their inner-city footprint around Melbourne, Brunswick and Prahran could expand at the election to include Richmond and Northcote and possibly Albert Park and Pascoe Vale.<sup>181</sup> Melbourne district incumbent Ellen Sandell attacked the Government’s record on incarceration of First Nations people, renters’ rights and exploratory drilling for gas. Ratnam said the Greens were ‘ready to work constructively and positively’ with whoever won government.<sup>182</sup> According to one report, this declaration drew a single ‘woo’.<sup>183</sup>

## Leaders’ debate

Unlike in previous elections, where leaders’ debates have been a prominent element of the campaign process, the 2022 election featured only one public debate. Initially, it appeared there may be no debate, with commentators lamenting a paucity of policy ideas and a seeming unwillingness of leaders to appear for questioning.<sup>184</sup> Daniel Andrews and Matthew Guy eventually agreed to debate on 22 November at a town-hall style event in Box Hill organised by Sky News and the *Herald Sun* and attended by 100 undecided voters.<sup>185</sup>

Debate centred on health, integrity, debt, infrastructure, climate change and energy policy, the cost of living and transport. Media assessments of the result were mixed. Both leaders took their cue from the souring campaign tone to bring civility to the debate.<sup>186</sup> The ABC’s Richard Willingham observed a variety of questions but conversely a lack of detail in responses.<sup>187</sup> *The Age* summarised that it was a ‘mostly calm’ and ‘mild-mannered’ debate in which ‘Guy avoided engaging directly with Andrews, who seemed at times frustrated that the opposition leader would not argue back’.<sup>188</sup> *News.com.au* noted the absence of the word

<sup>179</sup> A. Smethurst and A. McMillan (2022) ‘“More and more confident”: Energy, cost of living the focus as Matthew Guy addresses party faithful’, *The Age*, 13 November.

<sup>180</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) ‘Victoria election launch shows Labor’s strategy is all about a return to (70s-style) power’, *The Guardian*, 14 November.

<sup>181</sup> C. Lewis (2022) ‘“We are ready”: amid a sea of colour and triumphalism, the Victorian Greens launch an ambitious campaign’, *Crikey*, 17 November.

<sup>182</sup> (2022) ‘Victorian Greens launch election campaign’, *Sky News*, 1 October.

<sup>183</sup> C. Lewis (2022) op. cit., *Crikey*, 17 November.

<sup>184</sup> J. Faine (2022) ‘Are we witnessing an election campaign without proper debate?’, *The Age*, 30 October; R. Baxendale (2022) ‘Victorian election: Risk-averse leaders shun voters’, *The Australian*, 1 November.

<sup>185</sup> Sky News Australia writers (2022) ‘WATCH IN FULL: Daniel Andrews and Matthew Guy face off at the Sky News/Herald Sun People’s Forum and take questions from undecided voters’, *Sky News*, 22 November.

<sup>186</sup> C. Godde and AAP (2022) ‘Victoria election: Premier Daniel Andrews scores narrow debate win over Matthew Guy at Box Hill’, *7News.com.au*, 23 November; P. Durkin (2022) ‘Andrews warns of ‘Americanisation’ of politics during leaders’ debate’, *AFR*, 22 November.

<sup>187</sup> R. Willingham (2022) ‘As Victoria heads into the election campaign’s final stretch, leaders’ debate shows it’s still Labor’s to lose’, *ABC News*, 23 November.

<sup>188</sup> R. Eddie and S. Ilanbey (2022) ‘“The fight is yours”: Tetchy corruption exchange punctures mild-mannered debate’, *The Age*, 22 November. See also: M. Johnston (2022) ‘Matt Johnston: Matt Guy manages to disarm Daniel Andrews with a smile’, *Herald Sun*, 22 November; S. Deery, K. Rooney and S. Booth (2022) ‘Daniel Andrews, Matthew Guy spar over Victoria’s health system’, *Herald Sun*, 23 November.

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‘lockdown’, a sign voters were keen to move on from the pandemic as an issue.<sup>189</sup> Attendees declared Andrews the narrow winner, 38 per cent to 34 per cent, with 28 per cent unable to pick a winner.<sup>190</sup>

## Narracan

The election for the seat of Narracan was declared failed after the Nationals candidate, Sean Gilchrist, died on 20 November, only days before the election.<sup>191</sup> The election was postponed to 28 January 2023. Narracan had been a safe Liberal Party seat but was vacated prior to the 26 November election by long-term Liberal MP Gary Blackwood. The Liberal Party’s Wayne Farnham won the supplementary election, with Labor and the Nationals not running candidates.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> C. Francis (2022) ‘Prickly word Daniel Andrews avoided in Victorian leaders’ debate with Matthew Guy’, *News.com.au*, 22 November.

<sup>190</sup> R. Baxendale and A. Snowden (2022) ‘Victorian election: Health at heart of leaders’ town hall debate’, *The Australian*, 22 November.

<sup>191</sup> R. Eddie (2022) ‘Victorian Nationals candidate dies before court date on rape charges’, *The Age*, 21 November.

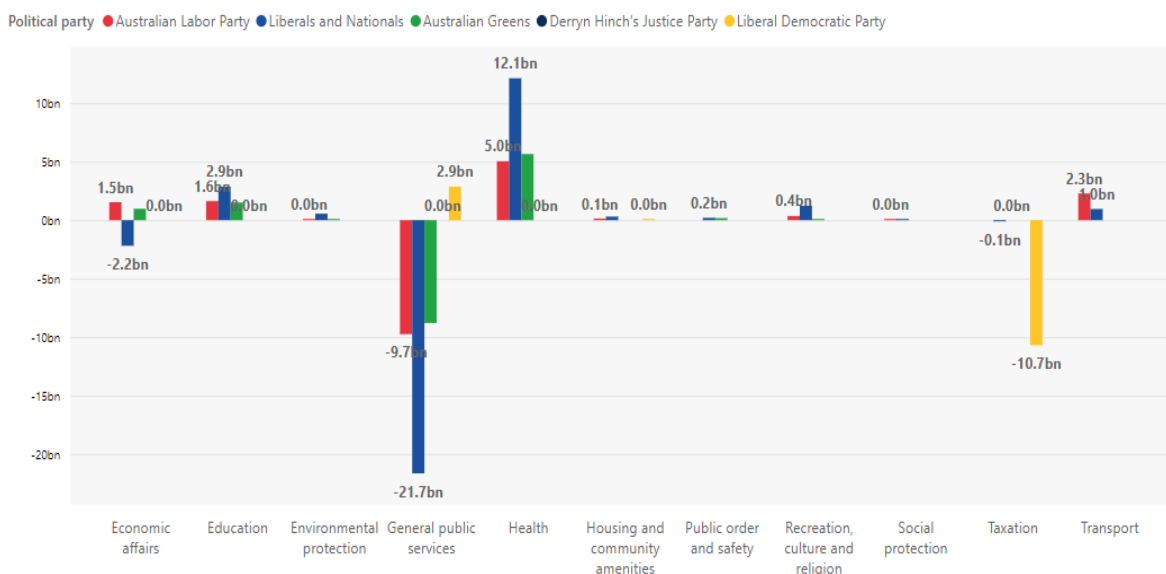
<sup>192</sup> K. Thomas (2022) ‘Wayne Farnham claims Narracan victory for Liberals to secure last seat in Victorian election’, *ABC News*, 28 January.

# 3 | Policy Matters

## Overview

The major political parties had begun announcing policy commitments from as early as May 2022. The Victorian Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) tracked the value of all policy announcements and commitments throughout this period. It identified a total of 369 commitments from late May to the election. On balance, accounting for both outlay and savings measures, the PBO estimated Labor’s 91 policies would cost \$1.2 billion, the Coalition’s 112 commitments would make savings of \$5.7 billion (largely by scrapping the Suburban Rail Loop) and the Greens’ 137 commitments would make savings of \$0.4 billion (via new levies and budget measures).

**Figure 3.1 - PBO summary of election commitment values by party and policy area:**



Source: Victorian Parliamentary Budget Office, 2022 Election Commitment Tracker, [pbo.vic.gov.au/2022\\_election\\_commitment\\_tracker](https://pbo.vic.gov.au/2022_election_commitment_tracker).

## Policy programs in brief

### Labor

Labor’s major policy announcements were in energy, health and education, following major infrastructure building commitments at the previous election. Its signature policy commitment, announced in August 2022, was to ‘bring back the SEC’ at a long-term cost of \$1 billion. Details of the plan were thin, but the central idea was to create a state-owned corporation (with significant private equity) to generate renewable electricity. It would involve a Centre of Training Excellence and create 59,000 jobs.

In health, major projects included \$1.155 billion in funding for a new hospital for Melbourne’s northern suburbs, \$1.05 billion to redevelop, expand and rename the Maroondah Hospital at Ringwood as the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, and \$675 million for a new hospital in East Gippsland. Other health proposals included upgrades to Monash Medical Centre in Melbourne’s south-east (\$560 million), Dandenong Hospital (\$295 million) and Wonthaggi Hospital (\$290 million), free pads and tampons in public places (\$23 million) and training and recruitment for an additional 17,000 nurses. In early October, Labor promised it would build the biggest hospital project in Australian history in North Melbourne, costing up to



\$6 billion over 12 years. This promise was not included in Labor's final policy costings or the PBO's election tracker.<sup>193</sup>

In education, \$850 million was promised to upgrade or build new schools, and free TAFE would be made available for people with qualifications to re-skill.<sup>194</sup> In June 2022, Labor announced a \$9 billion investment in early childhood education over the next decade, including free kindergarten, new universal four-year-old pre-prep and the establishment of 50 government-operated childcare centres. This promise was not included in Labor's final policy costings or the PBO's election tracker.<sup>195</sup>

## Coalition

The Coalition had a similar policy focus, significantly outbidding Labor on new or upgraded hospitals. According to the PBO, the Coalition promised \$12 billion in health spending compared to Labor's \$5 billion. Headline packages included \$2.4 billion for rebuilding the Alfred Hospital, \$600 million for training 40,000 new and upskilled nurses and midwives, and \$900 million for building a 275-bed Royal Children's Hospital campus in Werribee. From May through to October the Coalition announced hospital investments in Melton, Geelong, West Gippsland, Mildura, Albury-Wodonga, Sandringham, St Arnaud, Rosebud, Caulfield, Werribee, Daylesford, Mansfield, Maroondah, Box Hill, Wonthaggi, Cobram, Maffra, Bright, Casey and Swan Hill, among other locations.<sup>196</sup>

In mid-August, the Coalition announced these projects would be funded by scrapping the \$34.5 billion Suburban Rail Loop—at a saving of \$11 billion—and redirecting \$8 billion (later costed at \$10 billion) to healthcare projects.<sup>197</sup> In place of the Loop, alternative infrastructure projects were announced, including \$3.73 billion to rebuild roads in Melbourne's west, \$1.9 billion for rail extensions to the Frankston and Cranbourne lines, and \$10 billion over ten years on road maintenance. Additionally, early in 2022, the Coalition had promised a \$2.5 billion strategy (later costed at \$1.37 billion) to revitalise manufacturing across Victoria, including \$1 billion for regional manufacturing projects.<sup>198</sup>

The Coalition also had a strong focus on education, including \$700 million on a four-year capital works program to support non-government schools, a \$300 million two-year pilot program to provide free lunches to all Victorian public school students, a \$200 million pledge to develop and implement a 'simplified curriculum' and \$1.1 billion in capital funding for upgrades of public schools across the state.<sup>199</sup>

## Greens

The Greens followed the major parties with health and education commitments, as well as tending to their traditional focus on environmental, energy and social issues. Major health announcements included a \$1.3 billion package for hospital beds, \$500 million to increase the number of free GPs, nurses and allied health professionals, a \$120 million investment in public dental and \$20 million in financial support for out-of-pocket costs for contraception. In education, the Greens said a \$1.46 billion investment was needed to secure 'genuinely free

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<sup>193</sup> A. Dow, P. Sakkal and A. McMillan (2022) 'New \$5 billion hospital campus to be built in North Melbourne', *The Age*, 4 October.

<sup>194</sup> M. Clarke, 'Free TAFE pledge to encourage re-skilling', *Herald Sun*, 15 November 2022, p. 11.

<sup>195</sup> D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *Best start, best life: Early childhood education that works*, media release, 16 June; D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *Free Kindergarten For Thousands Of Victorian Children*, media release, 10 August.

<sup>196</sup> J. Dunstan (2022) 'Why big-ticket hospital pledges are dominating Victoria's state election', *ABC News*, 5 October.

<sup>197</sup> M. Guy (2022) *\$8 billion for regional Victoria's hospitals*, media release, 17 August.

<sup>198</sup> B. Vallence (2022) *Bringing manufacturing home to recover and rebuild*, media release, 18 February.

<sup>199</sup> D. Hodgett (2022) *A simplified curriculum to make Victorian students the best educated*, media release, 4 September; A. Smethurst (2022) 'Coalition vows back to basics for curriculum', *The Age*, 5 September, p. 4.

local public schools'.<sup>200</sup> Rather than advocating for electric vehicles, as in the 59th Parliament, the Greens outlined a \$2.5 billion package for bike 'super-highways' and more walkable neighbourhoods in Melbourne and regional cities, as well as \$800 million for improvements in the frequency of train and tram services. Finally, in response to Labor's 2020 commitment to build 12,000 social and affordable dwellings as part of its \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build, the Greens proposed building 100,000 public homes over the next ten years, a scheme funded by a levy on the banks.<sup>201</sup> As in 2018, the Greens remained committed to investing in making the Yarra River swimmable.<sup>202</sup>

## *Micro-parties and independents*

The PBO provided costings for several micro-parties in the Legislative Council seeking re-election. Transport Matters Party pledges totalled \$25.8 million, including the conversion of government fleets to electric vehicles, a non-employee transport workers tribunal, a \$2 levy on recreational boat registrations, extension of the free tram zone, and free public transport for seniors and full-time students. The Animal Justice Party proposed nine policies, including transitioning to eco-friendly and animal-friendly agriculture, establishing an Animal Crimes Division, ceasing all subsidies to the racing industry, and shutting down jumps and greyhound racing. The Liberal Democrats' nine policies cost \$11 million, including creating a bill of rights, opening national parks to public use, relaxing renewable energy commitments to lower prices and implementing fiscal measures to reduce outlays by \$7.791 billion.<sup>203</sup>

The Reason Party did not have the PBO cost its policies but released a series of policy documents titled, for example, 'Accountable Honest Politicians', 'Climate Emergency', 'Equality and Inclusion', 'Modern Criminal Justice', 'More Affordable Housing', 'Positive Again', 'Reproductive Health', 'Transparent Taxable Religion' and 'Youth at Risk'.<sup>204</sup> Similarly, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party released a policy document with commitments to animal welfare, regional roads, local government, law and order, public land management, firearms and water management.<sup>205</sup> Derryn Hinch's Justice Party called for drug courts in Geelong and Mildura, a child sex offenders public register, tougher penalties for family violence in the presence of a child, a wellbeing hub in Seymour, expanded roadside drug testing and building of the Murray Basin Rail Project. Independent Suzanna Sheed promised to fund a Shepparton sports stadium, road repairs and a hospital car park.<sup>206</sup>

Among other contending parties, Legalise Cannabis Victoria promoted legalising personal use of cannabis and the growing of plants at home, easing medical access, regulating commerce, relaxing hemp rules, reforming driving laws and expunging convictions.<sup>207</sup> In a pre-election statement, One Nation contrasted itself with 'radical Marxist greens', supporting a royal commission into the management of COVID-19, the unlocking of Victoria's gas reserves, a ban on foreign ownership of residential property, and highway upgrades.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>200</sup> Victorian Greens (2022) *Greens plan for quality, genuinely free public schools*, media release, 24 October.

<sup>201</sup> Victorian Greens (2022) *Victorian Greens launch election platform including plan for 200,000 homes and bank levy raising \$1.4 billion*, media release, 1 October.

<sup>202</sup> B. Hall (2022) 'It feels 'a little bit hairy' now, but the Greens want to make the Yarra swimmable', *The Age*, 21 November.

<sup>203</sup> Parliamentary Budget Officer (2022) 'Election policy costing: Mr David Limbrick, Debt and deficit', PBO website, 24 November.

<sup>204</sup> Reason Australia (2023) 'Victorian policies', Reason Australia website, retrieved 15 March.

<sup>205</sup> Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party (2022) *How we're Victoria's powerful voice*, Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party policy document, Election 2022.

<sup>206</sup> S. Sheed (2022) *Sheed to seek funding for new sports stadium*, media release, 16 November; S. Sheed (2022) *Sheed lists road repairs as immediate priority*, media release, 8 November; S. Sheed (2022) *Sheed calls for hospital carpark for health staff*, media release, 3 November.

<sup>207</sup> Legalise Cannabis Australia (2022) *Party Policy*, Legalise Cannabis Australia policy document, Election 2022.

<sup>208</sup> One Nation (2022) *Vote One Nation, Victoria!*, media release, 25 November.

## Major policy debates

### Health

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and related pressures on the hospital system and Victoria's triple-zero emergency systems, health policies were naturally the major focus leading to the 2022 election. In a survey taken by Resolve Political Monitor in August and September, 'health care and aged care' was the top response for Coalition voters and second highest for Labor voters. It was also comfortably the highest priority for voters in marginal electorates.<sup>209</sup> Surprisingly, COVID-19 itself did not feature as a major campaign issue.<sup>210</sup>

Despite the enormous outlay committed to health and hospitals—the PBO estimated \$22.8 billion between Labor, the Coalition and the Greens (see Figure 3.1)—experts were not convinced these proposals met Victoria's needs. In its election statement in October, the Australian Medical Association Victoria said chronic underfunding had placed the hospital system 'in extremis', in terms of not only beds and facilities but also staffing and resources.<sup>211</sup> While both major parties made promises to attract and train new nurses and midwives, experts said more attention was needed in retaining staff.<sup>212</sup> Deakin University's Dr Kathryn Backholer criticised the focus on hospitals and acute health care, fearing preventative health care was being neglected<sup>213</sup>. Health economist Stephen Duckett questioned the parties' priorities on hospitals over pandemic preparedness, preventive health and primary care.<sup>214</sup>

### Energy and climate

The continuing cost-of-living crisis and rising gas and fuel prices gave renewed urgency to energy, environment and climate change policies. Aside from its revival of the SEC, Labor's energy and climate pitch included plans to achieve 2.6 gigawatts of renewable energy storage capacity by 2030 and 6.3 gigawatts of storage by 2035—enough to power around half of Victoria's current household needs. Labor revised its emissions reduction targets, establishing a goal to reduce emissions by 75 to 80 per cent (on 2005 levels) by 2035 and achieve net zero by 2045, earlier than its legislated 2050 target. The party also announced renewable targets of 65 per cent by 2030 and 95 per cent by 2035.<sup>215</sup> Earlier in the year, Labor had also released a *Gas Substitution Roadmap*, removing requirements for new homes to connect to the gas network.<sup>216</sup>

The Coalition's headline energy policy was to 'turbocharge gas production and availability' and legislate a guarantee that 100 per cent of new conventional onshore gas produced in Victoria would be reserved for Victorian use.<sup>217</sup> This plan followed earlier announcements to

<sup>209</sup> S. Ilanbey (2022) 'Labor heading for 'Danslide 2' as voters turn away from Guy's Liberals', *The Age*, 22 September.

<sup>210</sup> *ABC News (Weekend)*, 7.06 am, 20 November 2022.

<sup>211</sup> S. Booth (2022) 'Victorian hospital crisis decades in the making, AMA reports reveals', *Herald Sun*, 6 October.

<sup>212</sup> A. Dow and M. Cunningham (2022) 'Victoria is missing a golden opportunity to rethink the health system', *The Age*, 21 November.

<sup>213</sup> A. Ore and C. Kelly (2022) 'Confused about who to vote for in the Victorian election? A guide to the promises made across key issues', *The Guardian*, 25 November.

<sup>214</sup> S. Duckett (2022) 'More and more hospital beds: Health promises lack vision', *The Age*, 21 November.

<sup>215</sup> D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *Australia's Biggest Renewable Energy Storage Targets*, media release, 27 September; D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *Putting power back in the hands of Victorians*, media release, 20 October.

<sup>216</sup> Victorian Government (2022) *Gas Substitution Roadmap*, Melbourne, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action website; A. McMillan (2022) 'New Victorian homes no longer required to have gas', *The Age*, 2 July.

<sup>217</sup> B. Kolovos and A. Ore (2022) 'Power bill relief all round as major parties launch Victorian election campaigns', *The Guardian*, 13 November;

legislate an emissions reduction target of 50 per cent by 2030, subsidise rebates for owner-occupiers of up to \$1,400 for household solar panel installations and \$3,000 for battery installations, establish a \$1 billion hydrogen strategy and commit \$1 million to set up an app comparing fuel prices (modelled on NSW's Fuel Check platform).<sup>218</sup> Other environmental commitments included reversing the Andrews government's native timber logging ban (commencing 2030).<sup>219</sup>

As with health, experts were unconvinced on the policy coherence of both parties. The Grattan Institute's Tony Wood noted both major parties had now pledged 50 per cent emissions cuts by 2030 on 2005 levels—and Labor net zero by 2045—but neither had outlined comprehensive strategies to achieve these goals, including tackling emissions from industrial processes, transport and agriculture.<sup>220</sup> Wood and other experts doubted Liberal plans to accelerate onshore gas production would amount to much, given there was no current interest in the area from the private sector, while reserving gas for Victorian use was legally dubious.<sup>221</sup> Some business commentators doubted the commercial viability of Labor's SEC proposal, particularly the 51–49 per cent split with private equity, which would need good returns on investment, making it difficult to lower electricity prices.<sup>222</sup>

The Greens committed to ending all coal mining in Victoria by 2030, increasing Victoria's legislated renewable energy target to 100 per cent by 2030, implementing a job-for-job guarantee for coal workers and securing funding for the independent Latrobe Valley Authority to oversee coal closures.<sup>223</sup> Other proposals included a \$1 billion 'zero extinction fund', ending native logging in 2023 and granting First Nations peoples rights to controlling land, water and oceans.<sup>224</sup>

## Cost of living

Energy issues were entangled with pressing cost-of-living questions. Both Daniel Andrews and Matthew Guy touted their energy policies as long-term cost-of-living solutions. Both parties also announced energy price relief measures at their campaign launches.<sup>225</sup>

Other significant cost-of-living proposals were promises to cut transport fares. Labor committed to capping the cost of regional fares at the same as maximum metropolitan fares, as well as adding trains and services to the regional network.<sup>226</sup> The Coalition promised to cap all public transport full fares at \$2 per day and concession fares at \$1.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>218</sup> M. Guy (2022) *Real solutions to lock in climate action and build Victoria's energy system of the future*, media release, 18 July; M. Guy (2022) *Power to the people—Real solutions for energy and emissions*, media release, 18 July; M. Guy (2022) *Real solutions to save on the growing price of fuel*, media release, 26 September.

<sup>219</sup> M. Guy (2022) *Disastrous building, construction material shortages loom unless 2030 ban reversed*, media release, 2 April; M. Guy (2022) *Putting Crown Land camping laws back in the hands of landholders*, media release, 16 August 2022.

<sup>220</sup> T. Wood, 'Political energy needed on climate change', *The Age*, 15 November, p. 23.

<sup>221</sup> R. Crabtree (2022) 'Coalition pledge to 'turbocharge' onshore gas extraction in Gippsland and Otways met with scepticism', *ABC Online*, 24 November.

<sup>222</sup> S. Evans (2022) 'Dan Andrews ignoring commercial realities in SEC revival plan', *AFR*, 21 November.

<sup>223</sup> Victorian Greens (2022) *Powering Victoria beyond coal*, Victorian Greens policy document, Election 2022.

<sup>224</sup> Victorian Greens (2022) *Greens propose \$1 billion zero extinction fund*, media release, 7 September.

<sup>225</sup> B. Kolovos and A. Ore (2022) 'Power bill relief all round as major parties launch Victorian election campaigns', *The Guardian*, 13 November; D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *\$250 power saving bonus to bust bills from Tomorrow*, media release, 2 May.

<sup>226</sup> D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *Cheaper fares, more trains, extra services for the regions*, media release, 2 November.

<sup>227</sup> (2022) 'Victorian opposition pledges to cap public transport fares at \$2 a day', *ABC Online*, 9 October.

The Greens offered free public transport for everyone under 21, \$1-a-day concession fares and \$3 adult fares.<sup>228</sup>

Cost of living registered high among voter concerns. In a RedBridge poll on 15 November, cost of living ranked highest of ten key election issues, receiving more than double the response of any other issue.<sup>229</sup> In a Resolve Strategic poll four days before the election, 27 per cent of voters nominated cost of living as the policy area influencing their vote most, followed by health care and the environment as the next most important issues (12 per cent of voters each).<sup>230</sup>

## Integrity

The cascade of IBAC investigations during the 59th Parliament spotlighted integrity as a major election issue. As *The Age* reported, the election campaign saw donation scandals, a court injunction (against *The Age*), calls for new laws that could lead to journalists being jailed for reporting material from integrity agencies' draft reports, questions about cash for political allies and accusations of political interference in the electoral processes.<sup>231</sup> In an October 2022 survey of readers, *The Age* found 'integrity in politics and governance' was the top factor influencing voters of all ages.<sup>232</sup> Similarly, Victoria's regional Australian Community Media (ACM) mastheads found that, behind health, integrity was the second-biggest issue in regional areas.<sup>233</sup>

Labor committed to implementing all 21 recommendations from IBAC's Operation Watts report by mid-2024.<sup>234</sup> The Liberals were more expansive in their integrity commitments, including additional funding of \$12 million each year for the Victorian Ombudsman and IBAC, a royal commission into Victoria's COVID-19 response, added funding of \$2.8 million over the next four years for the PBO and the scrapping of Victoria's pandemic laws.<sup>235</sup> The Greens also promised to provide more funding for IBAC, establish an independent integrity commissioner, publish ministerial diaries and push for a full parliamentary inquiry into the state's planning system.<sup>236</sup>

## Budget and costings: A spendathon?

By early September, the *Herald Sun* reported that Labor, the Coalition and the Greens had made \$30 billion worth of election commitments.<sup>237</sup> Large-scale spending in health, education and energy led some commentators to warn both major parties risked exacerbating inflation.<sup>238</sup> In early November, credit rating agency S&P Global Ratings labelled the campaign a 'spendathon' and warned of Victoria's apparent weak budget position and a

<sup>228</sup> The Greens (2022) *Public transport would be free for under 21s using 'climate ticket': Greens*, media release, 8 November.

<sup>229</sup> S. Deery (2022) 'Voters reveal big issues influencing their decision ahead of Victoria's 2022 election', *The Age*, 15 November.

<sup>230</sup> A. Smethurst (2022) 'Victorians feel the pinch as data shows cost of living most important election issue', *The Age*, 22 November.

<sup>231</sup> J. Gordon and P. Sakkal (2022) 'Integrity questions follow campaign trail', *The Age*, 24 November, p. 9.

<sup>232</sup> R. Eddie (2022) 'What Victorians want to hear from politicians', *The Age*, 10 October.

<sup>233</sup> A. Ford (2022), 'Battlelines', *The Courier*, 22 October, p. 1.

<sup>234</sup> L. Wong (2022), 'Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews apologises after IBAC investigation finds 'extensive misconduct' by Labor MPs', *The Age*, 20 July.

<sup>235</sup> ABC staff (2022) 'Victorian state opposition unveils election promise for 'strong' IBAC and Ombudsman', *ABC News*, 2 May; P. Sakkal (2022) 'Guy says royal commission should probe Andrews' 'tragic' COVID management', *The Age*, 28 August; D. Davis (2022) *Strengthening the role of the Parliamentary Budget Office to help control Daniel Andrews' spiralling debt*, media release, 2 October; M. Guy (2022) *Pandemic powers extension hits confidence*, media release, 7 July.

<sup>236</sup> Victorian Greens (2022) *Victorians owed full inquiry into broken planning system*, media release, 2 August.

<sup>237</sup> S. Deery (2022) 'Billion dollar parties', *Herald Sun*, 6 September, p. 8.

<sup>238</sup> R. Baxendale (2022) 'Poll promises to fire up inflation', *The Australian*, 3 November.



possible impact on its ratings.<sup>239</sup> RMIT Emeritus Professor of Public Policy David Hayward opined neither party was taking state debt seriously.<sup>240</sup>

Both parties released policy costings two days out from the election, and both announced they would rely on drawing on the Victorian Future Fund—a \$10 billion contingency fund established by the Andrews government in the May 2022 budget.

Labor’s costings, verified by the Department of Treasury and Finance, totalled \$11.6 billion, of which more than \$5 billion worth of commitments had no specific time line over the next five years. Labor ruled out any new taxes to meet its commitments. Treasurer Tim Pallas said Labor would deliver a \$1 billion surplus in 2025–26 by drawing down \$2.6 billion over four years from the Future Fund.<sup>241</sup>

The Coalition’s election costings, verified by the PBO, came to about \$28 billion. Shadow Treasurer David Davis said the Coalition would deliver a \$2.1 billion surplus a year earlier by taking \$7.6 billion over four years from the Future Fund.<sup>242</sup> In addition to scrapping the Suburban Rail Loop project (saving a projected \$11 billion<sup>243</sup>), the Coalition also proposed privatising parts of the Victorian sewerage system in a 50-year lease, while another \$10.2 billion would be taken from the Future Fund to pay down debt. Other measures to address budgetary issues included establishing a Victorian productivity commission and legislating a ceiling on state borrowing.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> P. Commins (2022) ‘Victorian election ‘spendathon’ risks credit rating’, *The Australian*, 7 November; C. Le Grand and J. Gordon (2022) ‘Ratings agency warns reality bites’, *The Age*, 17 November 2022.

<sup>240</sup> D. Hayward (2022) ‘Hey big spenders: Tackling debt doesn’t seem to be either party’s priority’, *The Age*, 22 November.

<sup>241</sup> A. Ore (2022) ‘Victoria’s major parties look to contingency funds as part of election commitment costings’, *The Guardian*, November 24; R. Willingham (2022) Labor, Coalition promise billion-dollar surpluses in three years as pre-election costings revealed, *ABC News*, November 24;

<sup>242</sup> R. Eddie and J. Gordon (2022) ‘Libs to partially privatise the sewerage system and drain the Future Fund’, *The Age*, 24 November; R. Baxendale (2022) ‘Victorian election: Raid on future funds poll pledges’, *The Australian*, 24 November.

<sup>243</sup> P. Sakkal (2022) ‘Matthew Guy says Coalition will shelve “dreamt up” Suburban Rail Loop’, *The Age*, 17 August.

<sup>244</sup> M. Guy (2022) ‘Red tape slashed and fair go for struggling tradies under Victorian Liberals and Nationals’, media release, 5 May; ABC News (2022) ‘Victorian opposition pledges to legislate a cap for the state’s ‘spiralling’ debt as election promises mount’, *ABC Online*, 2 October.

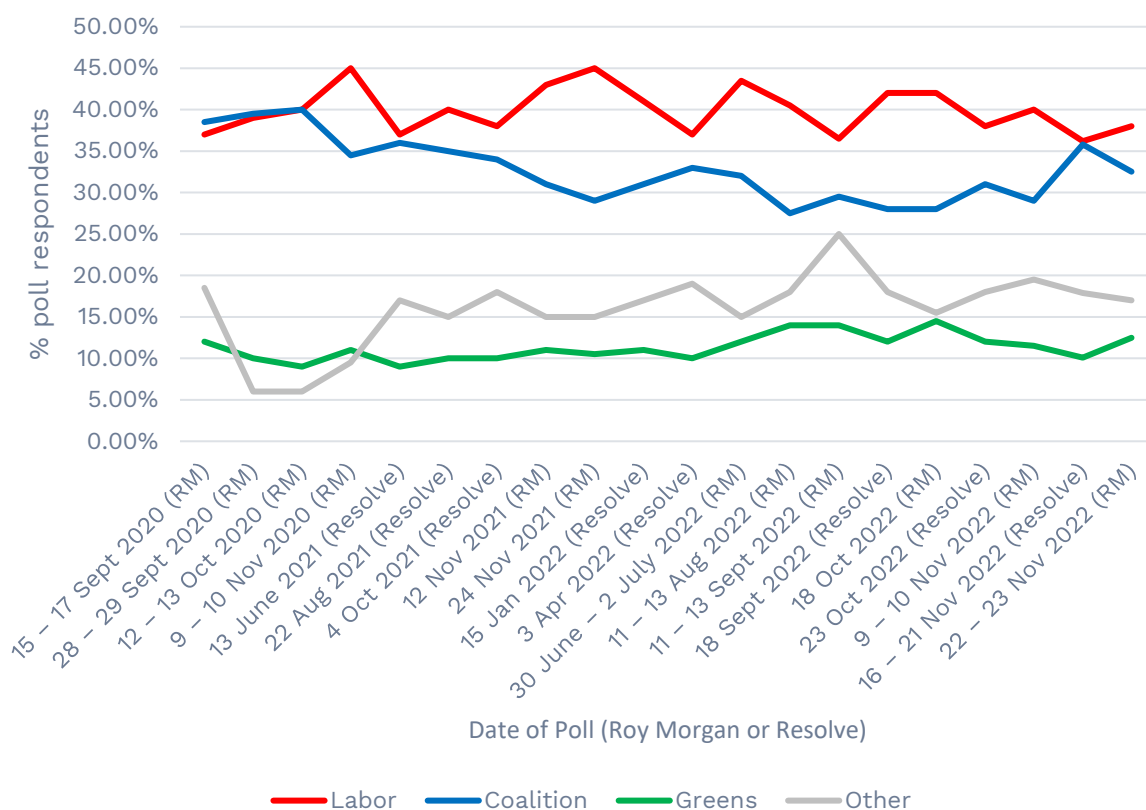
## 4 | Polling

Polling again provided a source of great speculation throughout the election campaign.

### Labor’s comfortable lead

After winning the 2018 election with 42.9 per cent of the primary vote and holding a two-party-preferred lead of 57.3–42.7 per cent, Labor maintained a lead over the Coalition in the polls for the next four years. Briefly in September 2020, following the hotel quarantine issues, Roy Morgan recorded Labor’s primary vote falling to 37 per cent and the Coalition’s combined primary vote creeping ahead to 38.5 per cent.<sup>245</sup> Roy Morgan maintained the two parties tied in the primary vote at 40 per cent each in November 2020, but thereafter Labor enjoyed a comfortable lead (Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1 - Roy Morgan and Resolve Strategic polls, Victoria primary vote, July 2020–Nov 2022**

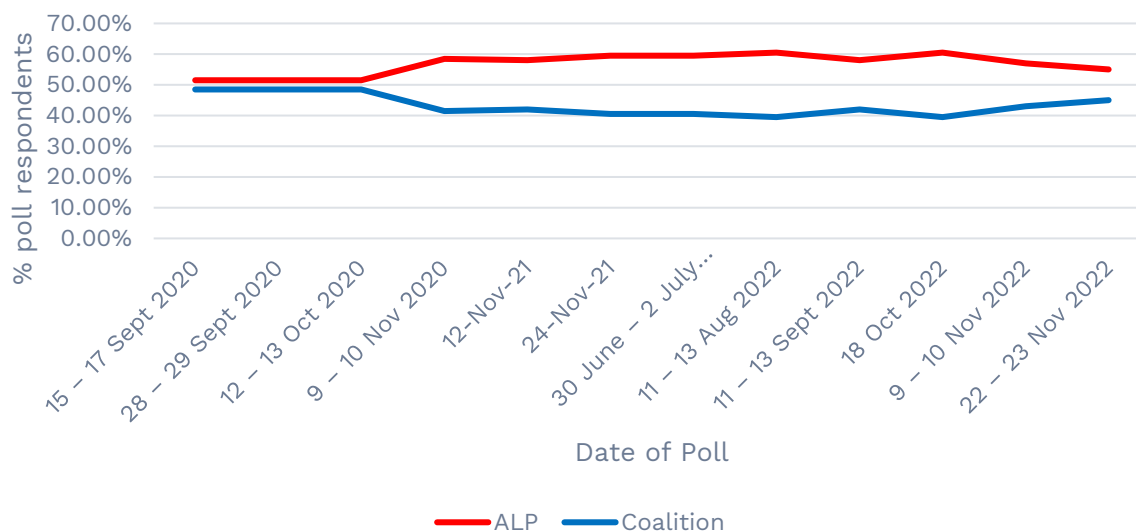


Source: Various releases, [www.roymorgan.com](http://www.roymorgan.com) and [www.resolvestrategic.com](http://www.resolvestrategic.com).

Labor maintained a slim 51.5–48.5 per cent two-party-preferred lead over the Coalition through mid-to-late 2020, down 5.8 per cent on its 2018 election result. Roy Morgan reported that by November 2020 Labor’s lead had recovered to 58.5–41.5, improving to a 60.5–39.5 lead in both August and October 2022 (see Figure 4.2).

<sup>245</sup> Roy Morgan (2020) *Victorian ALP Government support now 51.5% would win a close election with L-NP on 48.5%*, Finding No: 8521, media release, 18 September.

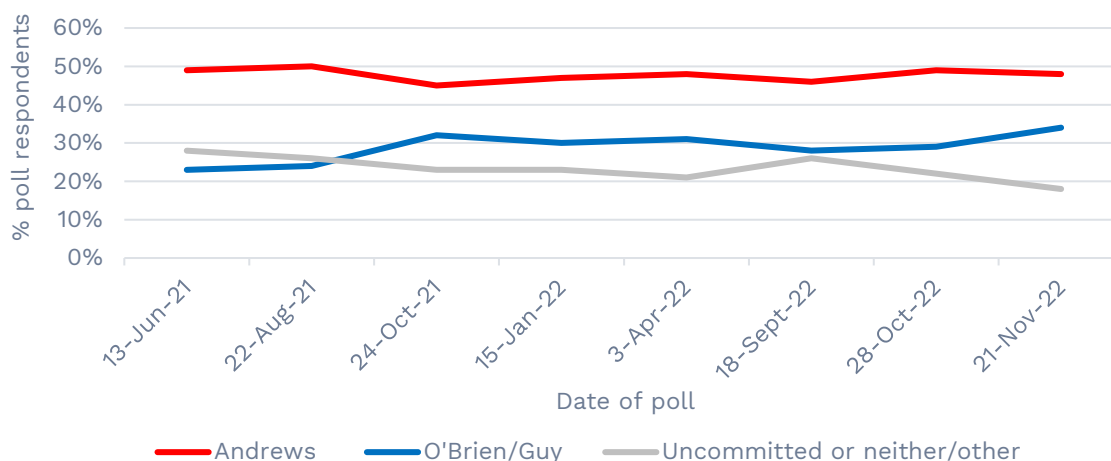
**Figure 4.2 - Roy Morgan two-party-preferred, July 2020–November 2022**



Source: Various releases, [www.roymorgan.com](http://www.roymorgan.com)

Similarly, Resolve Strategics’ preferred premier polls recorded Premier Andrews maintaining a comfortable lead over both Michael O’Brien and Matthew Guy. Guy did record a significant uptick when elected Leader of the Opposition in September 2021 (see the 13 October 2021 poll in Figure 4.3), improving from O’Brien’s last result of 24 per cent to a 32 per cent approval rating. Andrews pulled away again throughout 2022. While Guy enjoyed a boost as the number of undecided voters declined on election eve, two days before the poll Roy Morgan recorded a 57.5 per cent approval rating for Andrews and a 65–35 per cent lead over Guy on the question of who would make the better premier.<sup>246</sup> Newspoll recorded a narrower margin on election eve, Andrews at 51 per cent to Guy’s 35 per cent.<sup>247</sup>

**Figure 4.3 - Resolve Strategic preferred premier, June 2021–November 2022\***



\*Matthew Guy replaced Michael O’Brien as Leader of the Opposition on 7 September 2021.

Source: Various releases, [www.resolvestrategic.com](http://www.resolvestrategic.com)

<sup>246</sup> Roy Morgan (2022) *ALP Government of Daniel Andrews set to win with a reduced majority as support for L-NP grows—but will the trend continue?*, Finding: 9128, media release, 23 November.

<sup>247</sup> D. Wu (2022) ‘Final Newspoll before Victorian election shows Daniel Andrews is tipped to secure slim majority and win third term’, *Sky News Australia*, 26 November.



## Possible hung parliament?

From late October, pollsters began predicting a close election. While a Resolve Strategic poll on 23 October had Labor well ahead with 38 per cent of the primary vote to the Coalition's 31 per cent, soon after a RedBridge poll (compiled from 31 October to 6 November) had the two major parties neck-and-neck at 38 per cent of the primary vote each. Newspoll (31 October–3 November) indicated they were at 37 per cent each. Both RedBridge and Newspoll reported less enthusiasm for the independent candidates (11 per cent and 13 per cent respectively) than Resolve (around 17–18 per cent throughout 2021 and 2022).

Despite the clear two-party-preferred division, commentators pounced on these narrowing margins to predict a close-run election. Publishing the RedBridge poll (completed 6 November) on 14 November, the *Herald Sun* said the election was on a 'knife's edge with Victoria facing the prospect of a hung Parliament'.<sup>248</sup> Ten days later, the newspaper reported the state was 'on course for a minority government', predicting Labor would lose 'a dozen seats'.<sup>249</sup> Similarly, after its 21 November poll, Resolve Strategic had Labor at risk of losing between eight and 12 seats, while politics professor Paul Strangio told *The Age*, which commissioned the Resolve poll, a hung parliament was possible.<sup>250</sup> Former federal Labor Treasurer Wayne Swan told the *AFR* the election would be 'desperately close'.<sup>251</sup>

**Figure 4.4 - Polling results—from one month before the election on<sup>252</sup>**

Date of poll	Polling company	Primary Vote					Two-Party	
		ALP	LIB	NAT	GRN	OTH	ALP	L/NP
18 Oct 2022	Roy Morgan	42.0%	28.0%		14.5%	15.5%	60.5%	39.5%
23 Oct 2022	Resolve	38.0%	31.0%		12.0%	18.0%	-	-
31 Oct–3 Nov 2022	Newspoll	37.0%	37.0%		13.0%	13.0%	54.0%	46.0%
31 Oct–6 Nov 2022	RedBridge	38.0%	38.0%		14.0%	11.0%	53.5%	46.5%
9–10 Nov 2022	Roy Morgan	40.0%	29.0%		11.5%	19.5%	57.0%	43.0%
16–21 Nov 2022	Resolve	36.2%	35.8%		10.1%	17.9%	52.7%	47.3%
22–23 Nov 2022	Roy Morgan	38.0%	32.5%		12.5%	17.0%	55.0%	45.0%
21–24 Nov 2022	Newspoll	38.0%	35.0%		12.0%	15.0%	54.5%	45.5%

<sup>248</sup> S. Deery (2022) 'Health kick', *Herald Sun*, 14 November.

<sup>249</sup> S. Deery (2022) 'Labor on track to lose up to a dozen seats in Victorian election', *Herald Sun*, 24 November.

<sup>250</sup> A. Smethurst and P. Sakkal (2022) 'Labor, Coalition neck-and-neck, as gap narrows between Andrews and Guy', *The Age*, 22 November.

<sup>251</sup> P. Durkin and G. McCubbing (2022) 'Andrews backlash makes Victoria poll 'desperately close'', *AFR*, 25 November.

<sup>252</sup> Roy Morgan (2022), "ALP increases its large election-winning lead over the Liberal-National Coalition in Victoria", Press release, 18 October; A. Smethurst (2022). "Voters turn on major parties, but Labor retains election-winning lead", *The Age*, 28 October; R. Baxendale (2022). "Newspoll: Daniel Andrews faces battle to hold on to majority power in Victoria", *The Australian*, 4 November; S. Deery and M. Clarke (2022) "Labor tipped to edge election win but in danger of minority government, polling shows", *Herald Sun*, 14 November; Roy Morgan (2022), "ALP lead over Coalition in Victoria narrows since October and is back to 2018 Election result as minor parties surge", Press release, 11 November; A. Smethurst (2022). "Labor, Coalition neck-and-neck, as gap narrows between Andrews and Guy", *The Age*, 22 November; Roy Morgan, (2022) "ALP Government of Daniel Andrews set to win with a reduced majority as support for L-NP grows – but will the trend continue?", Press release, 23 November; R. Baxendale (2022). "Victorian election: Despite a swing, Newspoll puts Daniel Andrews on track to win", *The Australian*, 25 November.

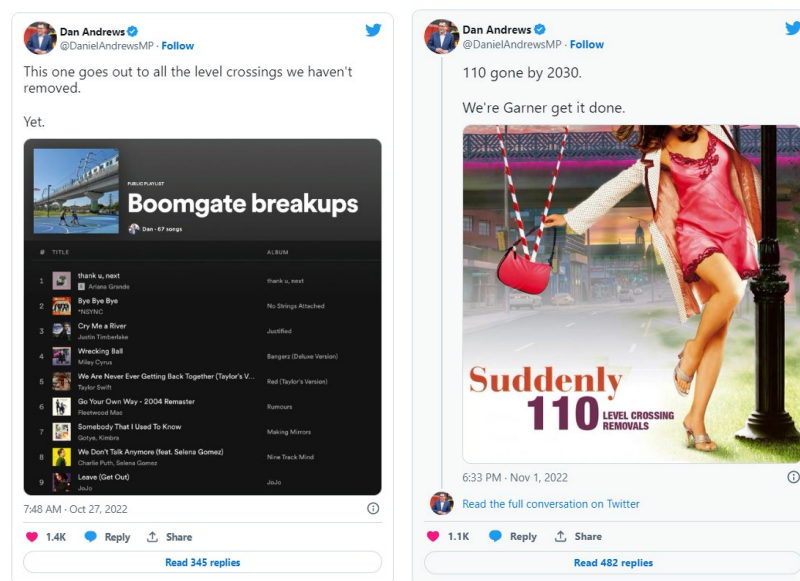
## 5 | Social media advertising

In September 2021, the Parliament’s Electoral Matters Committee published a report, *Inquiry into the impact of social media on Victorian elections and Victoria’s electoral administration*, reflecting the migration of election campaigning from traditional to digital media platforms.<sup>253</sup> It was the second time the committee had reported on the matter, following a 2014 inquiry on similar issues. This trend continued in the 2022 Victorian state election.

Labor’s social media presence was especially noted by commentators. *News.com.au* found Daniel Andrews’s 1 million Facebook followers was 26 times more than NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet’s following and 14 times more than Matthew Guy. Andrews also boasted 429,000 Twitter followers (Perrottet 44,000; Guy 30,000), 221,000 Instagram followers and 108,000 TikTok followers.<sup>254</sup>

*News.com.au* noted the use of ‘clever or cringe’ social media posts—mock Wikipedia pages, movie poster memes, Spotify playlists—used during the election campaign. Earlier in the year, Jon Faine described Andrews as ‘the most prolific and consistent user of social media in Australian politics with a sizeable team devoted to creating fresh content throughout the day as well as monitoring public reactions’. Faine observed that while the Prime Minister’s Twitter base may have been bigger, his account was not as active as Andrews’s.<sup>255</sup>

**Figure 5.1 - Examples of Daniel Andrews’s Twitter account**



Source: Chantelle Francis (2022) ‘Victorian election: Daniel Andrews’ carefully curated ‘dorky’ online persona’, *News.com.au*, 14 November.

## Measuring advertising spending

Meta (which owns Facebook and Instagram) and Google both have registers that record advertisements placed on their platforms for political purposes. These datasets offer varying degrees of detail but generally specify the amount of money spent on advertising by each political party, the number of advertisements served and the demographics these

<sup>253</sup> Electoral Matters Committee (2021), *Inquiry into the impact of social media on Victorian elections and Victoria’s electoral administration*, final report, Melbourne, The Committee, September.

<sup>254</sup> C. Francis (2022) ‘Victorian election: Daniel Andrews’ carefully curated ‘dorky’ online persona’, *News.com.au*, 14 November. See also: S. Elsworth (2022) ‘Daniel Andrews has amassed more than 1.77 million social media followers, 14 times that of Matthew Guy’, *The Age*, 4 September.

<sup>255</sup> J. Faine (2022) ‘In bypassing the media, Daniel Andrews controls the message’, *The Age*, 3 July.

advertisements were targeting. The following data and analysis have been compiled by the Parliamentary Library and Information Service.

## Facebook and Instagram

Across Facebook and Instagram, Labor's advertising budget considerably surpassed the Coalition. The Victorian Labor Facebook and Instagram accounts ran 9,003 advertisements from September with a minimum combined budget of \$1.36 million. The Daniel Andrews Facebook and Instagram accounts spent a minimum of \$198,500 across 595 individual advertisements. In addition, Labor ran an advertisement campaign branding Matthew Guy as 'The Liberal cuts guy'. The campaign included more than 2,500 advertisements and a minimum spend of \$146,900.

The Liberal Victoria Facebook and Instagram accounts spent a minimum of \$510,900 across 1,066 advertisements. Matthew Guy spent at least \$285,800 on 844 advertisements across Facebook and Instagram. The Victorian Greens, the Animal Justice Party and Fiona Patten were also some of the biggest spenders, with budgets all above \$100,000.

**Table 5.2 - Top 15 keywords used in Facebook and Instagram advertisements\***

	Victorian Labor	Dan Andrews	Liberal Victoria	Matt Guy	Victorian Greens	Samantha Ratnam – Leader of the Victorian Greens	The Nationals for Regional Victoria
1	build	year	#realsolutions 4allvictorians	Victorians	climate	Northern	Andrews
2	new	build	Andrews	#realsolutions 4allvictorians	affordable	Metro	let
3	Rail	big	vote	health	crisis	rent	Vote
4	job	mean	Labor	system	housing	live	away
5	Matthew	Victorians	Daniel	healthcare	governme nt	push	Daniel
6	Guy	new	energy	billion	push	region	Ali
7	free	Royal	let	Andrews	tackle	affordable	Copper
8	election	state	away	elect	vote	local	wake
9	TAFE	right	plan	family	gas	Samantha	hangover
10	Liberals	kid	cost	Government	coal	housing	vote
11	school	Victoria	Victorians	line	renewable	strong	Labor
12	cut	get	Vote	want	replace	Melbourne	create
13	want	power	putlaborlast	Hill	green	north	health
14	make	good	real	Labor	end	place	crisis
15	upgrade	Melbourne	solution	rail	control	new	third

\* This table excludes the respective political party each Facebook/Instagram account belongs to.

## Themes and keywords

'Build', 'rail', 'job', 'free' and 'TAFE' ranked highly among the keywords used in Labor's advertisements. 'Matthew Guy' was also mentioned in more than 1,800 Labor ads. The Liberals focused on references to Daniel Andrews. Their hashtag '#realsolutions4allvictorians' was the most used term, followed by 'Andrews', 'vote', 'Labor' and 'Daniel'.

'Climate' was the most used keyword in Greens advertising, followed by 'affordable', 'crisis' and 'housing'. The Nationals followed a similar strategy to the Liberals, although they ran far fewer ads than other major parties. Notably, references to independent Mildura MP Ali Cupper were regularly included in its advertising, pointing out her voting record in Parliament and former affiliation with Labor (see Table 5.2).

## Google and YouTube

More than 1,800 text, image and video advertisements were collected from Google's advertising network, including YouTube, totalling \$977,500 across all parties, candidates and other entities. Similar to its activity on Facebook and Instagram, Labor outspent the Liberal Party on Google's network with expenses of \$489,600 recorded between October and November.

Candidates such as the Liberal Party's Hawthorn candidate John Pesutto and organisations such as the Victorian Trades Hall Council and Climate 200, as well as political parties, were listed as advertisers on Google's register.

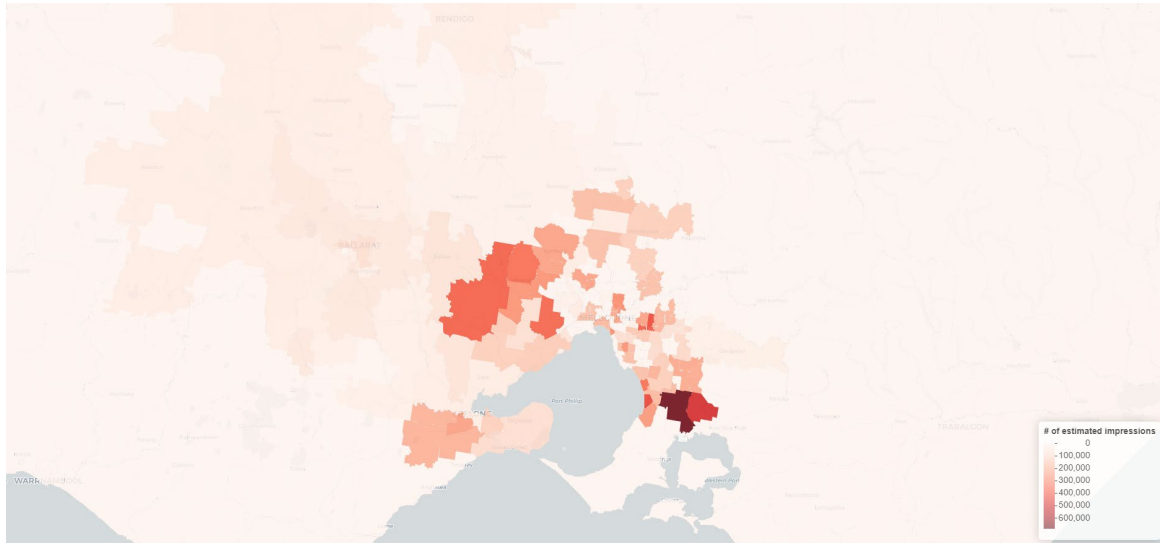
While Labor ran the most advertisements and spent the most of any party, they were often not the most effective or most viewed advertisements. Each Labor advertisement earned a mean minimum of 16,250 'impressions', fewer than the Liberal Party's 213,000 minimum impressions. The most viewed advertisement was placed by Kew Independents candidate Sophie Torney, recording between 3 million and 3.5 million impressions. Advertisements placed through Google were served for a mean average of 18.3 days.

## Postcode vs impressions

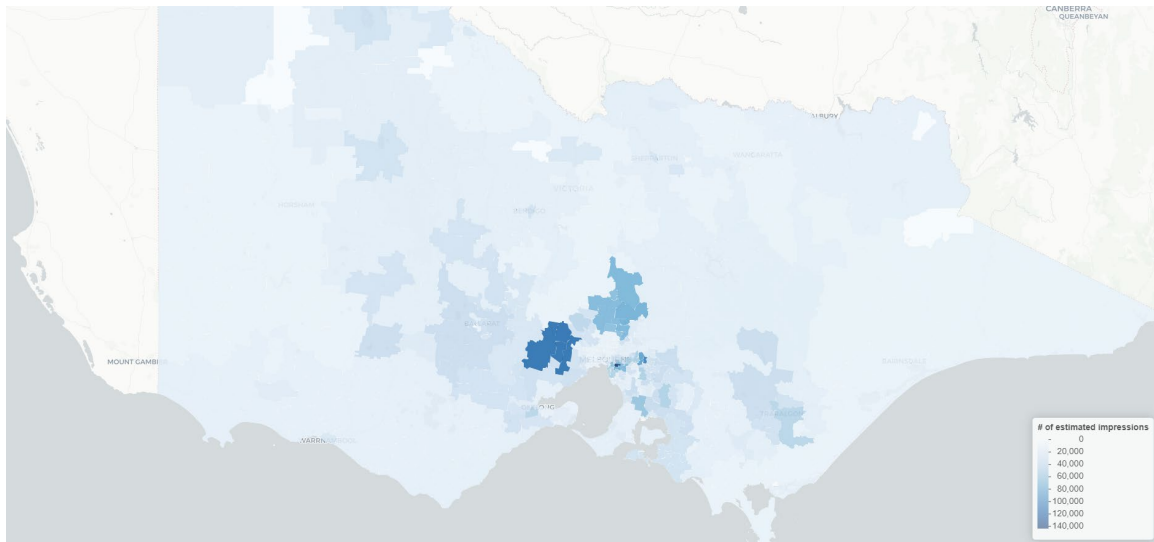
Google provides details on which postcodes were targeted for each advertisement placed, as well as a minimum and maximum range of impressions that were served. By averaging out the maximum number of impressions per advertisement between each targeted postcode, it becomes clearer which areas were targeted by which party. There is also an assumed correlation between the number of impressions served and the amount of money spent, but exact details are unavailable.

Heatmaps of the number of impressions in each postcode help interpret the districts each political party was targeting in the campaign. The Greens focused most of their efforts in inner Melbourne (Coburg, Northcote, Brunswick, Carlton), with additional impressions being served in the inner south and outer west. The major parties targeted areas outside the metropolitan area. For Labor, postcodes in Cranbourne, Bacchus Marsh, Melton, Tarneit, Truganina, Blackburn and Seaford accounted for a high proportion of their advertisement impressions. The Liberals targeted Croydon, Bayswater, Glen Iris, Melton, Bacchus Marsh, Whittlesea, Kilsyth, Caulfield, Wyndham Vale, Cranbourne and Traralgon.

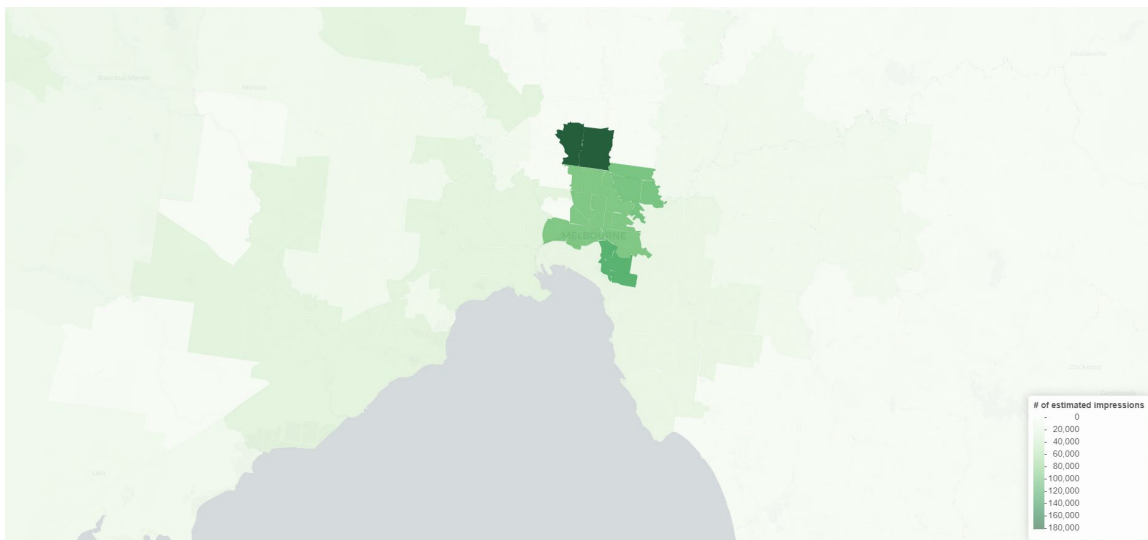
**Figure 5.3 - Intensity of Google advertising per postcode, per major party**



*Labor*



*Liberal*



*Greens*

**Click the above images for interactive maps.**

## 6 | Results

The following maps and data have been generated by the Parliamentary Library and Information Service using information provided by the Victorian Electoral Commission.

### Voter turnout

There was a notable fall in voter turnout, with 87.13 per cent of potential electors casting votes in the Legislative Assembly (down from 90.16 per cent in 2018) and 88.23 per cent in the Legislative Council (90.14 per cent in 2018). Both houses recorded a voter turnout of 93 per cent in the 2014 election.

The average informal vote was the equivalent of 5.5 per cent of valid votes across all seats, with a maximum rate of 10.63 per cent (Broadmeadows) and the lowest 2.46 per cent (Hawthorn). Informal voting was down from 5.83 per cent in 2018.

The trend towards early voting continued with 49.5 per cent of electors casting their ballot before polling day. Another 10.6 per cent lodged postal votes. These contingents increased from 36.75 per cent and 7.56 per cent respectively in 2018.

### Legislative Assembly

Labor won government, winning 56 seats of the 87 Legislative Assembly seats contested in November. Against predictions of losing seats, Labor increased its majority in the Assembly by one seat from the 2018 result. Following the sudden death of Nationals candidate, Shaun Gilchrist, the vote for Narracan was postponed until 28 January 2023. At the supplementary election for the district, the Liberals held the seat. As a result, the Coalition experienced a net gain of one, obtaining 28 seats, although considerable differences exist between the results of the Liberal and National parties. The Nationals picked up three additional seats (previously held by independents), finishing with nine Members in the lower house. The Liberals, by contrast, in addition to two of their seats being abolished (Ferntree Gully and Forest Hill), lost three seats (to Labor) and won two (both from Labor), resulting in a decline from 21 to 19 seats. The Greens retained their three districts and obtained one additional seat, Richmond (from Labor), taking their total in the Legislative Assembly to four.

For the first time since 2010 and only the second time since 1992, no independent won a seat in the Victorian Legislative Assembly. The two contesting incumbents, Suzanna Sheed (Shepparton) and Ali Cupper (Mildura), lost to Nationals candidates, while the Nationals won the seat of Morwell, vacated by retiring independent Russell Northe.

Table 6.1 summarises the overall party results, while Maps 6.1 and 6.2 display the seats held by each party in 2022.

**Table 6.1 - Legislative Assembly—overall party results**

Party	First-pref. votes counted	% First-pref. votes counted <sup>^</sup>	Seats won	Seats in 2018
Labor	1,339,496	37.0%	56	55
Liberal	1,070,672	29.6%	18*	21
Australian Greens	416,069	11.5%	4	3
Other Candidates	196,796	5.4%	0	3
The Nationals	172,687	4.8%	9	6

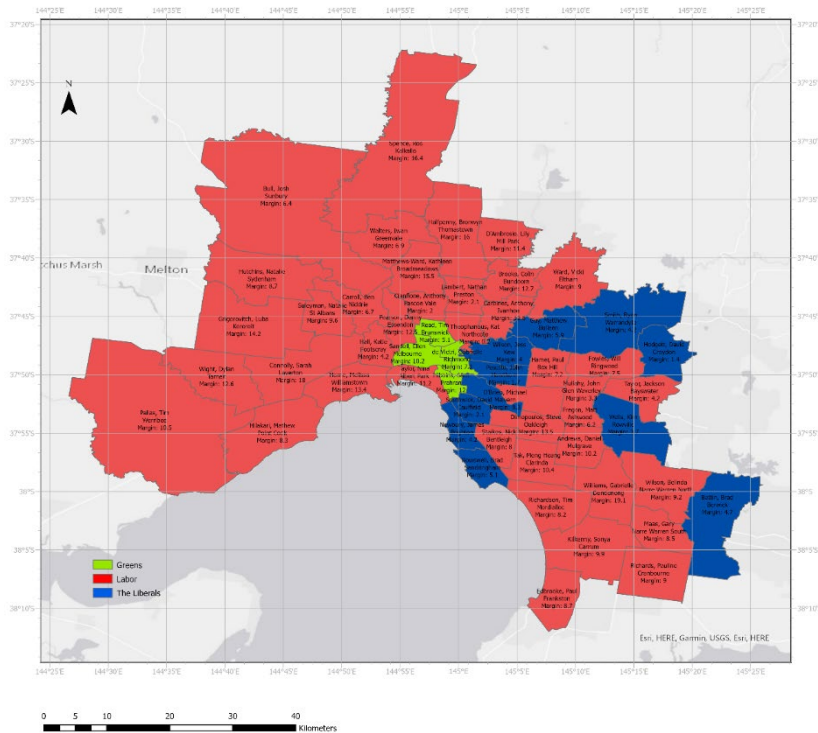


Family First Victoria	110,389	3.1%	0	0
Animal Justice Party	90,797	2.5%	0	0
Freedom Party of Victoria	61,812	1.7%	0	0
Victorian Socialists	48,865	1.4%	0	0
Democratic Labour Party	42,385	1.2%	0	0
Liberal Democrats	12,791	0.4%	0	0
Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	11,588	0.3%	0	0
Fiona Patten's Reason Party	10,907	0.3%	0	0
Derryn Hinch's Justice Party	7,927	0.2%	0	0
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	8,077	0.2%	0	0
Legalise Cannabis Victoria	5,838	0.2%	0	0
New Democrats	4,874	0.1%	0	0
Angry Victorians Party	3,037	0.1%	0	0
Health Australia Party	862	0.0%	0	0
Transport Matters Party	605	0.0%	0	0
Companions and Pets Party	526	0.0%	0	0

^ All percentages calculated based on total valid votes.

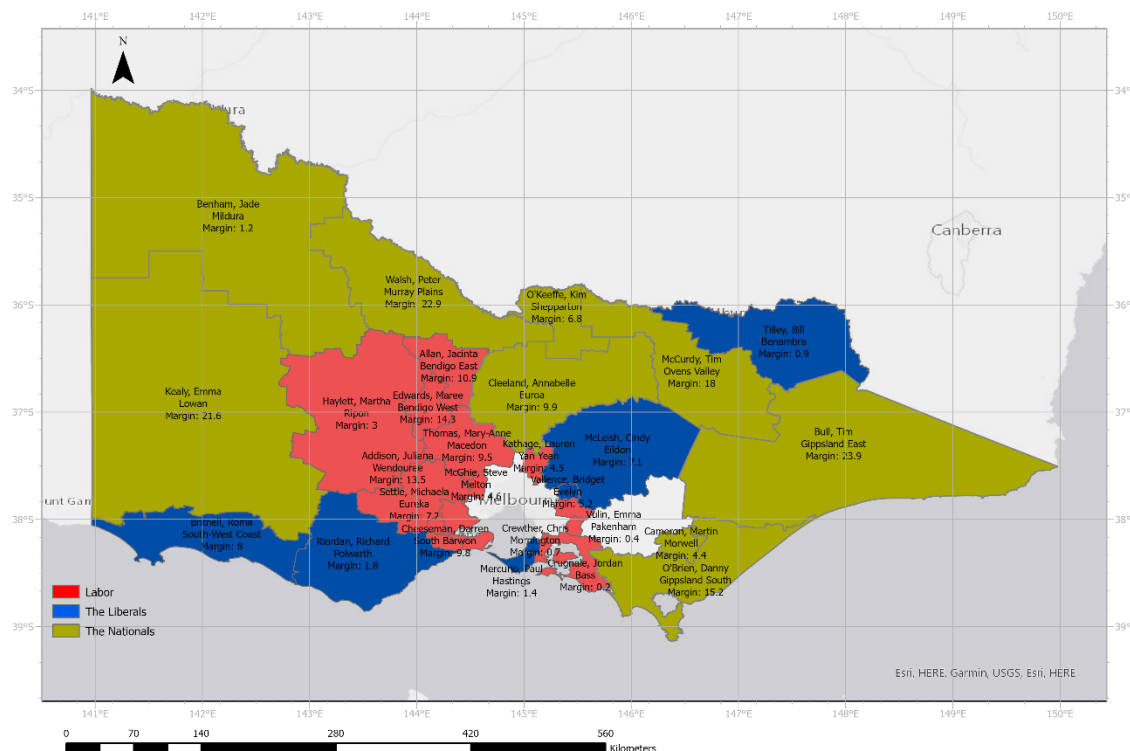
\* 19 seats after the Liberals won Narracan.

### Map 6.1 - Legislative Assembly—2022 metropolitan results and margins



[Click here](#) for interactive 2022 metropolitan results and [here](#) for 2018 metropolitan results.

**Map 6.2 - Legislative Assembly—2022 regional district results and margins**



\*Narracan not depicted due to failed election.

[Click here for interactive 2022 regional results](#) and [here for 2018 regional results](#).

### Main trends

The most notable trend in Legislative Assembly voting was a significant decline in the major parties' primary vote. The number of districts where preferences influenced the outcome increased from 47 seats in 2018 to 81 seats in 2022. In other words, the major parties only obtained a majority of primary votes in six of the contested 87 districts. Nevertheless, Labor achieved 55 per cent of the two-party-preferred vote (down from 57.3 per cent in 2018) and the Coalition 45 per cent (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2 - Two-party-preferred vote, 2022\***

Labor votes	Labor %	Coalition votes	Coalition %	Total formal votes
1,991,168	55.00%	1,629,464	45.00%	3,620,632

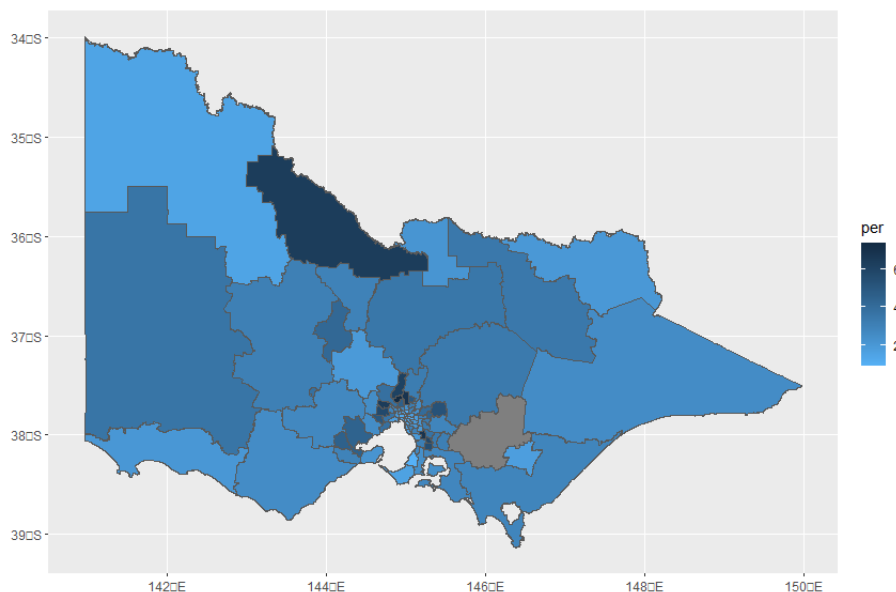
Source: VEC (2022).

\*Figures do not include results from Narracan supplementary election in January 2023.

Labor received 37 per cent of first-preference votes (down from 42.9 per cent in 2018). The Coalition obtained 34.4 per cent of first-preference votes, with a combined total of 1,243,359 votes. The Greens received 11.5 per cent of first-preference votes (416,069). Family First Victoria, the Animal Justice Party, the Freedom Party of Victoria, Victorian Socialists and the Democratic Labour Party all received more than 1 per cent of first-preference votes (see Table 6.1). 'Other candidates', including all non-aligned independents, obtained 5.4 per cent of votes (compared to 6.07 per cent in 2018). The overall percentage result for candidates not from Labor and the Coalition increased considerably from 21.3 per cent to 28.1 per cent. The most surprising result was for Family First. Registering with the VEC quite close to the deadline, the party's 3.1 per cent overall vote was the highest among the minor

parties. Its largest vote tallies (above 6 per cent) occurred in Greenvale, Dandenong, Thomastown, Sydenham, Murray Plains and Kalkallo districts. See Map 6.3.

### Map 6.3 - Family First Victoria primary vote in Assembly Districts



[Click here for booth-level two-party-preferred data in metropolitan seats](#) and [here, here and here for non-metropolitan seats](#).

### *Impacts of 2021 redistribution*

The Liberals were most adversely impacted by the 2021 redistribution. The Liberals lost Hastings and Ripon outright, with the latter already tipped to fall to Labor after the 2021 boundary redistribution. Meanwhile, Liberal incumbents Neil Angus and Nick Wakeling, whose seats—Forest Hill and Ferntree Gully, respectively—were abolished in the redistribution, were unable to win new seats. Angus contested new seat Glen Waverley, which in effect replaced Forest Hill, only to lose to Labor candidate John Mullahy, suffering an 8 per cent swing against his previous result in Forest Hill. Wakeling contested and lost the seat of Bayswater, which was held by incumbent Jackson Taylor. Of the nine reconstituted seats Labor won eight, having only held six of those seats that were abolished.

### *Labor*

Despite a significant fall in Labor's primary vote (almost 6 per cent) and a decline in the two-candidate-preferred vote (2CP) (2.1 per cent), Labor managed to increase its representation by one seat. Two trends were evident.

First, Labor predominated within seats it already held. There was little change across the seats in the western, northern and south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, the Geelong region and the state's inner-western regional electorates. There were two-party-preferred swings away from Labor to the Liberals in Nepean (7.6 per cent swing) and Hawthorn (2.1 per cent swing)—both of which Labor won in the 2018 election but have been safe Liberal seats for most of their history. Nepean's boundaries also changed significantly, losing a large area around Balnarring in the redistribution.

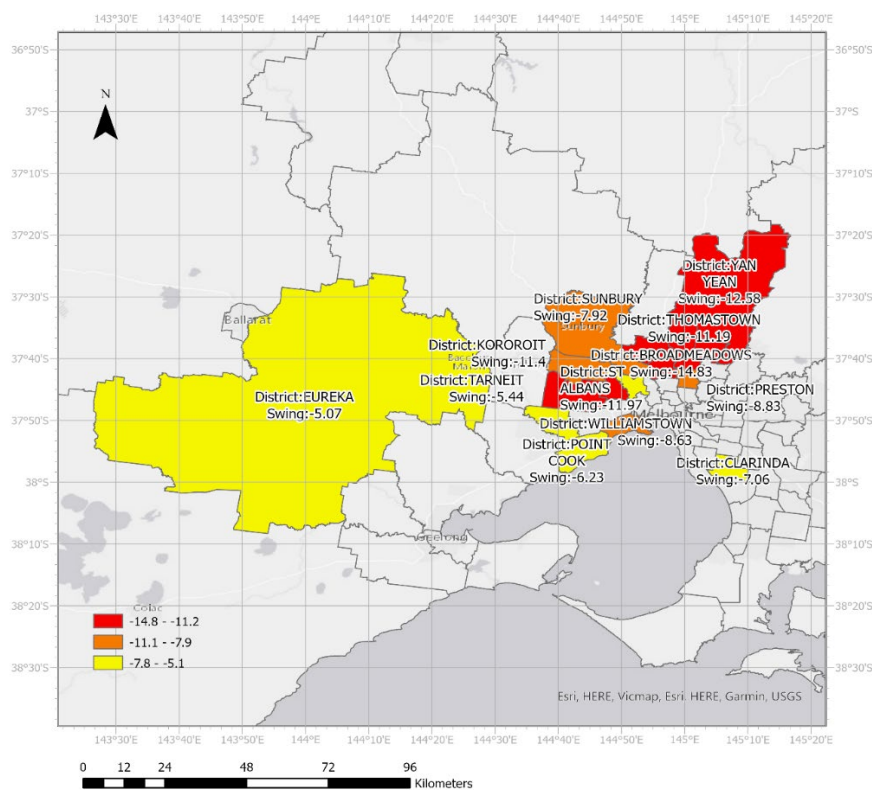
Labor lost the district of Richmond to the Greens. The Liberals did not run a candidate in Richmond in 2018 but did in 2022. This decision corresponded with a significant fall in Labor's primary vote from 44.4 per cent in 2018 to 31.8 per cent. The Liberal Party's preferencing of the Greens above Labor delivered a notional two-party-preferred swing of 12.78 per cent to Greens candidate Gabrielle de Vietri.

Second, Labor withstood considerable swings against it for both primary and two-party-preferred votes in seats where the party already had very high support in northern and western Melbourne, spanning an arc from Yan Yean to Eureka. Again, changes to electoral boundaries played a role. The average two-party-preferred swing across all seats was 3.8 per cent against Labor, with the most prominent swing away from Labor being 14.8 per cent in Broadmeadows. Clarinda in the south-east also experienced a swing against Labor of 7 per cent (see Map 6.4). The swing was even more pronounced in the primary vote with the average of 6 per cent swing away from Labor, the largest occurring in Broadmeadows (-22.8 per cent). Labor experienced a swing against of greater than 5 per cent in 45 seats.

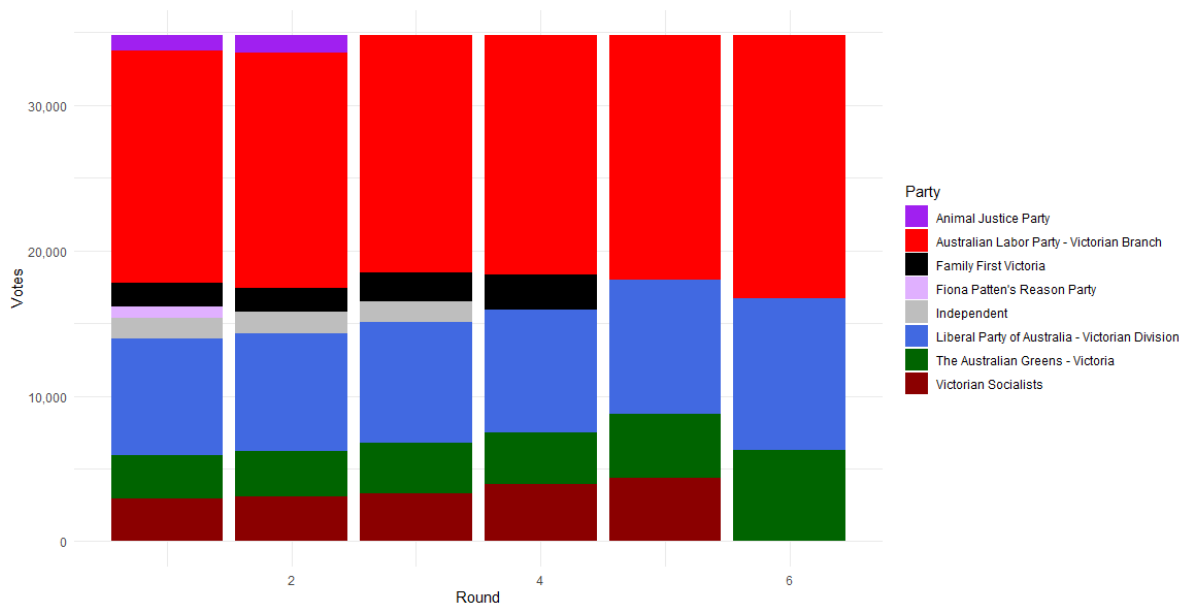
## Broadmeadows

In Broadmeadows, the swing to the Liberals was 6.8 per cent, and Family First picked up 4.6 per cent of the primary vote. Figure 6.1 demonstrates the preference flow across six rounds of counting. At the first round of voting, the minor candidates comprised just under 18 per cent support, plus another 8.4 per cent for the Greens. Most of these candidates' preferences flowed to each other until round 4. In Round 5, Family First's progressive tally of 7 per cent was dispersed across a range of remaining candidates, with the Liberals and the Greens receiving the most significant shares of 2.4 per cent and 2.55 per cent, respectively. Labor finally ended up with a majority of 51.9 per cent at round 6. Most of the Greens' 18.1 per cent then flowed to Labor, giving them a two-party-preferred result of 65.5 per cent, and the Liberals 34.5 per cent. While this was a big swing compared to Labor's 2018 result of 80.25 per cent, it was not enough to challenge the party's hold over the seat.

**Map 6.4 - Swings away from Labor in seats it held (two-party-preferred)**



**Figure 6.1 - Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Broadmeadows**

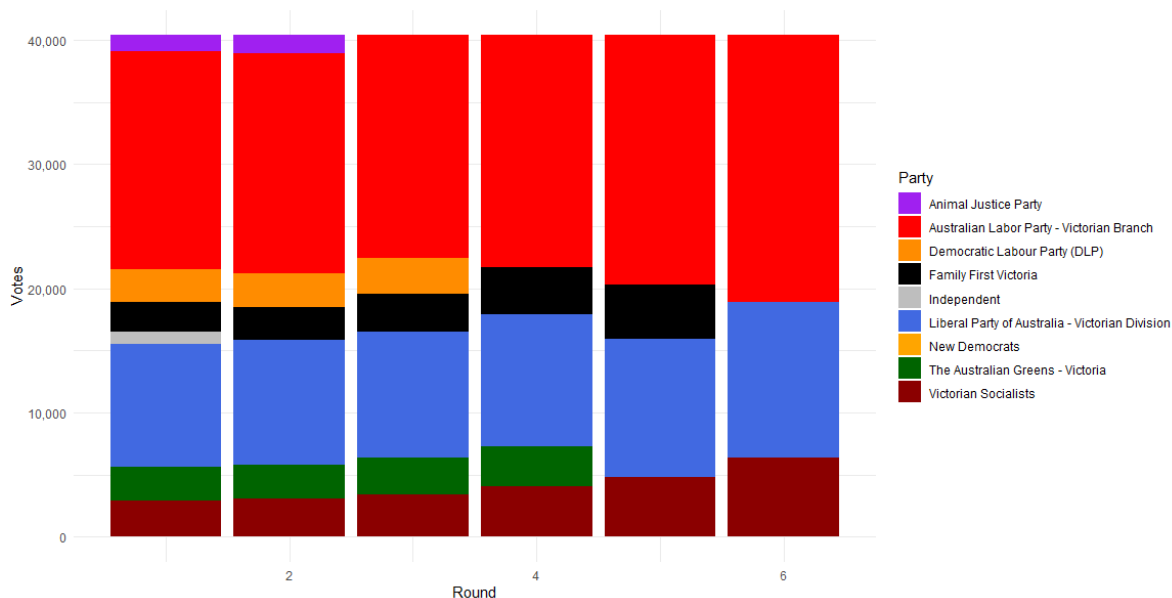


Source: VEC (2022).

## Kororoit

The situation was similar in Kororoit, with a 23 per cent swing away from Labor in the primary vote (Figure 6.2). Many candidates' initial preferences showed little discernible support pattern for either Labor or the Liberals up to round 4. After Family First's cumulative 10.7 per cent support flowed to the Liberals, the Greens and, finally, the Victorian Socialists, 16 per cent went to Labor in round 6.

**Figure 6.2 - Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Kororoit**



Source: VEC (2022).

## Liberal

As with Labor, the locations of the seats the Liberals won changed little from 2018. While winning back two traditionally safe seats in Hawthorn and Nepean, these gains were offset by losses in Ripon, Hastings and a new seat which was notionally Liberal, Glen Waverley. Moreover, with Liberal safe seat Ferntree Gully abolished in the redistribution, 16-year incumbent Nick Wakeling contested the existing seat of Bayswater, losing to Labor incumbent Jackson Taylor. Hastings, which had been held by retiring Liberal Neale Burgess for 16 years since 2006, was won by Labor candidate Paul Mercurio.

The Liberal Party primary vote fell slightly from 30.43 per cent to 29.6 per cent. There was an average 1.44 per cent swing against the party in the 18 seats it won in 2022. Negative swings in Kew, Croydon and Mornington offset the more significant positive swings in South-West Coast (10.5 per cent), Benambra (5 per cent) and Nepean (4.27 per cent).

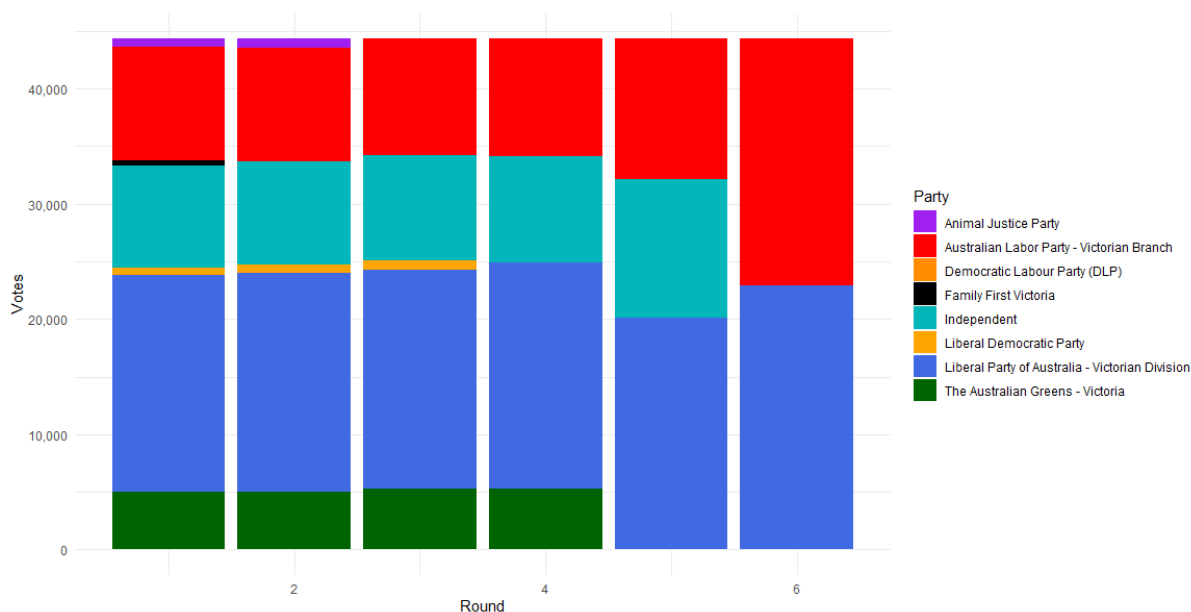
The Liberal Party performance in the two-party-preferred vote was slightly better, with the party attracting an average swing of 2 per cent across the 18 seats it won. Nepean featured the most significant two-party-preferred swing to the Liberals of 5.8 per cent. There was also a 3.6 per cent swing against the Liberals in Polwarth. The 1.4 per cent swing to the Liberals in Hawthorn was enough to unseat Labor.

Assessing the seats lost by the Liberals is more complicated due to redistributions. Glen Waverley had a notional two-party-preferred swing of 4.5 per cent against the Liberals compared to the 2018 result for Forest Hill (the most comparable electorate from the old 2013 boundaries), and Pakenham’s swing was 0.4 per cent away from the Liberals compared to the 2018 result in Gembrook. Ripon and Hastings, which saw major boundary reallocations, notionally swung 2.5 per cent and 3 per cent against the Liberals respectively.

## Hawthorn

Hawthorn was the only seat where the anticipated surge in support for independent candidates posed a serious challenge to the Liberals (Figure 6.3). Despite robust challenges from independents in other seats (Benambra, South-West Coast, Mornington and Kew), they failed to dislodge the Liberal Party’s hold on them.

**Figure 6.3 - Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Hawthorn**



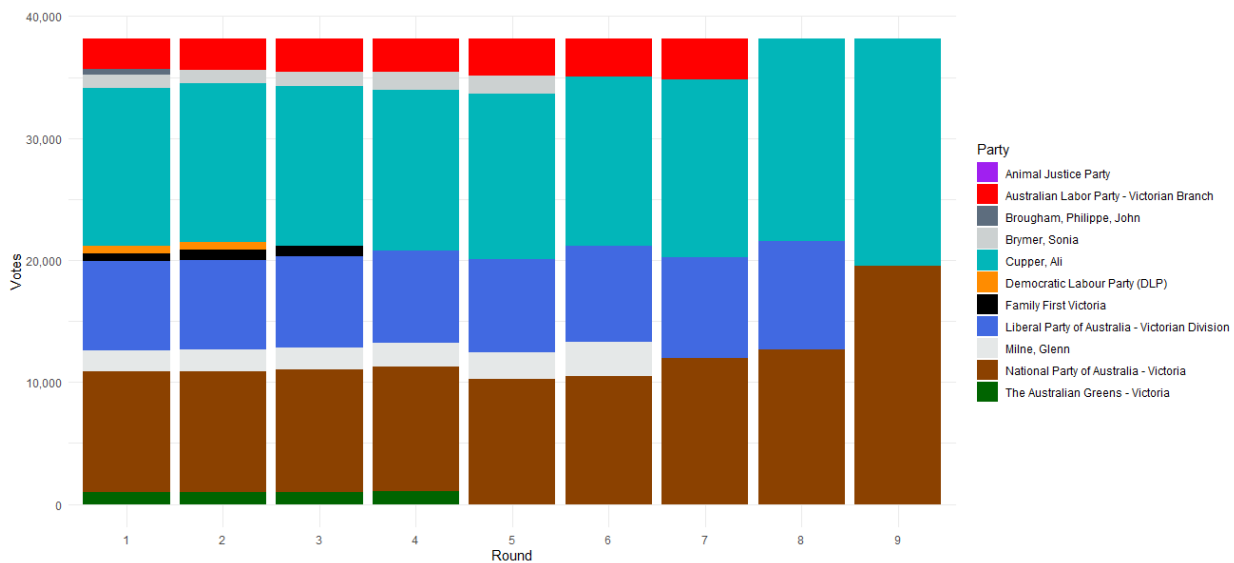
Source: VEC (2022).



## Nationals

A larger share of the Coalition’s gains went to the Nationals, with the party picking up three seats previously held by independents—Mildura, Morwell and Shepparton. The Nationals’ primary vote share was essentially unchanged at 4.8 per cent. The party maintained substantial support in the regional areas of the state it has traditionally championed. The two-party-preferred vote in the six seats the party already held remained much the same as in 2018. The party attracted a modest overall swing of 0.51 per cent, with more extensive swings in Euroa (–5.5 per cent) and Gippsland East (6.3 per cent). However, the more significant swings occurred in the seats newly won by the Nationals in 2022. Their primary votes increased in Shepparton (19 per cent) and Morwell (12.2 per cent) while falling by 13.5 per cent in Mildura.

**Figure 6.4 - Preference distribution across nine rounds of vote counts, Mildura**



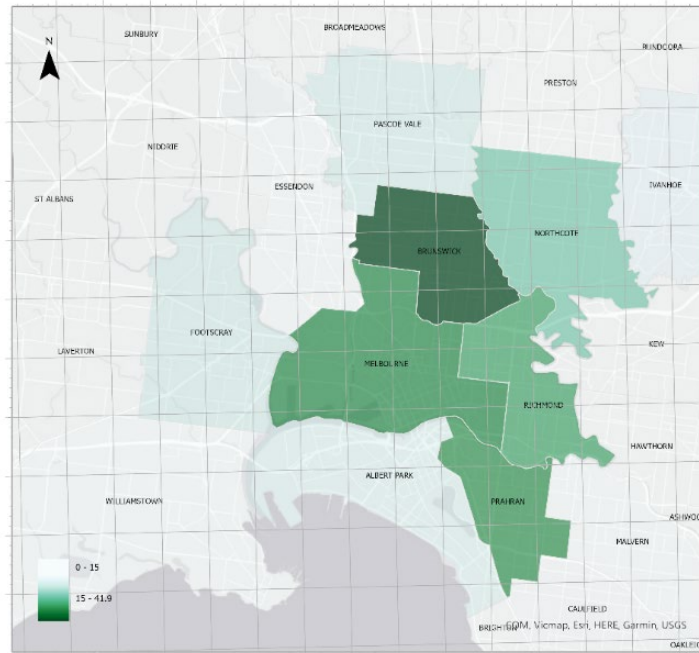
Source: VEC (2022).

## Greens

The Greens held their three existing seats in Melbourne, Brunswick and Prahran while also winning Richmond. Overall, the Greens’ primary vote improved marginally on 2018 results, going from 10.71 per cent to 11.5 per cent. However, the small overall growth in the party’s primary vote conceals some significant localised trends. The party’s most robust support base remains within the inner-suburban areas of Melbourne. Yet the Greens also gained considerable support in other areas, receiving close to or over 15 per cent of the primary vote in 19 seats. Map 6.5 shows the metropolitan seats where the Greens’ primary vote was greater than 15 per cent. Adding the likely preferences from a range of progressive parties, the number of districts where the Greens received above 15 per cent support increases to 65. In Northcote, Preston, Pascoe Vale and Footscray—where the Greens were runner-up in the two-party-preferred vote—the Greens’ primary vote was over 30 per cent.

The Greens also increased their support base in seats they held, attracting an 8.3 per cent swing in Prahran and a 3.55 per cent swing in Brunswick. The party’s primary vote fell by 2 per cent in Melbourne. Swings of –8.9 and 4.5 per cent occurred in the two-party-preferred votes in Brunswick and Melbourne, while there was a 4.56 per cent swing to the Greens in Prahran.

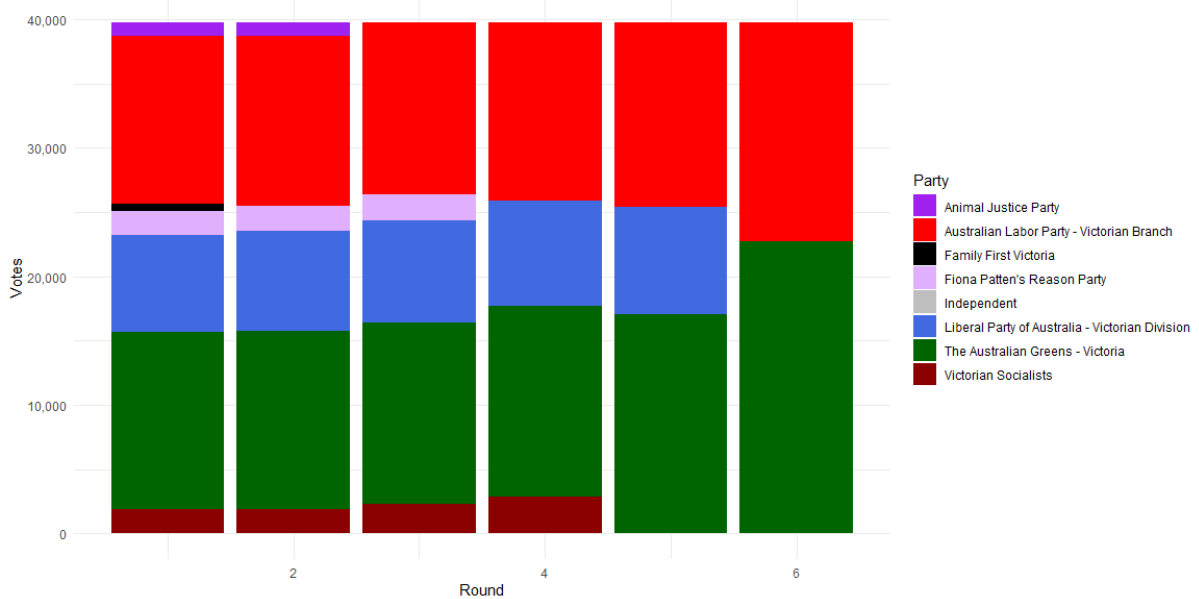
**Map 6.5 - Metropolitan districts with primary votes of 15 per cent or above for Greens candidates**



**Richmond**

The two-party-preferred swing of 12.78 per cent to the Greens in Richmond that delivered the party control of the seat resulted from two main factors. First, the Greens’ primary vote increased by 8.3 per cent on the 2018 result, going from 28.1 per cent to 36.4 per cent. Second, the decision by the Liberals to both run a candidate and preference the Greens meant the latter obtained a two-party-preferred vote of 57.32 per cent. Figure 6.5 demonstrates the preference allocations in Richmond.

**Figure 6.5 - Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Richmond**



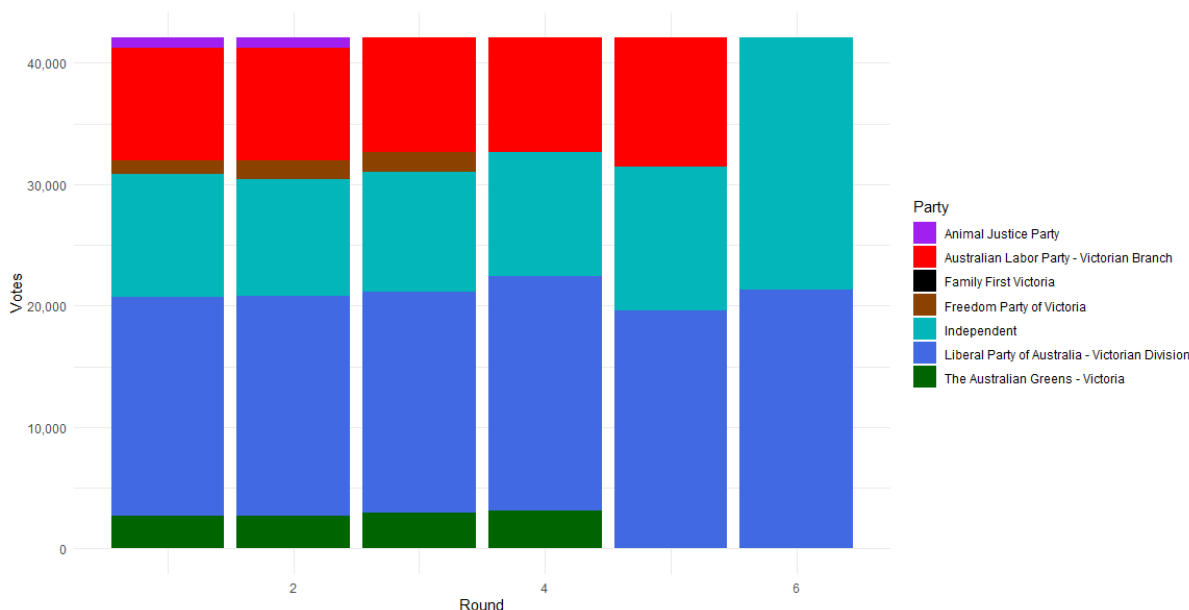
Source: VEC (2022).

## Independents

All three incumbent independent Members—in Mildura, Morwell and Shepparton—lost their seats to the Nationals. However, this was not the only trend among non-party candidates. The primary vote share for independent candidates such as Ali Cupper in Mildura (41.1 per cent), Suzanna Sheed in Shepparton (29.3 per cent) and Jacqui Hawkins in Benambra (31.5 per cent) remained strong in these regional seats, each finishing as the leading rival candidates in the two-party-preferred results.

Overall, however, and despite predictions of a second ‘teal wave’, independent candidates received 15 per cent or more of the primary vote in only nine seats. In Mornington, Kate Lardner was the only other independent candidate to end as a runner-up (to the Liberals) in a two-candidate-preferred vote, after picking up a range of preferences and displacing Labor in second place.

**Figure 6.6 - Preference distribution across six rounds of vote counts, Mornington**



Source: VEC (2022).

## Narracan

Finally, the supplementary election in Narracan held on 28 January was made more unusual with no Nationals or Labor candidates running. This meant the result differed from most seats in the November 2022 poll. The Liberal Party candidate Wayne Farnham won the seat with 45 per cent of the first-preference vote and 62.9 per cent after preferences. The runner-up candidate was independent Tony Wolfe, who received a primary vote of 11.05 per cent and a two-candidate-preferred tally of 37.1 per cent.

## Legislative Council

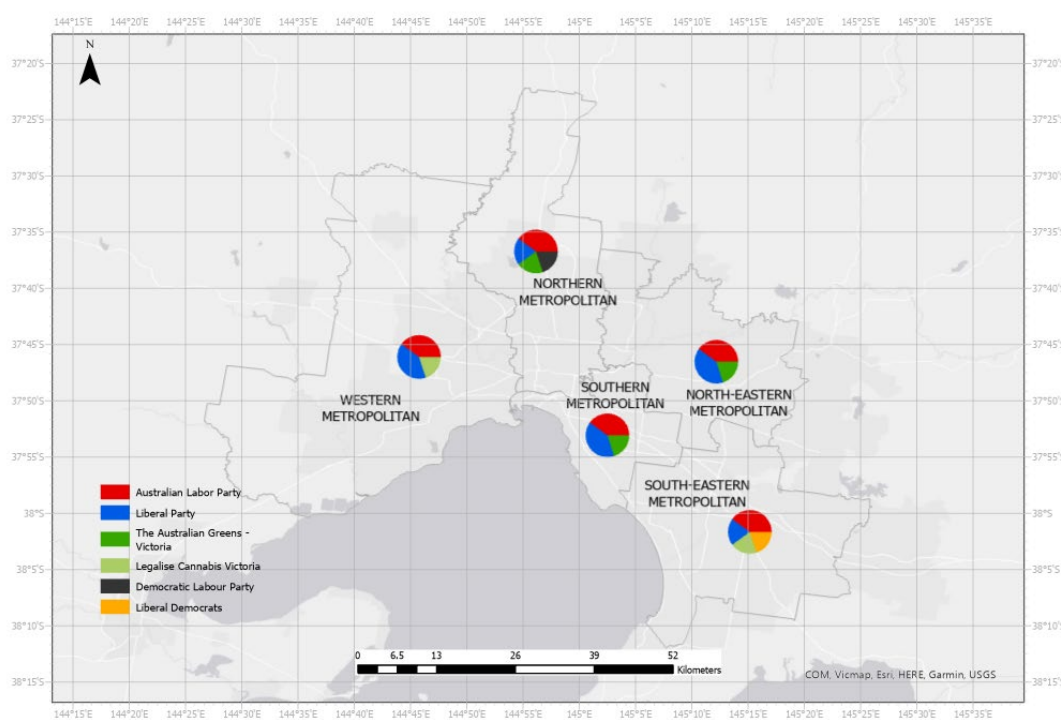
Ten parties obtained representation in the 60th Parliament’s Legislative Council. These parties were Labor, the Liberals, the Greens, the Nationals, Legalise Cannabis Victoria, the Liberal Democrats, the Animal Justice Party, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, the Democratic Labour Party and One Nation. Table 6.3, Map 6.6 and Map 6.7 indicate the distribution of the parties’ representation across the state. One region also changed name, with Eastern Metropolitan becoming North-Eastern Metropolitan.

**Table 6.3 - Legislative Council 2022 election results summary**

Party	Vote	Per cent vote	Members Elected
Labor	1,238,822	33.00	15
Liberal	636,828	16.97	12
Liberal/Nationals*	468,421	12.48	2
Australian Greens—Victoria	387,283	10.32	4
Legalise Cannabis Victoria	153,184	4.08	2
Democratic Labour Party	131,464	3.50	1
Liberal Democrats	98,901	2.63	1
Pauline Hanson’s One Nation	76,790	2.05	1
Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	76,772	2.05	1
Animal Justice Party	56,805	1.51	1

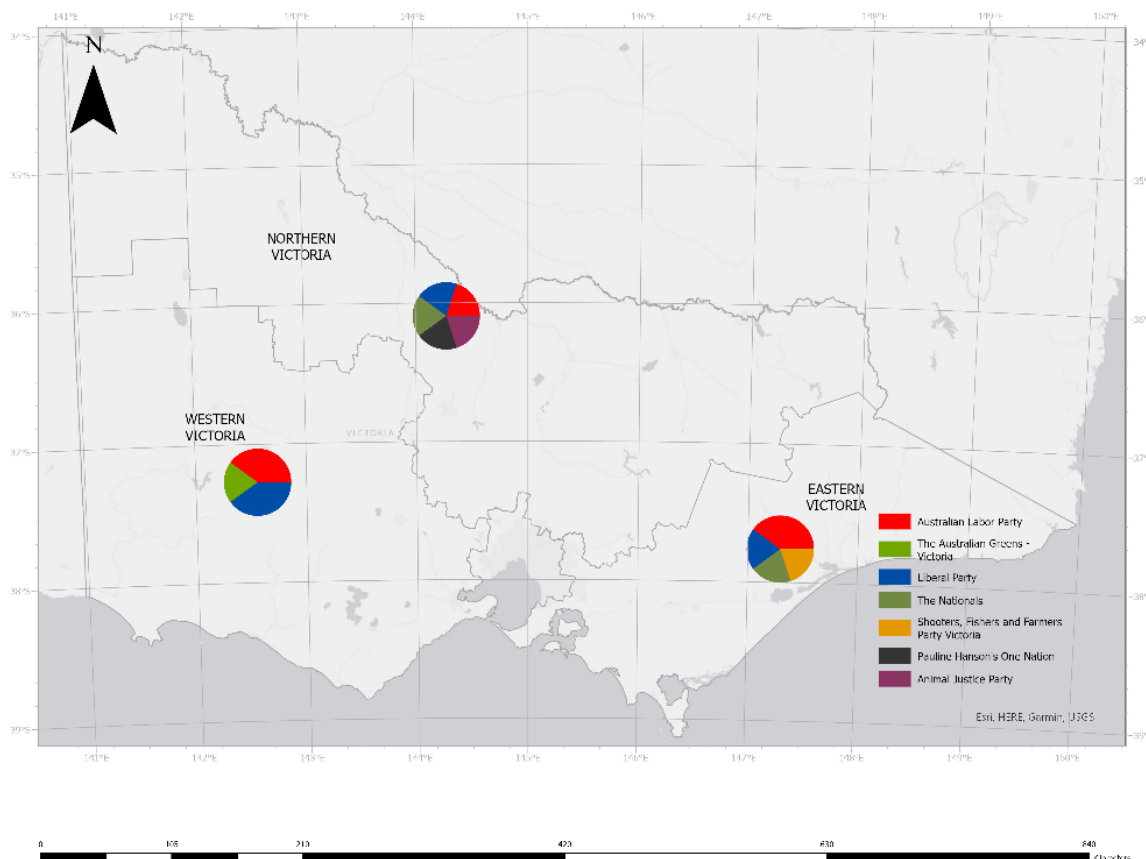
\* The Nationals ran together with the Liberals in non-metropolitan regions. Total Members elected refers to Nationals.

**Map 6.6 - Legislative Council results—metropolitan regions**



Source: VEC (2022).

**Map 6.7 - Legislative Council results—non-metropolitan regions**



[Click here for interactive metropolitan and non-metropolitan maps.](#)

**Table 6.4 - Legislative Council results by region**

Region	Candidates elected in order	First-preference votes	% of first-preference vote
Regional			
Eastern Victoria	Renee Heath (Liberal)	167133	35.31
	Tom McIntosh (Labor)	122413	25.86
	Melina Bath (Nationals)	2457	0.52
	Harriet Shing (Labor)	1169	0.25
	Jeff Bourman (SF&F)	13860	2.93
Northern Victoria	Wendy Lovell (Liberal)	159945	34.41
	Jaclyn Symes (Labor)	132001	28.40
	Gaelle Broad (Nationals)	1210	0.26
	Georgie Purcell (AJP)	7123	1.53
	Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell (One Nation)	17091	3.68
Western Victoria	Jacinta Ermacora (Labor)	171778	34.90
	Bev McArthur (Liberal)	130863	26.59
	Gayle Tierney (Labor)	1547	0.31

	Sarah Mansfield (Greens)	41430	8.42
	Joe McCracken (Liberal)	584	0.12
Metropolitan			
North-Eastern Metropolitan	Shaun Leane (Labor)	159126	33.09
	Matthew Bach (Liberal)	142882	29.71
	Sonja Terpstra (Labor)	1225	0.25
	Nick McGowan (Liberal)	1516	0.32
	Aiv Puglielli (Greens)	46952	9.76
Northern Metropolitan	Sheena Watt (Labor)	148830	32.90
	Evan Mulholland (Liberal)	83448	18.44
	Samantha Ratnam (Greens)	81014	17.91
	Enver Erdogan (Labor)	445	0.10
	Adem Somyurek (DLP)	21510	4.75
South-Eastern Metropolitan	Lee Tarlamis (Labor)	182732	38.90
	Ann-Marie Hermans (Liberal)	124128	26.42
	Michael Galea (Labor)	409	0.09
	Rachel Payne (LCV)	24205	5.15
	David Limbrick (Lib. Dem.)	16731	3.56
Southern Metropolitan	David Davis (Liberal)	165623	35.25
	John Berger (Labor)	135856	28.91
	Georgie Crozier (Liberal)	2507	0.53
	Katherine Copsey (Greens)	69409	14.77
	Ryan Batchelor (Labor)	779	0.17
Western Metropolitan	Lizzie Blandthorn (Labor)	163978	36.51
	Moira Deeming (Liberal)	108264	24.10
	Ingrid Stitt (Labor)	491	0.11
	David Ettershank (LCV)	18973	4.22
	Trung Luu (Liberal)	862	0.19

## Labor

The Labor vote in the Legislative Council declined by 6.23 per cent from 39.2 per cent in 2018 to 33 per cent in 2022. Considerable variation existed in the size of the swings, ranging from –10 per cent (from 47 per cent to 37 per cent) in South-Eastern Metropolitan to –2.26 per cent (36.1 per cent to 34.3 per cent) in Western Victoria. Correspondingly, the number of seats Labor held in the Council declined, from 18 seats in 2018 to 15 seats in 2022. The party lost one seat each from South-Eastern Metropolitan, Northern Victoria and Western Metropolitan. Two Labor Members remain in all regions except for Northern Victoria.

## Coalition

Unlike in the Legislative Assembly, the fall in Labor's vote translated into a minor boost for the Coalition parties in the Legislative Council. The Coalition's overall vote changed little at just over 29 per cent support, the same as 2018. A marginal swing of –0.2 per cent against



the Liberals in seats where they ran with no Nationals was offset by a positive 0.2 per cent swing in seats where the Liberals and Nationals ran candidates together. The latter were all non-metropolitan regions. Correspondingly, the most significant swings to the Coalition occurred in Northern Victoria (4 per cent) and Eastern Victoria (2.43 per cent). The Northern Metropolitan and Western Metropolitan regions featured the other more significant positive swings to the Liberals of 2.49 per cent and 3.24 per cent respectively. The most significant swing away from the Liberals of 5.8 per cent occurred in North-Eastern Metropolitan Region.

Nevertheless, both parties increased their representation in the chamber, with the Liberals expanding from ten to 12 Members and the Nationals from one to two. The Nationals picked up a seat in Northern Victoria in addition to the one they already held in Eastern Victoria Region. The two gains for the Liberals occurred in the Western Victoria and Western Metropolitan regions.

### *The crossbench*

While the size of the crossbench remained the same as returned at the 2018 election—with 11 non-major-party Members in total—its composition again provided some of the most interesting results in the Legislative Council. Three main trends were evident.

First, the Greens won four seats after being reduced to one seat in 2018. The party's overall vote in the upper house increased marginally from 9.25 per cent in 2018 to 10.3 per cent in 2022. The swings varied from a 2 per cent increase in support in the Southern Metropolitan Region to a decline of 0.54 per cent in Western Metropolitan.

Second, in addition to the Greens, the number of crossbench parties in the chamber decreased slightly from seven to six. Legalise Cannabis Victoria won seats in the Western Metropolitan and South-Eastern Metropolitan regions, and its overall level of support was 4 per cent, with its votes varying between 2.86 per cent in Southern Metropolitan Region and 5 per cent in South-Eastern Metropolitan Region. In addition, one seat went to each of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party (Eastern Victoria), One Nation (Northern Victoria), the Animal Justice Party (AJP) (Northern Victoria), the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) (Northern Metropolitan) and the Liberal Democrats (South-Eastern Metropolitan).

Third, there was a noticeable turnover of minor parties in the chamber. Four parties from the Legislative Council of the 59th Parliament would not be represented in the 60th. The Reason Party, Sustainable Australia, Derryn Hinch's Justice Party and the Transport Matters Party all experienced falling primary votes, and all incumbent Members lost their seats.

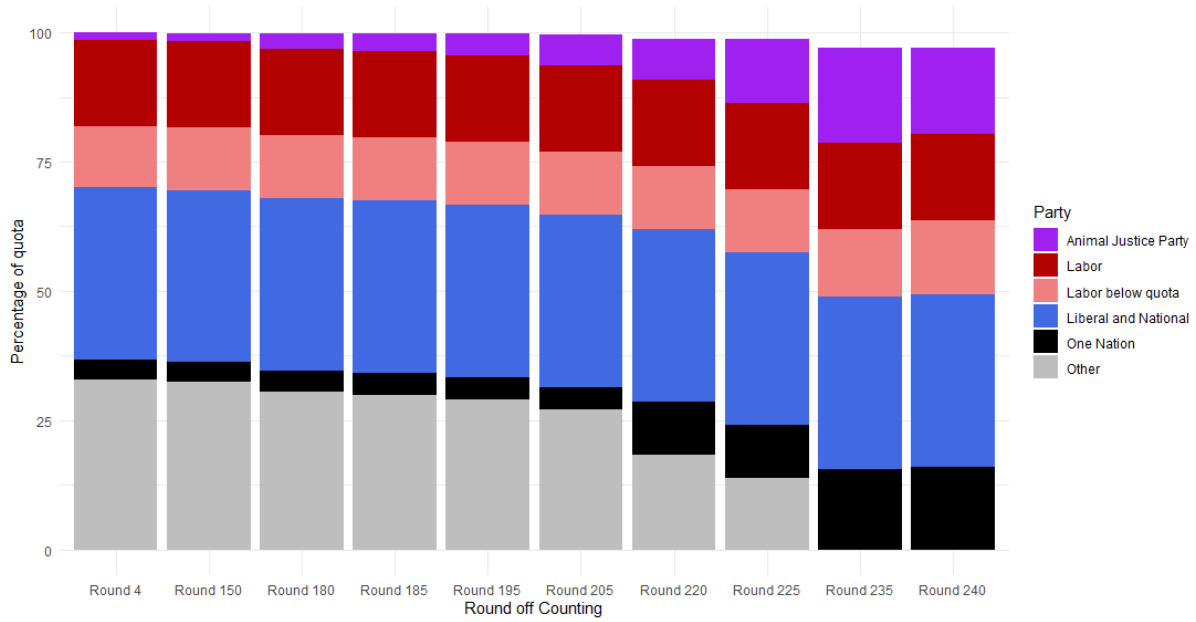
### *Preference distributions*

Predictions that contentious group voting ticket practices would again return candidates winning a tiny proportion of the primary vote, as at the 2018 election, did not materialise. Of the successful candidates, the only particularly low primary vote went to the AJP in Northern Victoria Region, with a 1.55 per cent result.

## Northern Victoria Region

Figure 6.7 summarises the 2022 preference distribution for Northern Victoria Region. Aside from the AJP's primary vote, the initial share of support for different parties was not unusual: 35.6 per cent for the Coalition; 29.2 per cent for Labor; 7.2 per cent for the Greens; and 3.7 per cent for One Nation. The remaining parties shared 23 per cent. Before preference counting, three candidates had already obtained a quota of 16.67 per cent (77,465 of 464,784 total votes).

**Figure 6.7 - Election preference flow in Northern Victoria Region, 2022\***



\*Sum of quotas does not amount to 100 per cent due to exhausted votes (votes with no valid preferences left for counting towards any of the continuing candidates).

The most significant changes occur after round 150 of the vote count. The AJP’s vote jumps from just over 7,000 votes to 9,114 following the elimination of the Transport Matters Party. Between then and round 225, preferences flow from groups such as the Restore Democracy Sack Dan Andrews Party, Derryn Hinch’s Justice Party and the Liberal Democrats. The AJP count then jumps ahead of Legalise Cannabis Victoria before receiving its preferences at count 225, overtaking the Greens and receiving their preferences at count 235—finally arriving at an above-quota vote tally of 85,633. The final spot then goes to One Nation, whose initial vote was 3.73 per cent. Note that the second Labor candidate (in a lighter shade of red) was not elected, as his final vote was below the quota needed.

## 7 | Post-election wash-up

### Party reactions

#### *Labor*

Premier Daniel Andrews had choice words upon claiming victory at the 2022 election. ‘Hope always defeats hate,’ he said, referring to a bitter campaign containing some ‘pretty nasty stuff’. He added that the conduct of the election was not something to be repeated. In an interview with *The Age* Andrews said the SEC was a major driver of Labor’s success.<sup>256</sup> He described it as both good policy and good politics and claimed ‘power for people, not profit’ was an effective message, striking a chord with people through the interrelated concerns over cost of living, climate change and energy security. He also credited the women’s health funding package as a key driver late in the campaign.

#### *Liberal*

There were ‘recriminations’ in the Liberal Party for a performance poorer than expected, given the close polling leading in to election day. Several Liberal Party MPs spoke to *The Age* anonymously after the election.<sup>257</sup> One said the party had ‘insult[ed] people’s intelligence’, assuming to know about their lives but ‘not having spoken to them, not having lived among them and engaged with them’. Another said, ‘It was a campaign targeting Liberal Party supporters who don’t like Daniel Andrews rather than swinging voters who need to be convinced to vote for us’. Others called for a full rebrand. Outgoing MP Tim Smith said the party ‘stood for nothing’ and lamented ‘campaign incompetence’ and ‘policy laziness’.<sup>258</sup> In February 2023, party president Greg Mirabella delivered his own report into the Liberal Party’s loss, bluntly assessing the ‘relentlessly negative’ Liberal campaign’s pitfalls: ‘Andrews, while highly polarising, could not be made more disliked than Matthew Guy.’<sup>259</sup>

Guy’s second failed tilt at leading the Coalition in an election campaign was swiftly followed by his resignation as leader, only a little over a year after replacing Michael O’Brien.<sup>260</sup> The Liberal Party leadership was contested by John Pesutto, who had regained the seat of Hawthorn in the Legislative Assembly after losing it four years earlier, and Brad Battin, who had initially challenged O’Brien for the leadership in March 2021. Each offered a different vision for the party’s future. Battin announced a plan to re-engage with growth corridors by ‘modernising’ the party’s message on issues such as housing access.<sup>261</sup> Pesutto, who had previously been touted as a future leader, emphasised the need for greater diversity.<sup>262</sup> Pesutto won the leadership ballot by one vote, and formed a leadership team comprising

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<sup>256</sup> Guardian staff (2022) ‘Hope always defeats hate’: Labor’s Daniel Andrews returned as premier in 2022 Victoria state election’, *The Guardian*, 26 November; A. Ore and B. Kolovos (2022) ‘Returning Victorian premier Daniel Andrews says ugly political campaigning must end’, *The Guardian*, 27 November; R. Millar, S. Ilanbey, R. Eddie and J. Gordon (2022) ‘Andrews says State Electricity Commission pledge sealed election for Labor’, *The Age*, 3 December.

<sup>257</sup> C. Le Grand and P. Sakkal (2022) ‘“We insult people’s intelligence”: The Liberal Party recriminations begin’, *The Age*, 27 November.

<sup>258</sup> P. Hannaford (2022) ‘The Liberal Party stood for nothing’: Former Liberal MP Tim Smith slams party’s election campaign’, *Sky News Australia*, 28 November.

<sup>259</sup> A. Smethurst, S. Ilanbey and P. Sakkal (2023) ‘Dislike of Guy and ‘relentlessly negative’ campaign blamed for Liberal election loss’, *The Age*, 17 February.

<sup>260</sup> C. Godde (2022) ‘Matthew Guy to step down as Victorian Liberal leader’, *7news.com.au*, 27 November.

<sup>261</sup> P. Hannaford (2022) ‘Liberal leadership contender Brad Battin says the party must modernise its message and engage with the growth corridors’, *Sky News Australia*, 2 December.

<sup>262</sup> A. Ore (2022) ‘Victorian Liberal leadership hopeful John Pesutto to push for more women MPs’, *The Guardian*, 2 December; A. Sciberras (2022) ‘Victorian Opposition Leader Matthew Guy to step down after election loss’, *9 News*, 27 November.

David Southwick as Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Georgie Crozier as upper house leader and Matthew Bach as her deputy.<sup>263</sup>

## Nationals

While the Liberal Party lost ground in the Assembly, the National Party enjoyed one of their best results in recent memory, gaining three Assembly seats, an extra seat in the Council and, consequently, expanded bargaining power in the Coalition. Leader of the Nationals Peter Walsh cited a strategy change after the 2018 election loss: ‘The last four years was a continuation of the reinvention of the National Party from the perception we are a farmers’ party ... to being a true champion of all of regional Victoria: regional towns, cities and our rural communities.’<sup>264</sup> Walsh stressed the importance of representing regional tourism, education and health in addition to agriculture. Resolve Strategic director Jim Reed said the Nationals did not suffer a ‘women problem’ in the same way as the Liberal Party. The election of three new Members—Jade Benham, Kim O’Keefe and Annabelle Cleeland—followed the retirement of Member for Euroa Steph Ryan, who was succeeded as the party’s deputy leader by Emma Kealy.

## Greens

Greens leader Dr Samantha Ratnam declared a ‘Greenslide’ on election night, though the claim proved premature regarding results in the Assembly. Early polling indicated the Greens would win both Richmond and Northcote from Labor. While Richmond was won comfortably, taking the Greens tally to four Assembly seats, Northcote proved a rollercoaster. At first it was thought Labor had won, with Greens candidate Campbell Gome conceding, before the counting of postal votes saw the race tighten, forcing Gome to rewind his concession.<sup>265</sup> He conceded for a second time when it became clear from further counting that Labor’s Kat Theophanous had retained the seat.

A longer process of preference counting in the Legislative Council eventually had the Greens settling with four seats, positioning the Greens as the largest crossbench presence in the 60th Parliament. Ratnam asserted the Greens would leverage its position to push for ‘climate action, housing affordability, strengthening integrity and more’.<sup>266</sup>

## Legalise Cannabis

With two Members elected to the Council crossbench, along with left-leaning parties such as the Greens and the Animal Justice Party, Legalise Cannabis Victoria were adamant that their result amounted to a mandate for change on cannabis legislation. Newly elected MLC Rachel Payne, who had previously held the role of General Manager of the Eros Foundation (a role previously also held by the Reason Party’s Fiona Patten), said: ‘The Victorian voters have spoken ... and we are very excited to see Cannabis has two people elected now.’<sup>267</sup> Payne and fellow electee David Ettershank, who uses cannabis as a treatment for an autoimmune condition and has worked for 20 years as a consultant for aged-care providers, are looking for ‘full legalisation, not just decriminalisation of cannabis’<sup>268</sup>.

<sup>263</sup> G. McCubbing (2022) ‘John Pesutto wins Liberal leadership in Victoria by one vote’, *AFR*, 8 December.

<sup>264</sup> S. Ilanbey (2023) ‘We can’t just be the farmers’ party’: The Nationals rebranding for poll success’, *The Age*, 6 January.

<sup>265</sup> B. Kolovos (2022) ‘Victorian Labor on track to equal ‘Danslide’ result after retaining Northcote by 184 votes’, *The Guardian*, 6 December.

<sup>266</sup> R. Eddie (2022) ‘Left-wing parties to hold sway in upper house as Greens quadruple seats’, *The Age*, 14 December.

<sup>267</sup> A. Sciberras (2022) ‘Cannabis legalisation set to be on agenda in newly elected Victorian upper house’, *9 News*, 14 December.

<sup>268</sup> J. Faine (2022) ‘Will Dan Andrews smoke a peace pipe with Legalise Cannabis in the upper house?’, *The Age*, 11 December.

## *Animal Justice Party*

While Animal Justice Party leader Andy Meddick was not returned to his seat representing Western Victoria Region, the party did win a seat in Northern Victoria Region, where Georgie Purcell became the youngest Member of the 60th Parliament's Legislative Council.<sup>269</sup> President of Oscar's Law, an anti-puppy-farming organisation, Purcell had previously worked as Meddick's chief of staff and said she would advocate for bans on duck shooting and jumps racing as well as an inquiry into greyhound racing.<sup>270</sup>

## *Liberal Democrats*

Having unsuccessfully run for a Senate seat in the federal election of May 2022, David Limbrick returned as the sole Member for the Liberal Democrats in the 60th Parliament, representing South-Eastern Metropolitan Region, with Tim Quilty not being re-elected in Northern Victoria Region. Limbrick tweeted that he was 'heading back to Parliament to defend your rights for another 4 years', with a photo of him being escorted by police from a rally protesting against the Government's pandemic restrictions.<sup>271</sup>

## *Democratic Labour Party*

With Adem Somyurek and Bernie Finn reviving the Democratic Labour Party to run for the 2022 election on an integrity platform following their respective exits from their parties, only Somyurek was successful achieving re-election. A closely watched battle with the Reason Party's Fiona Patten for the fifth seat in Northern Metropolitan Region saw Somyurek eventually take the seat following a protracted count when results were confirmed on 14 December. Somyurek said he had won the 'soft ALP vote' from voters 'looking for somewhere to go and don't see the Libs as a viable alternative'.<sup>272</sup>

## *One Nation*

Rickie-Lee Tyrell was elected to Northern Victoria Region for One Nation, the party's first seat in the Victorian Parliament. A dairy farmer by trade, she expressed a willingness to 'shake the boat a bit' on irrigation: '(I'm) definitely focused on our Northern Victorian irrigation community because that is why I got into politics in the first place'.<sup>273</sup>

## *Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party*

Jeff Bourman retained his seat in Eastern Victoria Region. He had little to say about his re-election but was vocal on several issues after the election, expressing scepticism about a potential national gun registration system, criticising the Government's consideration of a ban on duck shooting, and supporting a recommended increase in the quota for kangaroo culling for meat consumption. 'Where do the vegans think their vegetables come from? If we

<sup>269</sup> J. Hicken (2023) 'Animal Justice Party MP Purcell out to make a difference', *Shepparton News*, 16 January.

<sup>270</sup> R. Eddie (2022) 'Left-wing parties to hold sway in upper house as Greens quadruple seats', *The Age*, 14 December; Jaci Hicken (2023) op. cit.

<sup>271</sup> D. Limbrick (@\_davidlimbrick) (2022), 'I'm heading back to Parliament to defend your rights for another 4 years.', tweet, Twitter, 14 December, 1.20 pm.

<sup>272</sup> A. Somyurek (@AdemSomyurek) (2022), '1/ The L.C button will be pressed later today in the backdrop of wild claims & misinformation with the North Metro election. Analysing the data alone is not enough to determine causality. The level & nature of campaigning is a vital input into any accurate', tweet, Twitter, 14 December, 9.00 am.

<sup>273</sup> D. Johnston and A. Sinnott (2022) 'Victorian election 2022: Rikki-Lee Tyrrell, Georgie Purcell win Northern Victorian seats', *The Weekly Times*, 20 December.

don't control kangaroo numbers, then crops of Australian vegies will be decimated, causing veg prices to rise'.<sup>274</sup>

### *Minor party members not returning*

As the 60th Parliament welcomed a swathe of new crossbench Members, it also farewelled six minor party Members. Reason Party voters had by far the highest proportion of below-the-line preference distribution, with 50.90 per cent of voters taking control of their own preferences (far above the aggregate 9.4 per cent of the voting public who voted below the line) in an attempt to retain party leader Fiona Patten for a third term.<sup>275</sup> Having helped usher in a range of progressive reforms, Patten was hampered on the eve of the election by a diagnosis of kidney cancer. After her election loss, Patten expressed gratitude for an 'uplifting, enlightening experience' as an MP but regretted not being able to achieve some reforms, including legalising cannabis and outlawing preference harvesting.<sup>276</sup> Despite her views on preference flows, she said she was not blaming the system: 'People can scream about the system all they like, but I didn't get enough votes.'<sup>277</sup> Writing in *The Age*, she reflected 'most [state politicians] are decent people trying to do their best' and hoped 'I was one of those'.<sup>278</sup>

Stuart Grimley and Tania Maxwell from Derryn Hinch's Justice Party, who held seats in Western Victoria Region and Northern Victoria Region respectively, were also not re-elected. They had been unhappy with the Animal Justice Party on the eve of the election when it became apparent that they had been, in Grimley's words, 'scammed' in preference negotiations, releasing a press release that questioned the Animal Justice Party's integrity.<sup>279</sup>

Catherine Cumming, who had originally been elected in 2018 as a candidate for Derryn Hinch's Justice Party before quitting days later, unsuccessfully ran in the 2022 election as a candidate for the Angry Victorians Party, an offshoot of the Australian Values Party.

Also losing their upper house seats were Rod Barton, who had been elected as founder of the Transport Matters Party to represent the taxi industry, and Clifford Hayes, representing Sustainable Australia. Barton had belied his small primary vote share of 0.62 per cent in the 59th Parliament to be a central negotiator in the Government's pandemic legislation. On departure, Barton said he was 'no career politician' but would continue to address the issues he raised in Parliament.<sup>280</sup> Hayes left Parliament with a short tweet thanking fellow candidates for a 'civil and respectful campaign'.<sup>281</sup>

## No teal wave, decline of independents

The Victorian election did not see a repeat of the 'teal wave' that occurred in the May federal election. Victorian teal candidates were quick to blame election donation laws. Mornington candidate Kate Lardner lamented the limited ability for small parties or

<sup>274</sup> A. Sinnott and I. Royall (2023) 'Victoria's kangaroo cull quota increased for 2023 period', *The Weekly Times*, 10 January; (2022) 'Victorian MP says national gun registry 'wouldn't have changed a thing' in Qld cop shootings', *3AW Melbourne*, 20 December; M. Clarke and K. Rooney (2023) 'Duck hunting Victoria: Ban 'strongly considered' ahead of 2023 season', *Herald Sun*, 22 January.

<sup>275</sup> A. Green (2022) 'Legislative Council Results—VIC Election 2022', ABC *Victoria Votes* website, sourced 16 February 2023.

<sup>276</sup> R. Eddie (2022) 'Age of Reason ends: Upper house dealmaker Fiona Patten concedes defeat', *The Age*, 12 December.

<sup>277</sup> A. Smethurst (2022) 'Changemaker Fiona Patten leaves Victorian parliament with 'unfinished business'', *The Age*, 14 December.

<sup>278</sup> F. Patten (2022) 'Most politicians are good people. I hope I was one of those', *The Age*, 15 December.

<sup>279</sup> S. Grimley (2022) *Statement on the integrity of the Animal Justice Party*, media release, 15 November.

<sup>280</sup> R. Barton (2022) *A Statement from Rod Barton, Leader of Transport Matters Party*, media release, 14 December.

<sup>281</sup> C. Hayes (@CliffHayesVIC) (2022), 'A sincere thank you to all of those who have supported both myself and SAP over the past four years. Especially those who have volunteered their time throughout this frenetic election campaign. I am very grateful. 1/3', tweet, Twitter, 30 November, 12.48 pm.



independent candidates to fund campaigns. The leader of the Climate 200 group, Simon Holmes à Court, who helped fund four candidates, was more bullish, saying the fact that independent candidates were competitive showed there was an appetite for non-major-party voices in state politics.<sup>282</sup>

There was a general trend away from independent Members in the Victorian lower house. Sitting MPs Ali Cupper (Mildura) and Suzanna Sheed (Shepparton) fell to Nationals candidates Jade Benham and Kim O’Keefe respectively. Sheed reflected that independents tended to win their seats by ‘taking them by surprise and the surprise element is gone’.<sup>283</sup> She also felt the new donation laws had created an unequal ‘playing field’, while the decline in regionally based media made it difficult to develop a local presence. East along the Murray River in Benambra, Jacqui Hawkins was optimistic about her result in coming within a few percentage points of beating long-time Liberal Party MP Bill Tilley.

## Media introspection

Predictions of a close election result proved fanciful. *Crikey* derided the *Sydney Morning Herald’s* description of the election result as a ‘narrow victory’ for Labor, as reflecting the ‘strange disconnect between the media narrative around the election and what the reality turned out to be’.<sup>284</sup> Margaret Simons wrote that Labor winning comfortably under Daniel Andrews was hardly surprising—‘the polls have never showed that he was on the nose’—but media narratives of a close result, once established, were ‘hard to shift’. While appreciating some good reporting, Simons thought problems stemmed from reporting that was ‘oddly disassociated from what reporters on the ground were hearing and seeing’ and a Liberal Party campaign run on ‘false assumptions’.<sup>285</sup> Media ethics expert Denis Muller, writing in *The Conversation*, thought the ‘breathless and misleading’ election coverage followed an ‘abiding weakness in newsroom decision-making to prefer the most dramatic possibility’. Muller also noted a pattern across the *Herald Sun*, *The Age* and ABC whereby ‘each reinforced the other’s assessment of a story’s credibility’, no matter how ‘loose’ the original evidence.<sup>286</sup>

Chip Le Grand, *The Age’s* state political editor, defended his masthead’s coverage of the election, tweeting that no daily newspaper is perfect.<sup>287</sup> Later, in a largely self-congratulatory piece on its election coverage—including its focus on voter issues, swing seats and breaking news on contentious candidates—*The Age* editor Michael Bachelard admitted the paper’s ‘biggest error’ was its headline on the morning of the election: ‘Labor under siege’. This headed a story referring to a ‘late Liberal surge’ in polls, quoting internal party polling. In defence, Bachelard said other mastheads had reported the same.<sup>288</sup>

<sup>282</sup> A. Ore (2022) ‘“Teal wave” turns out to be barely a ripple as number of Victorian independents goes backwards’, *The Guardian*, 28 November.

<sup>283</sup> A. Ore (2022) ‘“The surprise element is gone”: how Victoria’s Nationals won voters back from independents’, *The Guardian*, 4 December.

<sup>284</sup> C. Lewis (2022) ‘Has the media ever gotten an election this wrong before’, *Crikey*, 28 November.

<sup>285</sup> M. Simons (2022) ‘Victoria’s election result dispelled the myth of Daniel Andrews’ supposed unpopularity’, *The Guardian*, 3 December.

<sup>286</sup> D. Muller (2022) ‘Media go for drama on Victorian election—and miss the story’, *The Conversation*, 27 November. See also, D. Muller (2022) ‘Attacks on Dan Andrews are part of News Corporation’s long abuse of power’, *The Conversation*, 6 November.

<sup>287</sup> C. Le Grand (@Melbchief) (2022) ‘Some of the criticism published on this platform about @theage’s coverage of #VicVotes2022 has prompted me to briefly return from Twitter exile to address a false narrative doing the rounds. I’m sure I’ll regret it, but here goes:’, tweet, Twitter, 29 November, 10.05 pm.

<sup>288</sup> M. Bachelard (2022) ‘How did we go in the election campaign?’, *The Age*, 9 December.

Figure 7.1 - Melbourne metropolitan newspaper front pages on election day, 25 November



Sources: *The Saturday Age*, *Herald Sun*.

## Media coverage of the 'referendum of Dan Andrews'

The mainstream press had positioned Premier Andrews as the central figure of debate in the election. On election eve, the ABC's David Speers wrote, 'The "Dan" factor ... makes this Victorian election somewhat unique', noting 'his image was everywhere'.<sup>289</sup> After the election, political and media experts questioned this focus. Monash University's Blair Williams described the campaign's focus on a single personality as 'presidential-style'.<sup>290</sup> La Trobe University's Ian Tulloch labelled the election reportage by the News Corp press as 'totally unbalanced' and said it 'breached a broader media code of conduct that reporting should be fair and reasonable'.<sup>291</sup> *The Guardian* described News Corp reportage as the 'antithesis of journalism'.<sup>292</sup> Media ethics expert Denis Muller wrote that 'the separation' between opinion and news 'has become blurred in recent years'.<sup>293</sup> The Centre for Advancing Journalism's Margaret Simons similarly questioned whether the 'toxic Dan' narrative was in fact a 'significant factor' in the election outcome, suggesting it was instead a 'fiction' created by a vocal minority.<sup>294</sup> By contrast, Shaun Carney, thought that 'the level of vituperation directed at the government and Andrews in particular' by News Corp made Labor's win 'one of the most remarkable victories in modern politics'.<sup>295</sup>

<sup>289</sup> D. Speers (2022) 'The "Dan" factor makes this Victorian election unique. But the pandemic poll is much more than a referendum on Andrews', *ABC News*, 24 November.

<sup>290</sup> S. Corsetti (2022) 'It appears "Dictator Dan" is still "the man" in Victoria. How did his media critics get it so wrong?', *The Feed*, 1 December.

<sup>291</sup> S. Corsetti (2022) op. cit.

<sup>292</sup> A. Dodd (2022) 'As the Herald Sun sticks to News Corp's election playbook, does it think its readers are idiots?', *The Guardian*, 10 November.

<sup>293</sup> D. Muller (2022) 'Credibility suffers as election coverage lurches into political fantasy, propaganda', *The Age*, 23 November.

<sup>294</sup> M. Simons (2022) 'Victoria's election result dispelled the myth of Daniel Andrews' supposed unpopularity', *The Guardian*, 3 December; M. Simons, T. Barry and K. Webeck (2022) 'Victoria election report card, week three: Ibac referrals, teal legal win and a preference whisperer stung', *The Guardian*, 19 November.

<sup>295</sup> S. Carney (2022) How Dan Andrews pulled off one of the most remarkable victories in modern politics, *The Conversation*, 27 November.

## Voting reform

With another diverse crossbench resulting from the maze of preference flows, questions again arose as to whether Victoria's Legislative Council voting system should be reformed. Glenn Druey claimed responsibility for the election of four MPs—Adem Somyurek, Jeff Bourman, David Limbrick and Georgie Purcell. ABC analyst Antony Green said some seats were determined 'entirely due to group voting ticket preference decisions', with major parties directing preferences towards parties such as One Nation and Legalise Cannabis Victoria over larger first-preference gatherers such as the Greens.<sup>296</sup> Other commentators thought the impact of preference dealing had been reduced with greater public awareness.<sup>297</sup> Ben Raue from *The Tally Room* said micro-parties had been less successful, with Derryn Hinch's Justice Party suffering a 2.45 per cent drop in their primary vote.<sup>298</sup>

During and after the election, several parties committed to reforming the upper house voting system, including the Greens, the Animal Justice Party and the Coalition.<sup>299</sup> Early in the 60th Parliament, the Greens called for the Government to 'show ... leadership and urgently establish an independent expert panel to review Victoria's undemocratic group voting system and make recommendations to Parliament on options for reform'<sup>300</sup>. The non-binding motion was agreed to.

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<sup>296</sup> R. Willingham (2022) 'Election of micro parties on preferences renews calls to change Victoria's 'broken' upper-house voting system', *ABC News*, 17 December.

<sup>297</sup> G. McCubbing (2022) 'Victorian parliament likely to be 'less bizarre' than the last term', *AFR*, 28 November.

<sup>298</sup> B. Raue (2022) 'How did below-the-line voting perform in Victoria?', *The Tally Room*, 28 January.

<sup>299</sup> R. Willingham (2022) 'Election of micro parties on preferences renews calls to change Victoria's 'broken' upper-house voting system', *op. cit.*

<sup>300</sup> S. Ratnam (2023) 'Electoral reform', *Debates*, Victoria, Legislative Council, 22 February, pp. 189–90.

## 8 | Outgoing and incoming Members

The 2022 election saw 45 new Members elected to Parliament, with 26 new Members in the Legislative Assembly and 19 new Members in the Legislative Council. The new Members constituted 35.15 per cent of the total membership of Parliament, considerably higher than the turnover in 2018 (29.68 per cent) and 2014 (28.13 per cent).

An extensive number of Members retired over the course of the 59th Parliament, and some were not preselected to recontest their seats at the 2022 election. Approximately 478 years of parliamentary representation left without contesting the 2022 election—including just over 303 years departing from Labor. A further 18 Members (nine in the Assembly, 11 in the Council) were not returned to their seats via the ballot box, taking another 109 years.

Several Members left the Legislative Council before the 2022 election and were replaced by new Members: Philip Dalidakis quit Parliament in June 2019 and was replaced by Enver Erdogan; Mary Wooldridge retired from Parliament in December 2019 and was replaced by Matthew Bach; Gavin Jennings retired from Parliament in March 2020 and was replaced by Lee Tarlamis; Jenny Mikakos resigned in September 2020 and was replaced by Sheena Watt; and Edward O'Donohue retired from Parliament in December 2021 and was replaced by Cathine Burnett-Wake. Jane Garrett died in July 2022 and was replaced by Tom McIntosh.

### Members who left Parliament before the 2022 election

#### Labor

Name	Seat	Reason	Elected–Retired (Years)
Philip Dalidakis	Southern Metropolitan	Retired	2014–2019 (5 years)
Luke Donnellan	Narre Warren North	Not preselected	2002–2022 (20 years)
Nazih Elasmr	Northern Metropolitan	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years)
John Eren	Lara	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years)
Martin Foley	Albert Park	Retired	2007–2022 (15 years)
Jane Garrett	Eastern Victoria	Deceased	2010–2022 (12 years)
Mark Gepp	Northern Victoria	Retired	2017–2022 (5 years)
Danielle Green	Yan Yean	Retired	2002–2022 (20 years)
Dustin Halse	Ringwood	Retired	2018–2022 (4 years)
Jill Hennessy	Altona	Retired	2010–2022 (12 years)
Gavin Jennings	South-Eastern Metropolitan	Retired	1999–2020 (21 years)
Marlene Kairouz	Kororoit	Not preselected	2008–2022 (14 years)
Frank McGuire	Broadmeadows	Not preselected	2011–2022 (11 years)
James Merlino	Monbulk	Retired	2002–2022 (20 years)
Jenny Mikakos	Northern Metropolitan	Retired	1999–2020 (21 years)
Lisa Neville	Bellarine	Retired	2002–2022 (20 years)
Martin Pakula	Keysborough	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years)
Jaala Pulford	Western Victoria	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years)
Robin Scott	Preston	Not preselected	2006–2022 (16 years)
Richard Wynne	Richmond	Retired	1999–2022 (23 years)

## Liberal

Name	Seat	Reason	Elected–Retired (Years)
Bruce Atkinson	Eastern Metropolitan	Retired	1992–2022 (30 years)
Gary Blackwood	Narracan	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years)
Neale Burgess	Hastings	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years)
Cathrine Burnett-Wake	Eastern Metropolitan	Not preselected	2021–2022 (1 year)
David Morris	Mornington	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years)
Edward O’Donohue	Eastern Victoria	Retired	2006–2021 (15 years)
Craig Ondarchie	Northern Metropolitan	Not preselected	2010–2022 (12 years)
Gordon Rich-Phillips	South-Eastern Metropolitan	Retired	1999–2022 (23 years)
Tim Smith	Kew	Retired	2014–2022 (8 years)
Mary Wooldridge	Eastern Metropolitan	Retired	2006–2020 (14 years)

## Nationals and independents

Name	Seat	Reason	Elected–Retired (Years)
Steph Ryan	Euroa	Retired	2014–2022 (8 years)
Russell Northe	Morwell	Retired	2006–2022 (16 years) (National 2006 to Aug 2017) (Independent Aug 2017 to 2022)

## Incumbent Members not returned at the 2022 election

### Legislative Assembly

Name	Seat	Party	Elected–Retired (Years)
Chris Brayne	Nepean	Labor	2018–2022 (4 years)
Ali Cupper	Mildura	Independent	2018–2022 (4 years)
John Kennedy	Hawthorn	Labor	2018–2022 (4 years)
Suzanna Sheed	Shepparton	Independent	2014–2022 (8 years)
Louise Staley	Ripon	Liberal	2014–2022 (8 years)
Nick Wakeling	Ferntree Gully	Liberal	2006–2022 (16 years) (seat abolished, contested Bayswater)
Neil Angus	Forrest Hill	Liberal	2010–2022 (12 years) (seat abolished, contested new seat, Glen Waverley)



## Legislative Council

Name	Seat	Party	Elected–Retired (Years)
Rod Barton	Eastern Metropolitan	Transport Matters	2018–2022 (4 years)
Catherine Cumming	Western Metropolitan	DHJP/ Independent	2018–2022 (4 years)
Stuart Grimley	Western Victoria	DHJP	2018–2022 (4 years)
Clifford Hayes	Southern Metropolitan	Sustainable Australia	2018–2022 (4 years)
Tien Kieu	South-Eastern Metropolitan	Labor	2018–2022 (4 years)
Tania Maxwell	Northern Victoria	DHJP	2018–2022 (4 years)
Andy Meddick	Western Victoria	Animal Justice Party	2018–2022 (4 years)
Cesar Melhem	Western Metropolitan	Labor	2013–2022 (9 years)
Fiona Patten	Northern Metropolitan	Reason Party	2014–2022 (8 years)
Tim Quilty	Northern Metropolitan	Liberal Democrats	2018–2022 (4 years)
Kaushaliya Vaghela	Western Metropolitan	Labor/ Independent	2018–2022 (4 years)

## Incoming Members

### Legislative Assembly

Name	Seat	Party
Alison Marchant	Bellarine	Labor
Kathleen Matthews-Ward	Broadmeadows	Labor
Annabelle Cleeland	Euroa	Nationals
John Mullahy	Glen Waverley	Labor
Iwan Walters	Greenvale	Labor
Paul Mercurio	Hastings	Labor
John Pesutto	Hawthorn	Liberals
Jess Wilson	Kew	Liberals
Luba Grigorovitch	Kororoit	Labor
Ella George	Lara	Labor
Jade Benham	Mildura	Nationals
Chris Crewther	Mornington	Liberal
Daniela De Martino	Monbulk	Labor
Martin Cameron	Morwell	Nationals
Wayne Farnham	Narracan	Liberals



Belinda Wilson	Narre Warren North	Labor
Sam Growth	Nepean	Liberals
Emma Vulin	Pakenham	Labor
Anthony Cianflone	Pascoe Vale	Labor
Mathew Hilakari	Point Cook	Labor
Nathan Lambert	Preston	Labor
Gabrielle de Vietri	Richmond	Greens
Martha Haylett	Ripon	Labor
Kim O'Keefe	Shepparton	Nationals
Dylan Wight	Tarneit	Labor
Lauren Kathage	Yan Yean	Labor

### *Legislative Council*

Name	Seat	Party
Renee Heath	Eastern Victoria	Liberals
Evan Mulholland	Northern Metropolitan	Liberals
Aiv Puglielli	North-Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Nick McGowan	North-Eastern Metropolitan	Liberals
Gaelle Broad	Northern Victoria	Nationals
Georgie Purcell	Northern Victoria	Animal Justice
Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell	Northern Victoria	One Nation
Katherine Copsey	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
John Berger	Southern Metropolitan	Labor
Ryan Batchelor	Southern Metropolitan	Labor
Rachel Payne	South-Eastern Metropolitan	Legalise Cannabis
Ann-Marie Hermans	South-Eastern Metropolitan	Liberals
Michael Galea	South-Eastern Metropolitan	Labor
David Ettershank	Western Metropolitan	Legalise Cannabis
Moira Deeming	Western Metropolitan	Liberals
Trung Luu	Western Metropolitan	Liberals
Sarah Mansfield	Western Victoria	Greens
Joe McCracken	Western Victoria	Liberals
Jacinta Ermacora	Western Victoria	Labor

## 9 | Women in Parliament

The number of women in Parliament continued an upward trend following the 2022 state election. Sixty-two women were elected to the Victorian Parliament, an increase of nine compared to the previous election.

**Table 9.1 - Women in Victorian Parliament**

Election year	Number of women elected	% of women in Parliament
2006	38	29.7
2010	42	32.8
2014	48	37.5
2018	53	41.4
2022	62	48.8

**Table 9.2 - Composition of Victorian Parliament by gender and chamber**

Chamber	Men	Women	% of women by chamber
Legislative Assembly	48	40	45.5
Legislative Council	18	22	55

**Table 9.3 - Women in Victorian Parliament by party**

Party	No. of women	Party total	% of women by party
Labor	38	71	53.5
Liberal	10	30	33.3
Nationals	6	11	54.5
Greens	5	8	62.5
Legalise Cannabis	1	2	50
Animal Justice Party	1	1	100
Democratic Labour Party	0	1	0
Liberal Democrats	0	1	0
One Nation	1	1	100

Source: A. Hough (2023) *Gender composition of Australian parliaments by party: a quick guide*, Research Paper Series, 2022–23, 23 January.

**Table 9.4 - Comparison of Australian parliaments by gender (as of 23 January 2023)**

Parliament	No. of men	No. of women	% of women
Victoria	66	62	48.8
Commonwealth	126	101	44.5
New South Wales	90	45	33.3
Queensland	64	29	31.2
Western Australia	51	44	46.3
South Australia	42	27	39.1
Tasmania	20	20	50
Australian Capital Territory	12	13	52
Northern Territory	12	12	50
Total	482	353	42.3

Source: A. Hough (2023) *Gender composition of Australian parliaments by party: a quick guide*, Research Paper Series, 2022–23, 23 January.

## 10 | The new Andrews ministry

Following the election, Daniel Andrews unveiled his 22-person cabinet on 5 December 2022. In 2018, the Andrews Government was the first Victorian government to achieve gender equality in cabinet with 11 out of 22 cabinet members being women.<sup>301</sup> Andrews's new cabinet increases that number to 14.

Minister	Portfolios <sup>302</sup>
Daniel Andrews	Premier
Jacinta Allan	Deputy Premier; Commonwealth Games Delivery; Suburban Rail Loop; Transport and Infrastructure
Tim Pallas	Treasurer; Industrial Relations; Trade and Investment
Danny Pearson	Assistant Treasurer; Consumer Affairs; Government Services; Worksafe and the TAC
Jaclyn Symes	Attorney-General; Emergency Services
Gayle Tierney	Agriculture; Higher Education; Training and Skills
Gabrielle Williams	Ambulance Services; Mental Health; Treaty and First Peoples
Melissa Horne	Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation; Local Government; Ports and Freight; Roads and Road Safety
Lizzie Blandthorn	Child Protection and Family Services; Disability, Ageing and Carers
Lily D'Ambrosio	Climate Action; Energy and Resources; State Electricity Commission
Harriet Shing	Commonwealth Games Legacy; Equality; Regional Development; Water
Ros Spence	Community Sport; Prevention of Family Violence; Suburban Development
Enver Erdogan	Corrections; Victim Support; Youth Justice
Steve Dimopoulos	Creative Industries; Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Anthony Carbines	Crime Prevention; Police; Racing
Ingrid Stitt	Early Childhood and Pre-Prep; Environment
Natalie Hutchins	Education; Women
Ben Carroll	Employment; Industry and Innovation; Manufacturing Sovereignty; Public Transport
Mary-Anne Thomas	Health; Health Infrastructure; Medical Research
Colin Brooks	Housing; Multicultural Affairs
Sonya Kilkenny	Outdoor Recreation; Planning
Natalie Suleyman	Small Business; Veterans; Youth

<sup>301</sup> A. Carey (2018) 'Labor makes history with first cabinet that is 50 per cent women', *The Age*, 27 November.

<sup>302</sup> D. Andrews, Premier of Victoria (2022) *New Cabinet To Keep Doing What Matters*, media release, 5 December.

# 11 | Further results

## Legislative Assembly

**Table 11.1 - Primary vote results—Legislative Assembly, all districts**

District	Labor	Liberal	The Nationals	Greens	Other	Won by	Retain/change from 2018
Albert Park	36.4	29.8	0	20.9	12.8	Labor	Retain
Ashwood (new)	40.3	37.2	0	14.8	7.8	Labor	Retain
Bass	32.6	30.1	13.3	8.1	15.9	Labor	Retain
Bayswater	41.3	35.6	0	7.4	15.6	Labor	Retain
Bellarine	42.6	33.1	0	11.7	12.5	Labor	Retain
Benambra	13.1	42.9	0	3.9	40.1	Liberals	Retain
Bendigo East	48.3	27.4	0	8.7	15.7	Labor	Retain
Bendigo West	46.5	25	0	11.5	17	Labor	Retain
Bentleigh	45.8	36.3	0	10.7	7.1	Labor	Retain
Berwick (new)	35.8	45.2	0	9.7	9.2	Liberals	Retain
Box Hill	41.3	35.2	0	14.1	9.4	Labor	Retain
Brighton	24.7	45.6	0	13.8	15.9	Liberals	Retain
Broadmeadows	45.7	23.1	0	8.4	22.8	Labor	Retain
Brunswick	28.5	10.9	0	43.6	17	Greens	Retain
Bulleen	32.7	48.1	0	10.7	8.6	Liberals	Retain
Bundoora	47.8	27.7	0	13.2	11.3	Labor	Retain
Carrum	49.9	30.3	0	7.6	12.2	Labor	Retain
Caulfield	27.8	44.5	0	15.8	11.9	Liberals	Retain
Clarinda	45.5	28.6	0	8	18	Labor	Retain
Cranbourne	46.2	27.5	0	5.6	20.7	Labor	Retain
Croydon	34.1	43	0	10.8	12.1	Liberals	Retain
Dandenong	54.9	21.5	0	8.1	15.5	Labor	Retain
Eildon	29	47.5	0	11.2	12.4	Liberals	Retain
Eltham	44.5	35.6	0	13.4	6.4	Labor	Retain
Essendon	41.1	29.5	0	15.2	14.3	Labor	Retain
Eureka (new)	41	31.6	0	10.8	16.6	Labor	Retain
Euroa	30.4	21.8	31.9	5.3	10.5	Nationals	Retain
Evelyn	32.7	46.7	0	9.3	11.3	Liberals	Retain
Footscray	43.1	17.9	0	22.4	16.6	Labor	Retain
Frankston	41.5	29.4	0	12.7	16.3	Labor	Retain
Geelong	46.4	27.2	0	15.3	11.1	Labor	Retain
Gippsland East	17	0	63.3	6.4	13.2	Nationals	Retain
Gippsland South	23.4	0	53.3	8.4	15	Nationals	Retain

District	Labor	Liberal	The Nationals	Greens	Other	Won by	Retain/change from 2018
Glen Waverley (new)	40.6	40.2	0	9.6	9.6	Labor	Gain
Greenvale (new)	41.5	25.4	0	5.8	27.3	Labor	Retain
Hastings	37.3	39.8	0	10	12.9	Labor	Gain
Hawthorn	22.1	42.3	0	11.1	24.5	Liberals	Gain
Ivanhoe	42.7	31	0	19.2	7.1	Labor	Retain
Kalkallo (new)	53.9	22.9	0	5.3	18	Labor	Retain
Kew	22.7	44.3	0	8.3	24.7	Liberals	Retain
Kororoit	43.3	24.3	0	6.6	25.9	Labor	Retain
Lara	49.7	21.4	0	11.3	17.6	Labor	Retain
Laverton (new)	45.8	22.2	0	9.4	22.6	Labor	Retain
Lowan	19.8	0	58.9	5.9	15.4	Nationals	Retain
Macedon	41.4	30	0	12.5	16.1	Labor	Retain
Malvern	26.2	52.5	0	15.7	5.6	Liberals	Retain
Melbourne	30.7	17.7	0	37.3	14.4	Greens	Retain
Melton	37.7	24.3	0	4.5	33.4	Labor	Retain
Mildura	6.5	19.1	25.9	2.3	46.2	Nationals	Gain
Mill Park	49.9	25.9	0	7.3	16.9	Labor	Retain
Monbulk	36.1	29.5	0	15	19.5	Labor	Retain
Mordialloc	44	31.4	0	10.3	14.3	Labor	Retain
Mornington	22	42.6	0	6.4	29.1	Liberals	Retain
Morwell	31.4	15.5	22.9	4.2	25.9	Nationals	Gain
Mulgrave	51	17.2	0	5.1	26.7	Labor	Retain
Murray Plains	18.8	0	61.8	3.9	15.6	Nationals	Retain
Narre Warren North	46.8	27.3	0	6.8	19.1	Labor	Retain
Narracan*	0	45.0	0	11.1	43.0	Liberals	Retain
Narre Warren South	48	28.7	0	6.6	16.8	Labor	Retain
Nepean	32.6	48.1	0	8.8	10.5	Liberals	Gain
Niddrie	44	34	0	7.4	14.7	Labor	Retain
Northcote	40.6	12.2	0	30	17.2	Labor	Retain
Oakleigh	45	29.3	0	16.6	9.1	Labor	Retain
Ovens Valley	20.7	0	52.1	9	18.2	Nationals	Retain
Pakenham (new)	33.8	32.4	0	6.6	27.1	Labor	Retain
Pascoe Vale	38.8	21	0	22.4	17.8	Labor	Retain
Point Cook (new)	40	24.7	0	6.8	28.5	Labor	Retain
Polwarth	29.3	42.5	0	16.7	11.6	Liberals	Retain
Prahran	26.6	31.1	0	36.4	6	Greens	Retain
Preston	37.6	17.3	0	15.1	30	Labor	Retain

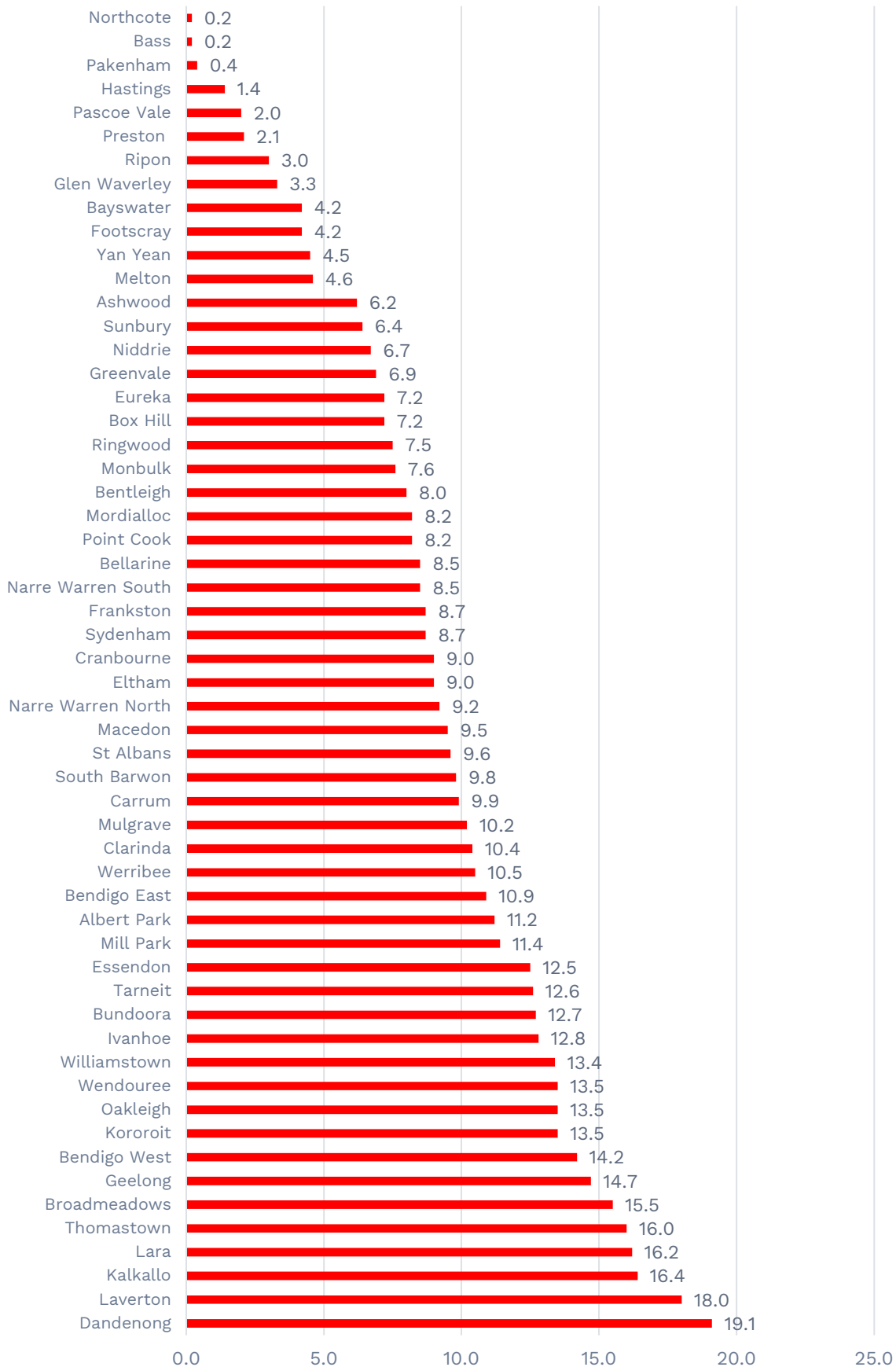
District	Labor	Liberal	The Nationals	Greens	Other	Won by	Retain/change from 2018
Richmond	32.8	18.8	0	34.7	13.8	Greens	Gain
Ringwood	39	33.8	0	15.5	11.6	Labor	Retain
Ripon	38.5	36.1	0	6	19.3	Labor	Gain
Rowville	32.9	40.6	0	7	19.4	Liberals	Retain
Sandringham	25.7	46.4	0	14.7	13.2	Liberals	Retain
Shepparton	8	20.6	32.1	2.6	36.9	Nationals	Gain
South Barwon	44.2	32.1	0	12.7	11	Labor	Retain
South-West Coast	21.2	42.9	0	5.4	30.5	Liberals	Retain
St Albans	42.3	25.4	0	6.8	25.6	Labor	Retain
Sunbury	43.1	31.5	0	6.5	18.8	Labor	Retain
Sydenham	43.5	29	0	5.8	21.7	Labor	Retain
Tarneit	46.6	26.8	0	7.4	19.2	Labor	Retain
Thomastown	51.8	24	0	6.8	17.4	Labor	Retain
Warrandyte	33.2	47.4	0	11.7	7.8	Liberals	Retain
Wendouree	47.6	29.8	0	10.4	12.3	Labor	Retain
Werribee	45.4	25.3	0	6.8	22.5	Labor	Retain
Williamstown	41.5	28	0	15.4	15	Labor	Retain
Yan Yean	41.4	33.9	0	6.4	18.2	Labor	Retain

\* Conducted as a supplementary election in January 2023.

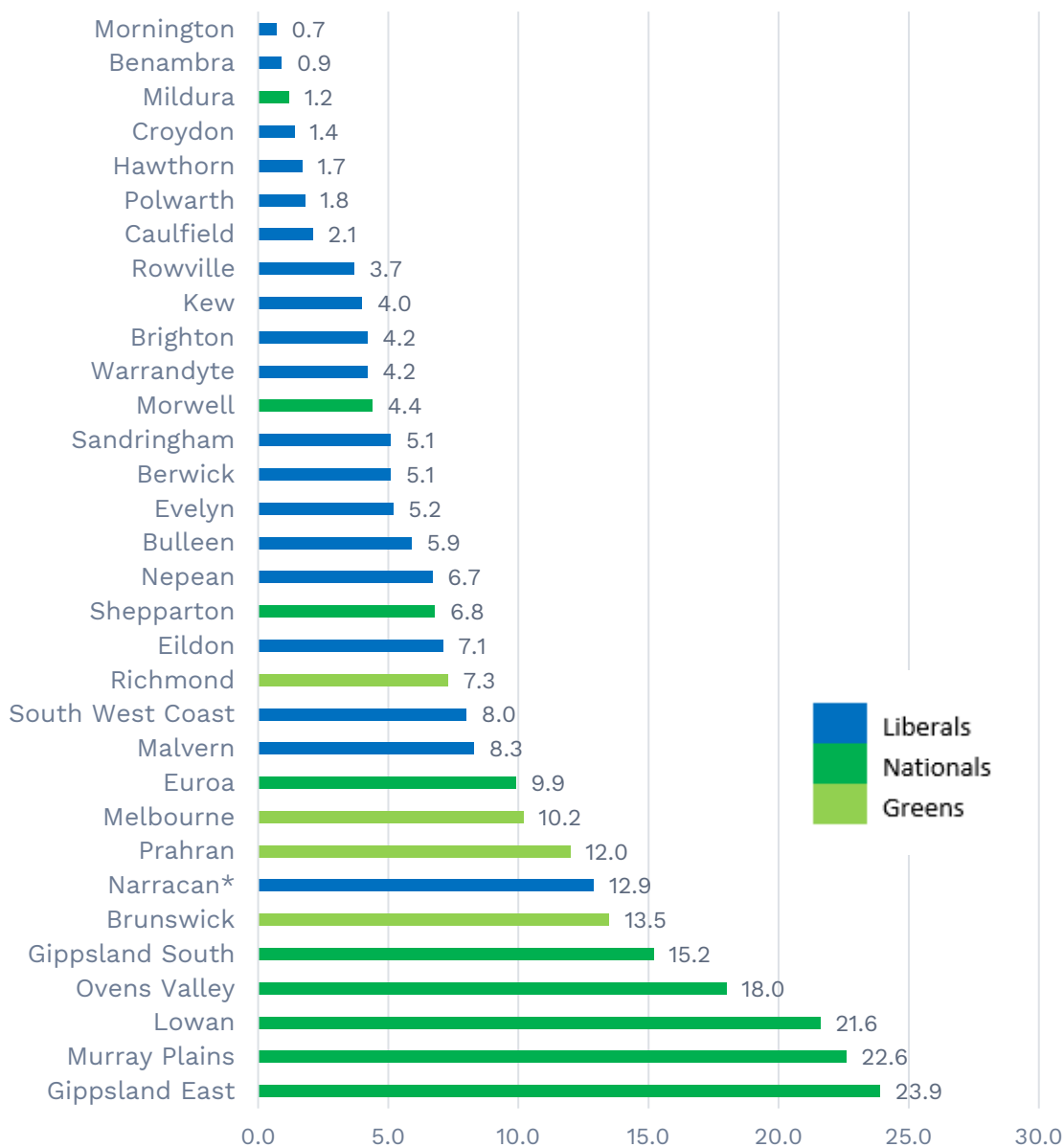
**See [here](#) for full and searchable Legislative Assembly booth-level data tables.**



**Figure 11.1a - Legislative Assembly—Margin (%) per seat won by Labor**



**Figure 11.1b - Legislative Assembly—Margin (%) per seat won by Liberals, Nationals and Greens**



\*Narracan conducted as a supplementary election in January 2023.

### Two-party-preferred swings

Calculating swings between 2018 and 2022 is complicated by the 2021 electoral redistribution. All electoral boundaries were changed and nine seats were abolished with nine new seats created. Any comparisons or analyses of swings based on district names are notional. Therefore, for an initial comparison, Table 11.2 matches new seats with the district boundaries established at the previous redistribution in 2013 (used in the 2014 and 2018 election) that best fit their location. These pairings are then used to calculate the percentage of swing to or from Labor in the 2022 election. For a detailed discussion of how swings have been calculated, and the different methods, see the Appendix at the end of this paper.

**Table 11.2 - Nominal matching of 2022 and 2018 Legislative Assembly electoral districts**

New district—2021	Approximate 2013 district
Ashwood	Mount Waverley
Berwick	Gembrook
Eureka	Buninyong
Glen Waverley	Forest hill
Greenvale	Yuroke
Kalkallo	Yuroke
Laverton	Altona
Pakenham	Gembrook
Point cook	Altona

Source: VEC (2022).

**Table 11.3 - Legislative Assembly—Two-party-preferred swings (%) from 2018 to 2022**

Each electorate's counting method is specified as one of 'preference distribution', 'two-candidate preferred' and 'two-party-preferred'. See the Appendix for an explanation of the Victorian Electoral Commission's counting methods.

District 2022	Method	Match district 2018	Swing to/from Labor (%)	Result
Albert Park	Preference distribution	Albert Park	-1.98	Labor retain
Ashwood (new)	Preference distribution	Mount Waverley	4.3	Labor gain
Bass	Preference distribution	Bass	-2.15	Labor retain
Bayswater	Preference distribution	Bayswater	3.84	Labor retain
Bellarine	Preference distribution	Bellarine	-2.99	Labor retain
Benambra	2PP	Benambra	-4.35	Liberals retain
Bendigo East	2CP	Bendigo East	-1.2	Labor retain
Bendigo West	2CP	Bendigo West	-4.2	Labor retain
Bentleigh	Preference distribution	Bentleigh	-3.87	Labor retain
Berwick (new)	2CP	Gembrook	-3.93	Liberals retain
Box Hill	Preference distribution	Box Hill	5.12	Labor retain
Brighton	2CP	Brighton	-3.1	Liberals retain
Broadmeadows	2CP	Broadmeadows	-14.83	Labor retain
Brunswick	2PP	Brunswick	-0.33	Greens retain
Bulleen	2CP	Bulleen	-0.17	Liberals retain
Bundoora	2CP	Bundoora	-4.69	Labor retain
Carrum	2CP	Carrum	-2.01	Labor retain
Caulfield	Preference distribution	Caulfield	-1.8	Liberals retain
Clarinda	2CP	Clarinda	-7.06	Labor retain
Cranbourne	2CP	Cranbourne	-1.98	Labor retain
Croydon	Preference distribution	Croydon	0.74	Liberals retain

District 2022	Method	Match district 2018	Swing to/from Labor (%)	Result
Dandenong	2CP	Dandenong	-4.82	Labor retain
Eildon	2CP	Eildon	-4.64	Liberals retain
Eltham	Preference distribution	Eltham	-0.07	Labor retain
Essendon	Preference distribution	Essendon	-3.41	Labor retain
Eureka (new)	Preference distribution	Buninyong	-5.07	Labor retain
Euroa	Preference distribution	Euroa	5.51	Nationals retain
Evelyn	2CP	Evelyn	-2.57	Liberals retain
Footscray	2PP	Footscray	-2.45	Labor retain
Frankston	Preference distribution	Frankston	-1.08	Labor retain
Geelong	Preference distribution	Geelong	4.57	Labor retain
Gippsland East	2CP	Gippsland East	-6.33	Nationals retain
Gippsland South	2CP	Gippsland South	0.08	Nationals retain
Glen Waverley (new)	Preference distribution	Forest Hill	4.45	Labor gain
Greenvale (new)	2CP	Yuroke	-13.34	Labor retain
Hastings	Preference distribution	Hastings	2.42	Labor gain
Hawthorn	Preference distribution	Hawthorn	-2.16	Liberals gain
Ivanhoe	Preference distribution	Ivanhoe	0.38	Labor retain
Kalkallo (new)	2CP	Yuroke	-3.83	Labor retain
Kew	Preference distribution	Kew	0.8	Liberals retain
Kororoit	2CP	Kororoit	-11.4	Labor retain
Lara	2CP	Lara	-2.99	Labor retain
Laverton (new)	2CP	Altona	3.45	Labor retain
Lowan	2CP	Lowan	1.87	Nationals retain
Macedon	Preference distribution	Macedon	-3.64	Labor retain
Malvern	2CP	Malvern	-2.18	Liberals retain
Melbourne	2PP	Melbourne	-0.24	Greens retain
Melton	Preference distribution	Melton	0.31	Labor retain
Mildura	2PP	Mildura	-8.5	Nationals gain
Mill Park	2CP	Mill Park	-13.46	Labor retain
Monbulk	Preference distribution	Monbulk	-1.06	Labor retain
Mordialloc	Preference distribution	Mordialloc	-4.71	Labor retain
Mornington	2PP	Mornington	-3.29	Liberals retain
Morwell	Preference distribution	Morwell	-6.82	Nationals retain
Mulgrave	2CP	Mulgrave	-2.51	Labor retain
Murray Plains	2CP	Murray Plains	1.07	Nationals retain

District 2022	Method	Match district 2018	Swing to/from Labor (%)	Result
Narracan*	No Labor candidate	Narracan	N/A	Liberals retain
Narre Warren North	2CP	Narre Warren North	-0.59	Labor retain
Narre Warren South	2CP	Narre Warren South	1.6	Labor retain
Nepean	2CP	Nepean	-7.59	Liberals gain
Niddrie	Preference distribution	Niddrie	-5.89	Labor retain
Northcote	2PP	Northcote	-1.53	Labor retain
Oakleigh	Preference distribution	Oakleigh	-2.3	Labor retain
Ovens Valley	2CP	Ovens Valley	-5.34	Nationals retain
Pakenham (new)	Preference distribution	Gembrook	1.18	Labor retain
Pascoe Vale	2PP	Pascoe Vale	3.93	Labor retain
Point Cook (new)	Preference distribution	Altona	-6.23	Labor retain
Polwarth	Preference distribution	Polwarth	3.62	Liberals retain
Prahran	2PP	Prahran	3.52	Greens retain
Preston	2PP	Preston	-8.83	Labor retain
Richmond^	^	Richmond	-18.67	Greens gain
Ringwood	Preference distribution	Ringwood	4.71	Labor retain
Ripon	Preference distribution	Ripon	3.01	Labor gain
Rowville	Preference distribution	Rowville	2.02	Liberals retain
Sandringham	2CP	Sandringham	-4.5	Liberals retain
Shepparton	2PP	Shepparton	-12.62	Nationals gain
South Barwon	Preference distribution	South Barwon	5.2	Labor retain
South-West Coast	Preference distribution	South-West Coast	-5.73	Liberals retain
St Albans	Preference distribution	St Albans	-11.97	Labor retain
Sunbury	Preference distribution	Sunbury	-7.92	Labor retain
Sydenham	2CP	Sydenham	-9.13	Labor retain
Tarneit	2CP	Tarneit	-5.44	Labor retain
Thomastown	2CP	Thomastown	-11.19	Labor retain
Warrandyte	2CP	Warrandyte	-0.27	Liberals retain
Wendouree	2CP	Wendouree	3.2	Labor retain
Werribee	2CP	Werribee	-2.05	Labor retain
Williamstown	Preference distribution	Williamstown	-8.63	Labor retain
Yan Yean	2CP	Yan Yean	-12.58	Labor retain

\* Conducted as a supplementary election in January 2023.

^No Liberal candidate in 2018.

## Legislative Assembly – Historic results

**Table 11.4 - Legislative Assembly—Elections 1992–2022, primary vote won (%)**

Party	1992	1996	1999	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018	2022*
Liberal	44	44	42.22	33.91	34.44	38.03	36.46	30.43	29.6
Labor	38.67	43.1	45.57	47.95	43.06	36.25	38.1	42.86	37
Greens	-	-	1.15	9.73	10.04	11.21	11.48	10.71	11.5
Nationals	7.75	6.7	4.8	4.3	5.17	6.75	5.53	4.77	4.8
Others	9.4	6.2	5.98	3.97	3.01	5.48	8.42	11.23	16.4

\*Figures do not include results for Narracan supplementary election.

**Table 11.5 - Legislative Assembly—Elections 1992–2022, seats won**

Party	1992	1996	1999	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018	2022
Liberal	52	49	36	17	23	35	30	21	19*
Labor	27	29	42	62	55	43	47	55	56
Greens	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	4
Nationals	9	9	7	7	9	10	8	6	9
Others	0	1	3	2	1	0	1	3	0

\*Includes seat won at supplementary election in Narracan.

## Legislative Council

**Table 11.6 - Legislative Council—Elections 1992–2022, primary vote won (%)**

Party	2006	2010	2014	2018	2022
Labor	41.45	35.36	33.46	39.22	33.00
Liberal	34.55	43.04	20.82	17.16	16.97
Nationals (Liberals/Nationals)	4.43	0.11 <sup>#</sup>	15.32 <sup>^</sup>	12.27 <sup>^</sup>	12.48
Greens	10.58	12.01	10.75	9.25	10.32
Legalise Cannabis Victoria	-	-	-	-	4.08
Democratic Labour Party	1.97	2.33	2.32	2.1	3.50
Liberal Democrats	-	-	-	2.5	2.63
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	-	-	-	-	2.05
Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Vic	-	-	1.65	3.02	2.05
Family First Victoria	-	-	-	-	2.01
Derryn Hinch's Justice Party	-	-	-	3.75	1.53
Animal Justice Party	-	-	-	2.47	1.51
Victorian Socialists	-	-	-	-	1.39
Fiona Patten's Reason Party (formerly Sex Party)	-	1.91	2.63	1.37	1.26
Freedom Party of Victoria	-	-	-	-	1.06
Restore Democracy Sack Dan Andrews	-	-	-	-	0.83
United Australia Party	-	-	-	-	0.83
Health Australia Party	-	-	-	-	0.58



Sustainable Australia Party	-	-	-	0.83	0.47
Others	7.02	5.22	12.84	7.55	1.45

#The Nationals low vote share for 2010 is due to a Coalition ticket.

^The Nationals ran on a joint ticket with the Liberal Party in the non-metropolitan regions.

**Table 11.6 - Legislative Council—Elections 1992–2022, seats won**

Party	2006	2010	2014	2018	2022
Labor	19	16	14	18	15
Liberal	15	18	14	10	12
Nationals	2	3	2	1	2
Greens	3	3	5	1	4
Legalise Cannabis Victoria	-	-	-	-	2
Democratic Labour Party	1	-	1	-	1
Liberal Democrats	-	-	-	2	1
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	-	-	-	-	1
Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party Vic	-	-	2	1	1
Family First Victoria	-	-	-	-	-
Derryn Hinch's Justice Party	-	-	-	3	-
Animal Justice Party	-	-	-	1	1
Victorian Socialists	-	-	-	-	-
Fiona Patten's Reason Party (formerly Sex Party)	-	-	1	1	-
Freedom Party of Victoria	-	-	-	-	-
Restore Democracy Sack Dan Andrews	-	-	-	-	-
United Australia Party	-	-	-	-	-
Health Australia Party	-	-	-	-	-
Sustainable Australia Party	-	-	-	1	-
Others	-	-	1	1	-

**See [here](#) for full Legislative Council results.**

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## Appendix

Table 11.3 outlines the two-party-preferred vote for each Legislative Assembly district. Two initial confounding factors complicate the data. First, the Victorian Electoral Commission's (VEC) approach to counting votes and preferences influences how results are displayed. Second, there are a growing number of seats where the two-candidate-preferred vote differs from the two-party-preferred result. Two-candidate-preferred refers to the *last two remaining candidates, regardless of their party*. Two-party-preferred refers to the proportion of votes the major parties received after preference distribution, *even if the last remaining candidates are not affiliated with either Labor or the Coalition parties*.

Therefore, Table 11.3 adopts the VEC's categorisation of district results as a starting point. As Antony Green outlines, the VEC employs different counting types to estimate two-party-preferred votes.<sup>303</sup> There are three methods for deriving the two-party-preferred vote. A '2CP' column in the 'Method' column indicates the two-candidate-preferred votes correspond with the final two-party-preferred count between Labor and Coalition candidates. For example, Mill Park records a 61.43 per cent result for Labor in 2021. In 2018 it was 74.89 per cent, so a swing of 13.46 per cent away from Labor took place.

On the other hand, 'Preference Distribution' means one candidate passed the 50 per cent threshold and the further allocation of preferences was not needed. In these districts, the VEC uses the totals of indicative preference counts by polling place and vote type to estimate the two-party-preferred vote.

However, when the final pairing of candidates was not from Labor or the Coalition, a separate two-party-preferred count was conducted. It is represented by '2PP' in the 'Method' column. In Prahran, for example, the two-party-preferred vote was 61.07 per cent for Labor and 38.93 per cent for the Liberals. Yet Greens candidate Sam Hibbins won the seat with 62.01 per cent of the two-candidate preferred vote.

The percentage swing in the vote between 2018 and 2022 uses the two-candidate-preferred vote in the previous election for the '2CP' and 'Preference Distribution' categories. It is the difference between the vote percentage in 2022 and 2018. The '2PP' category, on the other hand, uses the two-party-preferred result for comparison. Hence the Prahran district swing of 3.52 per cent results from the lift in Labor's two-party-preferred vote from 57.55 to 61.07 per cent.

There is also a third confounding factor: the 2021 redistribution of electoral boundaries. As Table 11.2 demonstrates, there were nine new districts, and all electorates experienced boundary changes. As such, the swings in Table 11.3 are all 'nominal' as they either do not consider the new boundaries or use older districts that roughly correspond to the newer entity locations as a comparison.

However, these calculations use VEC counts—the 'official' result—as its basis. Notional and actual swings vary, various approaches to their measurement exist and two-party-preferred results in Table 11.3 differ from other sources (such as the ABC that use other estimates and adjustments). Green, for example, estimates two-party-preferred results based on inferences drawn from checked primary votes. The ABC also used estimates of the 2018 vote in current seat boundaries, although they do not outline the methods used to derive them.

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<sup>303</sup> A. Green (2023) 'VIC22 – 2-Party Preferred Results and Swings by District', *Antony Green's Election Blog*, 11 January.

## Suggested citation

Huf, B., B. Reid, A. Tonkin & C. Triscari (2023), *The 2022 Victorian state election*, Parliamentary Library & Information Service, Melbourne, Parliament of Victoria.

## Acknowledgements

The Parliament of Victoria Library acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work and live. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present, and we value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and knowledge.

The authors would like to thank Marianne Aroozoo, Annie Wright, Debra Reeves and Carolyn Macvean for their assistance in the preparation of this paper.

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ISSN 2204-4752 (Print) 2204-4760 (Online)