

# Polling - Misinformation and the referendum

*October 2023*

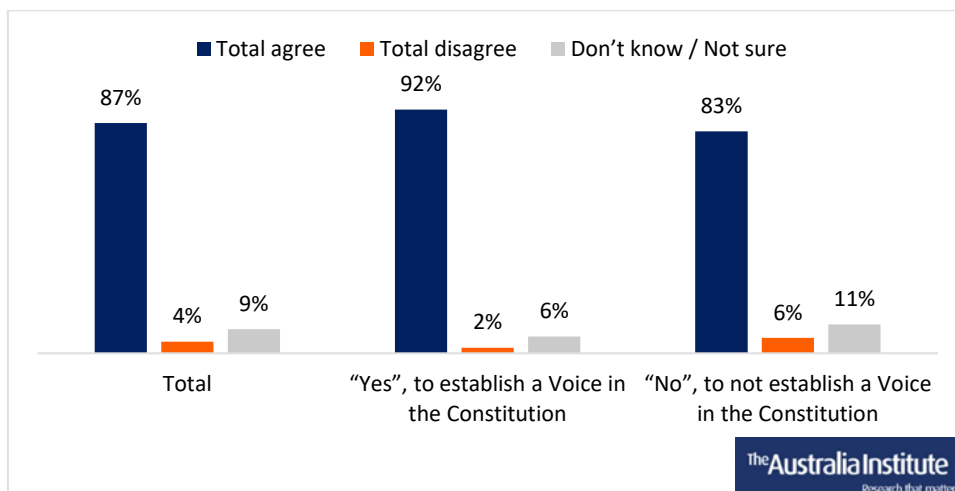
## Key results

The Australia Institute conducted a special exit poll, surveying a sample of 1,547 Australians from 6pm Saturday 14 October, about the Voice referendum and misinformation. The results were weighted according to the latest referendum count.

The key results show that:

- Nine in 10 Australians (87%) agree that truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign; only 4% disagree.
- Both those who voted “Yes” and those who voted “No” to the Voice overwhelmingly agree that truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign (92% and 83% respectively).
- Seven in 10 Australians (72%) agree they are concerned about lies and misinformation that circulated on social media during the referendum campaign, compared to one in five who disagree (17%).
- Seven in 10 Australians (72%) agree it is now up to the Albanese Government to come up with solutions to close the gap, compared to 47% who agree it is up to No campaigners.

**Figure 1: Truth in political advertising laws for next election, by Voice vote**



Respondents were shown the following:

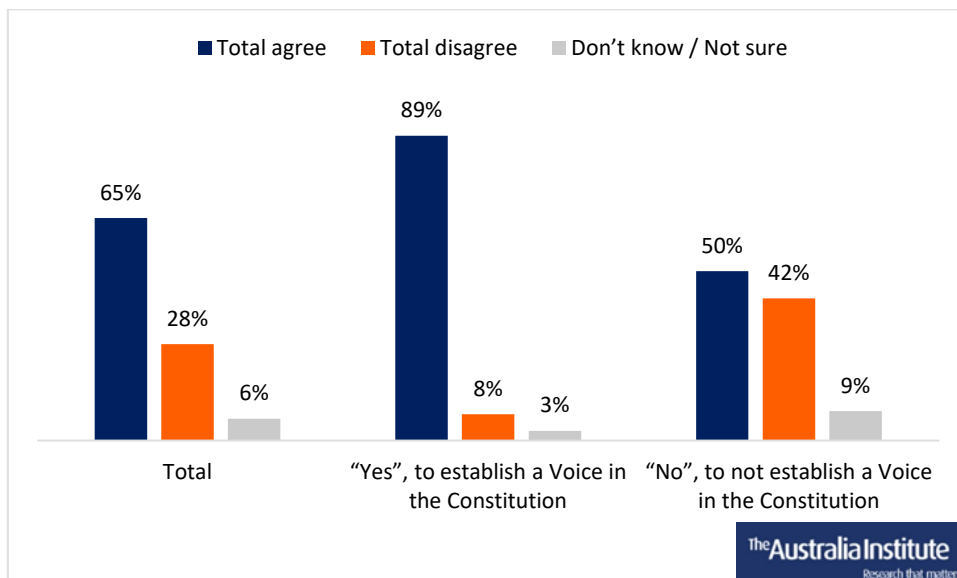
“Closing the gap” refers to the gap between health, education, employment and other outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the general Australian population, such as lower life expectancy or being less likely to go to university.

They were then asked if they thought more needs to be done to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The results show that:

- Two in three Australians (65%) agree that more needs to be done to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, compared to three in 10 (28%) who disagree.
- Nine in 10 (89%) of those who voted “Yes” to the Voice agree that more needs to be done to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, compared to the one in 10 who disagree (8%).
- Half (50%) of those who “No” to the Voice agree that more needs to be done to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, more than the two in five who disagree (42%).

**Figure 2: More needs to be done for Indigenous Australians, by Voice vote**



Respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

Since they rejected the Voice, it is now up to No campaigners to come up with solutions to close the gap.

And

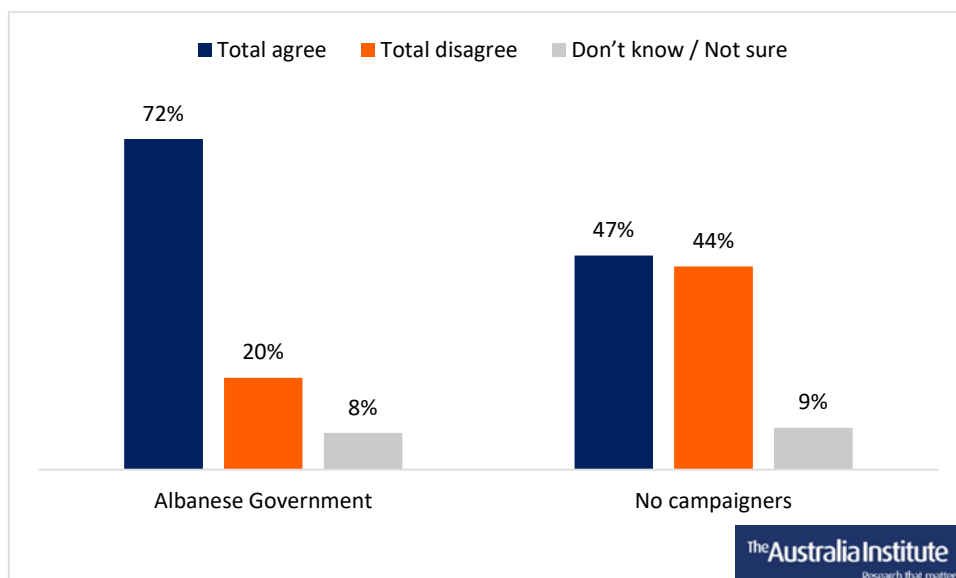
It is now up to the Albanese Government to come up with solutions to close the gap.

These two statements were shown in random order in a grid.

The results show that:

- Seven in 10 Australians (72%) agree it is now up to the Albanese Government to come up with solutions to close the gap, while only 47% of Australians agree it is up to No campaigners.
- Among both “Yes” and “No” voters, more agree that it is up to the Albanese Government to come up with solutions than agree it is up to No campaigners:
  - 84% of Yes voters agree it is now up to the Albanese Government to come up with solutions to close the gap and 75% agree it is up to No campaigners.
  - 64% of No voters agree it is now up to the Albanese Government to come up with solutions to close the gap, while only 28% agree it is up to No campaigners.

**Figure 3: It is now up to whom to come up with solutions to close the gap?**



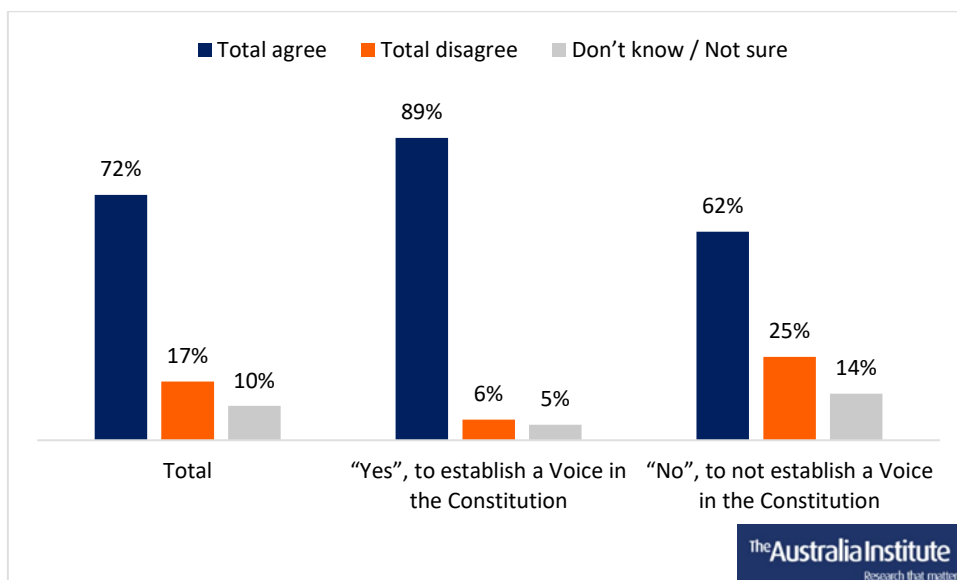
Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the following statement regarding the referendum.

“I am concerned about lies and misinformation that circulated on social media during the referendum campaign.”

The results show that:

- Seven in 10 Australians (72%) agree they are concerned about lies and misinformation that circulated on social media during the referendum campaign, compared to one in five who disagree (17%).
- Of those who voted “Yes” to the Voice, nine in 10 (89%) agree they are concerned about lies and misinformation that circulated on social media during the referendum campaign.
- Of those who voted “No” to the Voice, three in five (62%) agree they are concerned about lies and misinformation that circulated on social media during the referendum campaign.
- Across all voting intentions, more than three in five Australians agree they are concerned about lies and misinformation that circulated on social media during the referendum campaign (Labor 78%, Coalition 64%, Greens 82%, One Nation 61% and Independent/Other 72%).

**Figure 4: Agreement with concern about misinformation, by Voice vote**



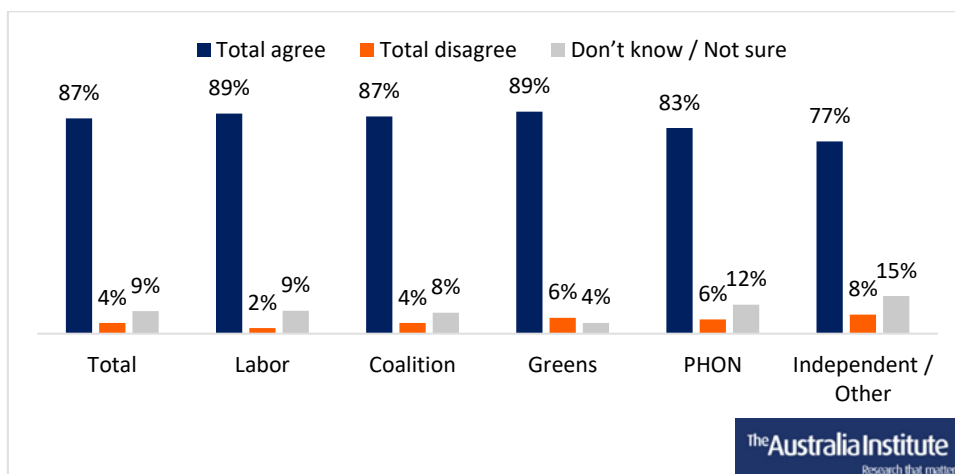
Respondents were asked to what extent do they agree or disagree with the following statement?

“Truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign.”

The results show that:

- Nine in 10 Australians (87%) agree that truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign, compared to just one in 20 who disagree (4%).
- Of those who voted “Yes” to the Voice, nine in 10 (92%) agree that truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign, compared to 2% who disagree.
- Of those who voted “No” to the Voice, four in five (83%) agree that truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign, compared to 6% who disagree.
- Across all voting intentions, three in four or more Australians agree that truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign (Labor 89%, Coalition 87%, Greens 89%, One Nation 83% and Independent/Other 77%).

**Figure 5: Truth in political advertising laws for next election, by voting intention**



The results are very similar to those found in the Australia Institute’s special exit poll for the 2022 federal election,<sup>1</sup> showing that Australian support for truth in political advertising laws has been consistently high.

<sup>1</sup> Arya (2022) *Political advertising on social media platforms during the 2022 federal election*, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/report/political-advertising-on-social-media-platforms-during-the-2022-federal-election/>

## Method

Between 14 and 17 October 2023, The Australia Institute surveyed 1,005 adults living in Australia, online through Dynata’s panel, with nationally representative samples by gender, age group and state/territory. A further 416 South Australians and 126 Queenslanders were sampled to produce more precise results, but weighting was used to ensure that people from these states were not over-represented in national results.

Voting crosstabs show voting intentions for the House of Representatives. Those who were undecided were asked which way they were leaning; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs.

The research is compliant with the [Australian Polling Council Quality Mark standards](#). The long methodology disclosure statement follows.

### Long disclosure statement

The results were weighted by three variables (gender, age group and state or territory) based on Australian Bureau of Statistics [“National, state and territory population”](#) data, and by the national referendum results based on the Australian Electoral Commission Tally Room count on the 17 October 2023, using the raking method. Those who answered the gender identity question as “Non-binary”, “I use a different term”, or “Prefer not to answer” had their responses included with females for the purpose of reporting, due to constraints from weighting data availability. This resulted in an effective sample size of 1,110.

The margin of error (95% confidence level) for the national results is  $\pm 3\%$ .

Results are shown only for larger states.

Voting intention questions appeared just after the initial demographic questions, before policy questions. Respondents who answered “Don’t know / Not sure” for voting intention were then asked a leaning question; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs. “Coalition” includes separate responses for Liberal and National. “Other” refers to Independent/Other, and minor parties in cases where they were included in the voting intention but represent too small a sample to be reported separately in the crosstabs.



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## Detailed results

Preceding questions in the poll are expected to have influenced the results of some of the questions published here. The questions, and the response options for each question, are included in the order that they appeared:

**“Closing the gap” refers to the gap between health, education, employment and other outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the general Australian population, such as lower life expectancy or being less likely to go to university.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

Response options were presented in random order.

**“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disadvantaged compared to the general Australian population.”**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don’t know / Not sure

**“More needs to be done to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.”**

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	28%	27%	31%	28%	26%	25%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	39%	37%	37%	40%	40%	34%
<b>Disagree</b>	16%	17%	16%	13%	15%	20%	16%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	12%	12%	12%	13%	10%	9%	13%
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	6%	5%	8%	6%	7%	5%	11%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>PHON</i>	<i>Other</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	35%	17%	49%	9%	22%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	42%	41%	30%	31%	30%
<b>Disagree</b>	16%	11%	22%	11%	25%	19%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	12%	7%	14%	8%	29%	17%
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	6%	5%	7%	3%	5%	13%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>18-29</i>	<i>30-39</i>	<i>40-49</i>	<i>50-59</i>	<i>60+</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	35%	30%	20%	28%	25%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	33%	40%	43%	32%	40%
<b>Disagree</b>	16%	14%	13%	16%	20%	18%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	12%	13%	11%	17%	8%	10%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	6%	4%	6%	4%	12%	7%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>"Yes" to Voice</i>	<i>"No" to Voice</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	51%	13%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	39%	37%
<b>Disagree</b>	16%	5%	24%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	12%	3%	18%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	6%	3%	9%

**“Since they rejected the Voice, it is now up to No campaigners to come up with solutions to close the gap.”**

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	19%	22%	15%	19%	17%	19%	20%
<b>Agree</b>	28%	25%	30%	32%	31%	25%	22%
<b>Disagree</b>	24%	22%	25%	21%	26%	24%	24%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	21%	22%	19%	21%	18%	21%	20%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	9%	8%	11%	8%	8%	10%	14%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>PHON</i>	<i>Other</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	19%	27%	10%	29%	7%	11%
<b>Agree</b>	28%	32%	25%	33%	21%	21%
<b>Disagree</b>	24%	18%	32%	17%	27%	25%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	21%	13%	26%	12%	38%	27%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	9%	9%	7%	9%	7%	16%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>18-29</i>	<i>30-39</i>	<i>40-49</i>	<i>50-59</i>	<i>60+</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	19%	25%	19%	15%	17%	18%
<b>Agree</b>	28%	31%	34%	28%	24%	23%
<b>Disagree</b>	24%	24%	19%	24%	24%	26%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	21%	13%	19%	27%	21%	24%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	9%	7%	10%	7%	13%	9%



	<b>Total</b>	<b>“Yes” to Voice</b>	<b>“No” to Voice</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	19%	37%	7%
<b>Agree</b>	28%	38%	21%
<b>Disagree</b>	24%	13%	31%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	21%	4%	31%
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	9%	8%	10%

“It is now up to the Albanese Government to come up with solutions to close the gap.”

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>QLD</b>	<b>WA</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	33%	24%	30%	29%	27%	28%
<b>Agree</b>	44%	41%	46%	43%	46%	43%	45%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	12%	11%	11%	11%	13%	9%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9%	8%	9%	10%	6%	9%	9%
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	8%	6%	9%	6%	7%	8%	9%

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Labor</b>	<b>Coalition</b>	<b>Greens</b>	<b>PHON</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	31%	28%	29%	16%	29%
<b>Agree</b>	44%	44%	44%	46%	46%	34%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	11%	10%	13%	14%	11%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9%	5%	10%	5%	19%	13%
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	8%	8%	7%	7%	5%	13%

	<b>Total</b>	<b>18-29</b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>40-49</b>	<b>50-59</b>	<b>60+</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	28%	25%	26%	28%	32%
<b>Agree</b>	44%	46%	50%	47%	39%	38%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	12%	7%	14%	14%	11%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9%	7%	9%	8%	8%	10%
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	8%	6%	9%	5%	10%	9%

	<b>Total</b>	<b>“Yes” to Voice</b>	<b>“No” to Voice</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	28%	36%	23%
<b>Agree</b>	44%	48%	41%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	8%	14%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9%	3%	12%
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	8%	6%	9%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding the referendum?

“I had enough information to make an informed vote.”

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / Not sure

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding the referendum?

“I am concerned about lies and misinformation that circulated on social media during the referendum campaign.”

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	35%	36%	34%	38%	31%	32%	33%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	36%	38%	36%	43%	36%	37%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	12%	11%	9%	13%	15%	15%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	6%	7%	5%	6%	5%	6%	7%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	10%	8%	12%	10%	8%	11%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>PHON</i>	<i>Other</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	35%	39%	27%	45%	31%	34%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	40%	37%	37%	30%	38%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	10%	13%	7%	17%	10%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	6%	3%	10%	4%	7%	7%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	10%	8%	12%	7%	16%	11%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>18-29</i>	<i>30-39</i>	<i>40-49</i>	<i>50-59</i>	<i>60+</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	35%	38%	38%	33%	31%	34%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	43%	39%	38%	37%	33%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	10%	10%	17%	11%	10%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	6%	3%	7%	5%	6%	8%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	10%	6%	6%	7%	16%	15%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>“Yes” to Voice</i>	<i>“No” to Voice</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	35%	51%	24%
<b>Agree</b>	38%	38%	37%
<b>Disagree</b>	11%	4%	16%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	6%	2%	9%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	10%	5%	14%

**During the referendum campaign, how often have you come across political ads that you know to be misleading?**

- At least once a day
- About once a week
- About once a month
- Never
- Don't know / Not sure

**Do you approve or disapprove of the job that Anthony Albanese is doing as Prime Minister of Australia?**

- Strongly approve
- Approve
- Disapprove
- Strongly disapprove
- Don't know / Not sure

**Do you approve or disapprove of the job that Peter Dutton is doing as Opposition Leader?**

- Strongly approve
- Approve
- Disapprove
- Strongly disapprove
- Don't know / Not sure

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

“Truth in political advertising laws should be in place in time for the next federal election campaign.”

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	46%	48%	45%	46%	43%	50%	43%
<b>Agree</b>	40%	40%	41%	39%	44%	39%	37%
<b>Disagree</b>	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	9%	7%	11%	10%	10%	7%	13%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>PHON</i>	<i>Other</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	46%	47%	42%	58%	40%	47%
<b>Agree</b>	40%	42%	45%	31%	42%	30%
<b>Disagree</b>	3%	1%	3%	6%	3%	5%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	9%	9%	8%	4%	12%	15%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>18-29</i>	<i>30-39</i>	<i>40-49</i>	<i>50-59</i>	<i>60+</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	46%	37%	37%	41%	55%	57%
<b>Agree</b>	40%	52%	41%	48%	32%	32%
<b>Disagree</b>	3%	4%	6%	1%	1%	3%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	1%	0%	2%	3%	2%	1%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	9%	7%	14%	8%	10%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>“Yes” to Voice</i>	<i>“No” to Voice</i>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	46%	53%	42%
<b>Agree</b>	40%	39%	41%
<b>Disagree</b>	3%	2%	4%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	1%	0%	2%
<b>Don't know / Not sure</b>	9%	6%	11%