

Polling - Cost of living

November 2023

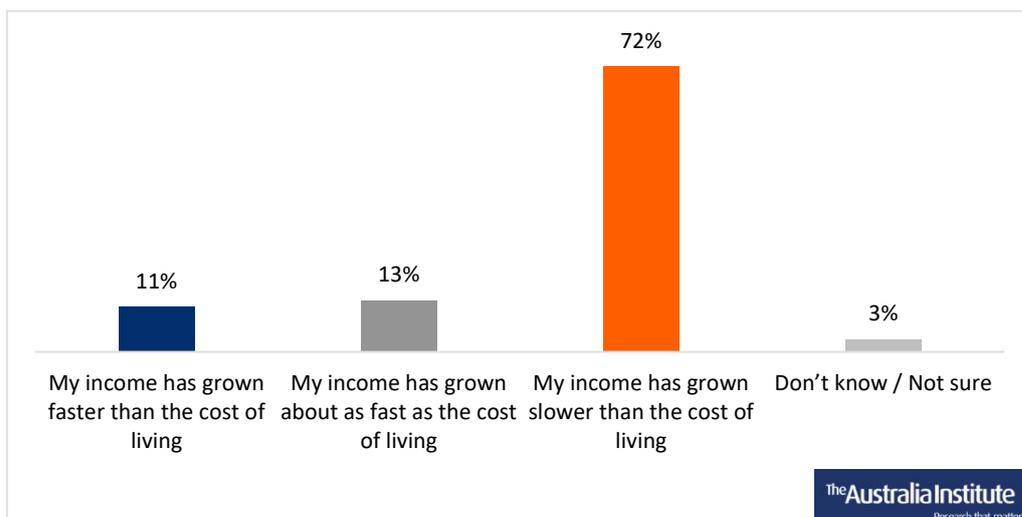
Key results

The Australia Institute surveyed a sample of 1,379 Australians about their wages growth and the cost of living over the past year.

The results show that:

- Seven in 10 Australians (72%) say their income grew slower than the cost of living over the past year, with 38% saying their income grew much slower.
- Australians earning more than \$200,000 were the only group where a majority (53%) said their income either grew as fast as or faster than the cost of living.
- 40% of Australians feel that Labor has a better approach to cost of living and low wages growth, compared to 33% who feel the Coalition have a better approach.
- By age group, only among Australians aged 60 and older do more trust the Coalition (38%) on issues of cost and living and low wages growth (Labor 35%).
- More Australians living in metropolitan areas trust Labor than trust the Coalition (42% vs 31%); the reverse is true in rural areas (33% vs 38%).

Figure 1: Income growth compared to cost of living

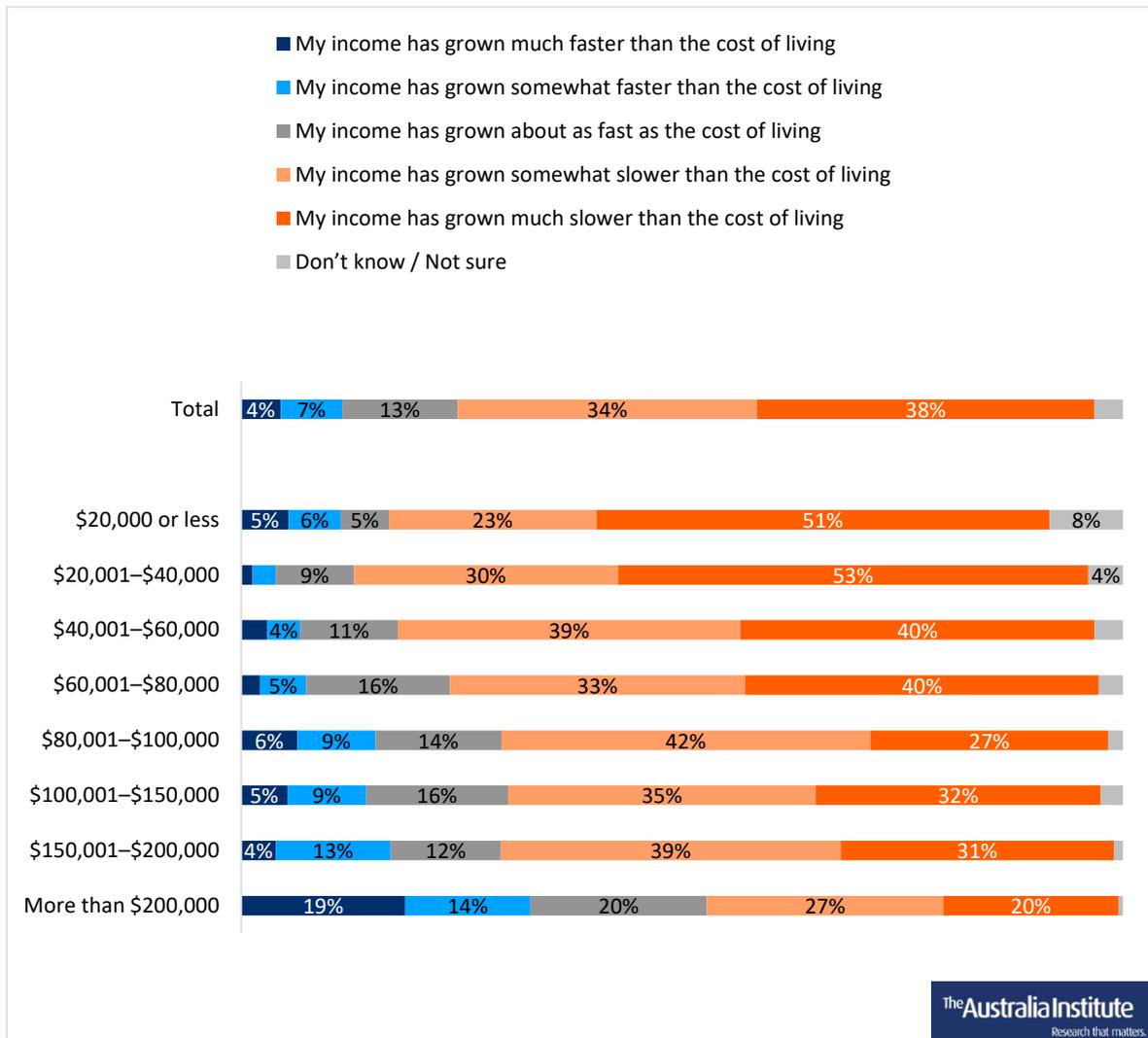


Respondents were asked about how they think their income in the past year has compared to the increase in the cost of living.

The results show that:

- Seven in 10 Australians (72%) say their income has grown slower than the cost of living.
 - 25% say their income either grew as fast as or faster than the cost of living.
- Australians earning more than \$200,000 are the only group where a majority (53%) say their income either grew as fast as or faster than the cost of living.
 - 33% of Australians earning more than \$200,000 say their income grew faster and 19% say it grew much faster than the cost of living over the past year. However, even among those earning more than \$200,000, 47% say that their income grew slower or much slower than the cost of living.
- This contrasts significantly with lower income Australians.
 - Only 4% of Australians earning between \$20,001 and \$40,000 say their income grew faster than the cost of living, with only 1% saying it grew much faster.
 - 83% of Australians earning between \$20,001 and \$40,000 say their income grew slower than the cost of living, with over half (53%) saying it grew much slower.

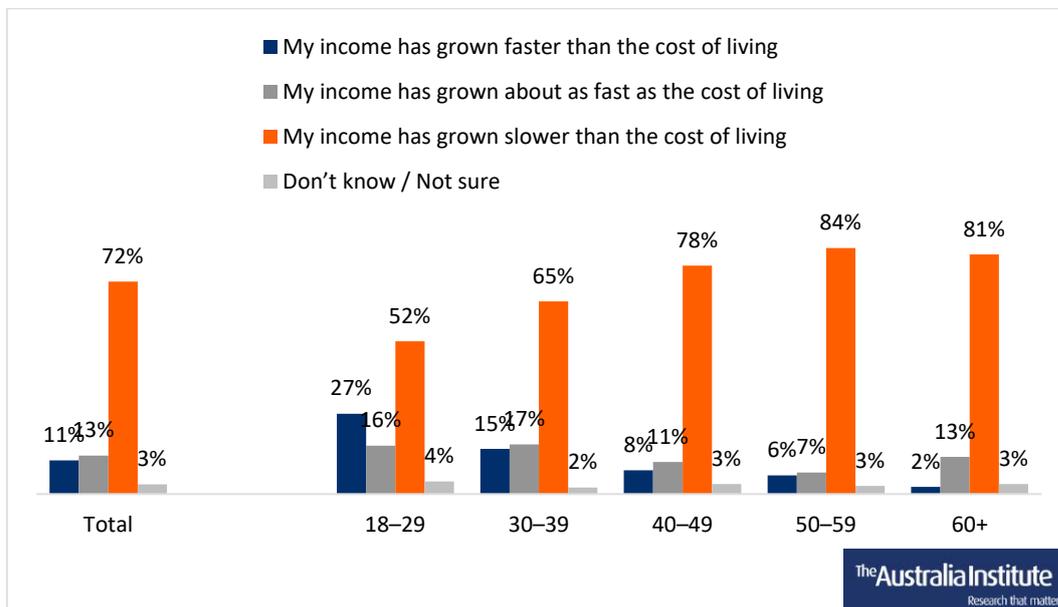
Figure 2: Income compared to cost of living, by income bracket



Results by age show that:

- More younger Australians than older Australians say their income grew faster than the cost of living.
 - 27% of Australians aged 18-29 say their income grew faster than the cost of living, with 13% saying it grew much faster.
 - This contrasts with older Australians, with only 2% of Australians aged sixty and older saying their income grew faster than the cost of living.
 - 84% of Australians aged 50-59 say their income grew slower than the cost of living over the past year, with 47% saying it grew much slower.

Figure 3: Income compared to cost of living, by age

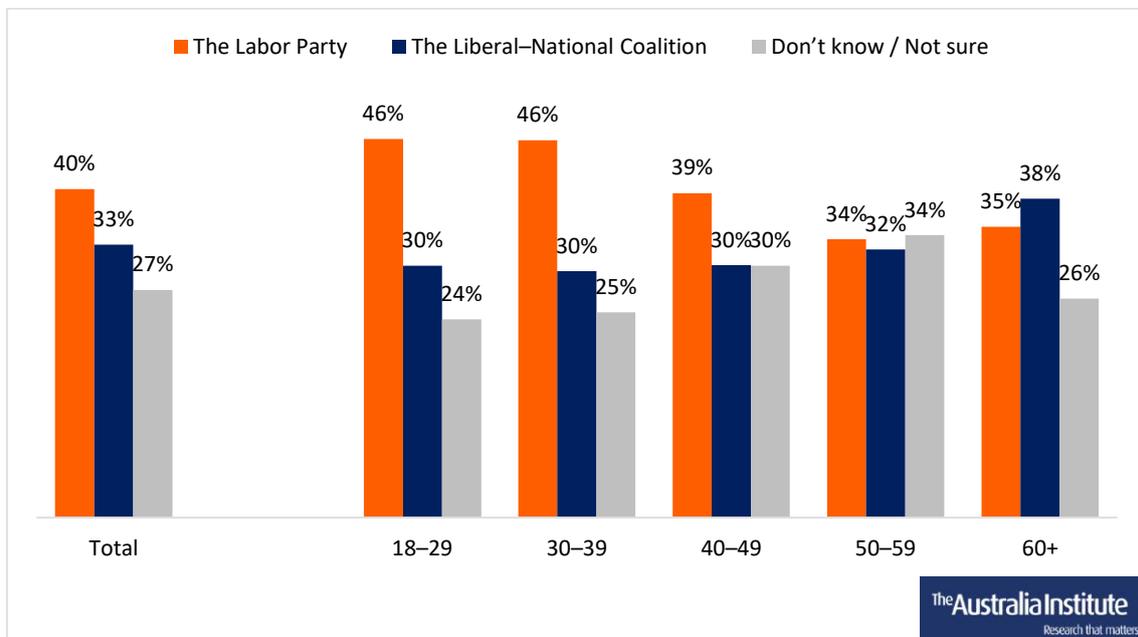


Respondents were asked about which party they feel has the better approach to the issue of cost of living and low wages growth, between the Labor Party and the Liberal–National Coalition.

Results show that:

- 40% of Australians feel the Labor Party has a better approach to cost of living and low wages growth, compared to 33% for the Coalition.
 - 27% of Australians don't know or are not sure.
- By age group, only among Australians aged 60 and older, do more trust the Coalition on the issue of cost and living and low wages growth (38% compared to 35% for Labor).

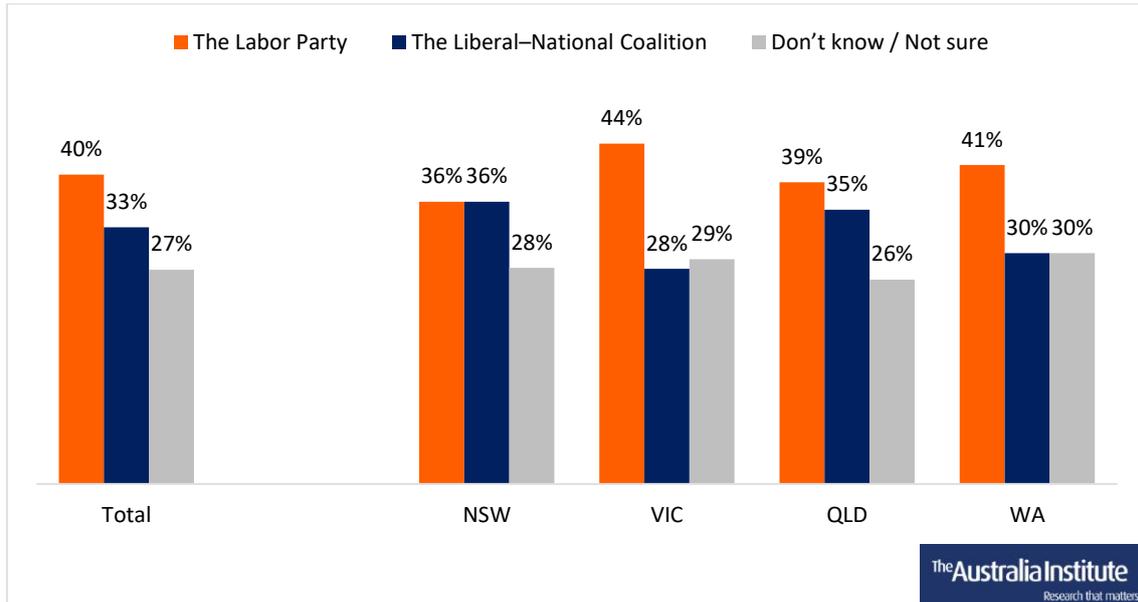
Figure 4: Better approach to cost of living/low wages growth, by age



Results by state show that:

- More Australians feel that the Labor Party has a better approach to cost of living and low wages growth in all large states except NSW, where the result is tied with the Coalition (36% for both).
- The highest level of support for the Labor Party on this issue is in Victoria (44%) and the highest level of support for the Coalition on this issue is in NSW (36%).

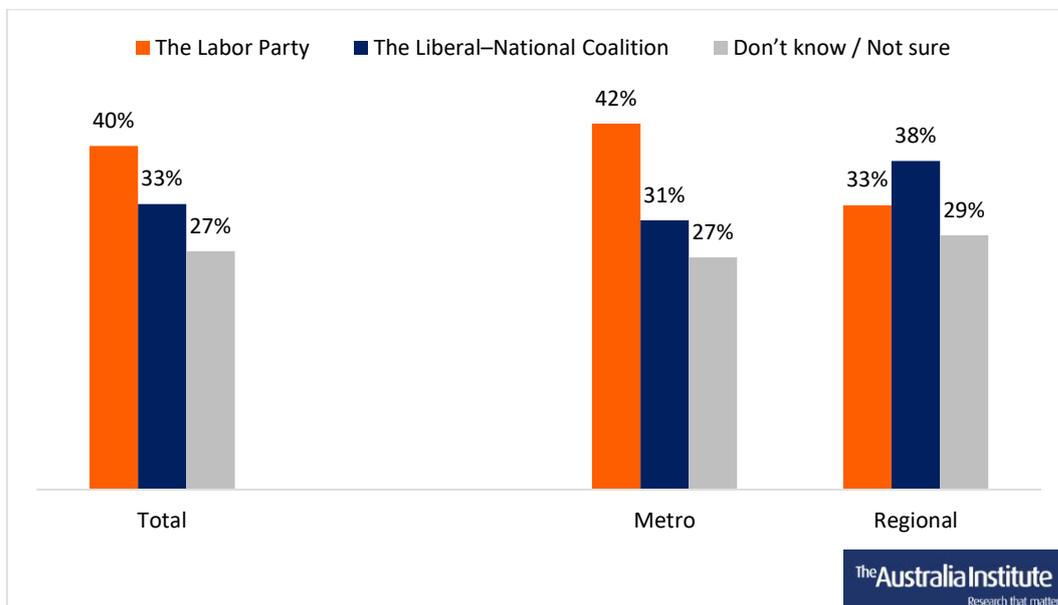
Figure 5: Better approach to cost of living/low wages growth, by state



Results by area show that:

- Support for the Labor Party approach to cost of living and low wages growth is higher in metro areas and support for the Coalition approach is higher in regional areas:
 - 42% of Australians living in metro areas feel that Labor has a better approach to this issue, compared to 31% who feel that the Coalition has a better approach.
 - 38% of Australians living in regional areas feel the Coalition has a better approach to this issue, compared to 33% who think the Labor has a better approach.

Figure 6: Better approach to cost of living/low wages growth, by area

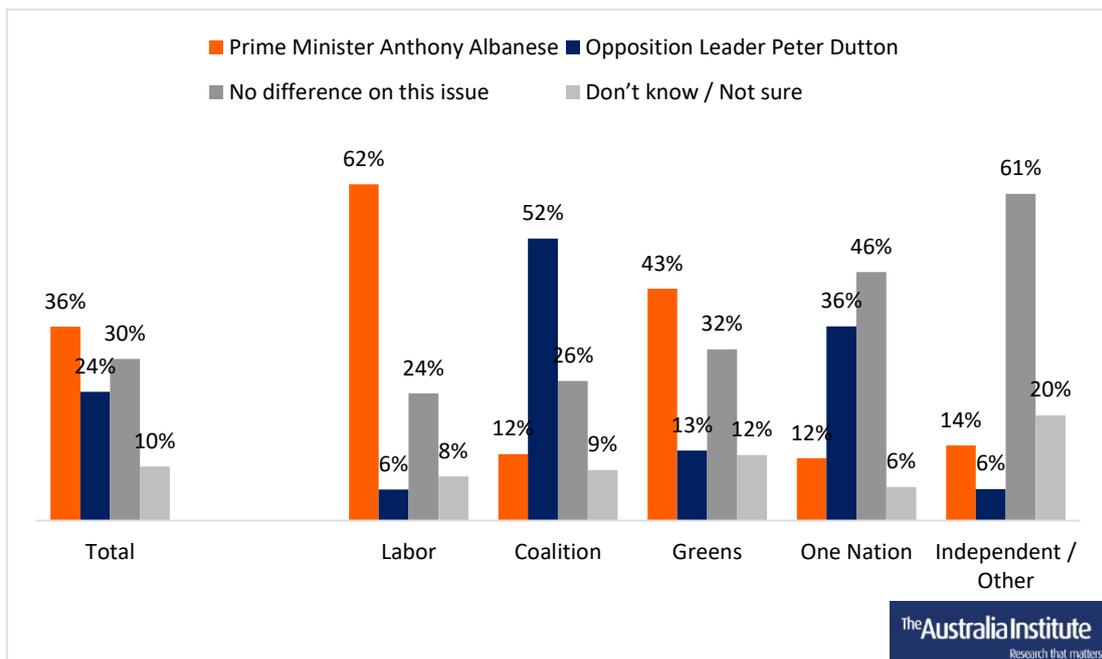


Regarding the role of party leader, respondents were asked who they trust more on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth.

Results show that:

- More Australians (36%) trust Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth than they do Opposition Leader Peter Dutton (24%).
- Trust in Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth is highest among Labor voters (62%) and Greens voters (43%).
- Trust for Opposition Leader Peter Dutton on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth is highest among Coalition voters (52%) and One Nation voters (36%).
- 61% of Independent/Other voters and 46% of One Nation voters say there is no difference between the two leaders on the issue.

Figure 7: More trusted leader on cost of living/low wages growth, by voting intention

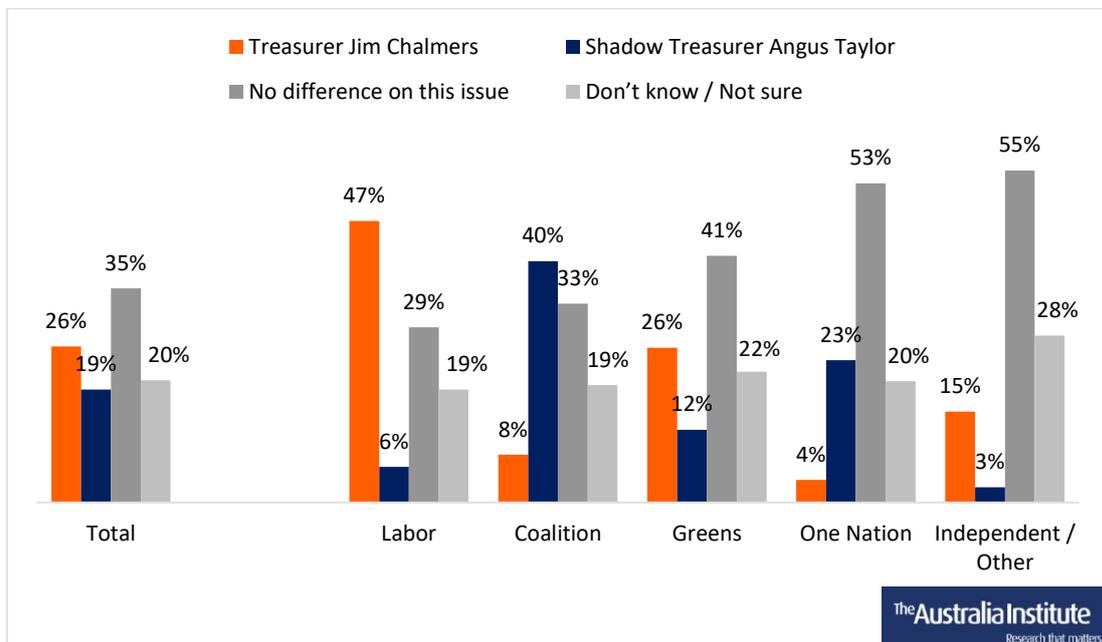


Regarding the role of treasurer, respondents were asked who they trust more on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth.

Results show that:

- One in four Australians (26%) trust Treasurer Jim Chalmers more on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth, compared to one in five (19%) who trust Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor more.
- One in three (35%) Australians see no difference between Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor on the issue of cost of living and low wages, while 20% don't know or are not sure.
- Trust in Treasurer Jim Chalmers on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth is highest among Labor voters (47%).
- Trust in Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth is highest among Coalition voters (40%).
- More than half of all Independent/Other voters (55%), One Nation voters (53%), and 41% of Greens voters see no difference between Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor on the issue of cost of living and low wages growth.

Figure 8: More trusted treasurer on cost of living, by voting intention



Method

Between 31 October 2023 and 3 November 2023, The Australia Institute surveyed 1,002 adults living in Australia, online through Dynata’s panel, with nationally representative samples by gender, age group and state/territory. A further 377 South Australians were sampled to produce more precise results, but weighting was used to ensure that people from the state 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, 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 1,059.

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.



**Australian
Polling Council
Quality Mark**

Detailed results

How do you think your income in the past year has compared to the increase in the cost of living?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
My income has grown much faster than the cost of living	4%	7%	2%	5%	3%	2%	4%
My income has grown somewhat faster than the cost of living	7%	9%	5%	7%	7%	7%	6%
My income has grown about as fast as the cost of living	13%	17%	10%	14%	15%	13%	10%
My income has grown somewhat slower than the cost of living	34%	33%	35%	34%	34%	38%	38%
My income has grown much slower than the cost of living	38%	32%	44%	36%	38%	39%	37%
Don't know / Not sure	3%	2%	4%	4%	2%	2%	4%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>One Nation</i>	<i>Other</i>
My income has grown much faster than the cost of living	4%	7%	4%	3%	4%	0%
My income has grown somewhat faster than the cost of living	7%	8%	7%	6%	0%	7%
My income has grown about as fast as the cost of living	13%	13%	15%	12%	10%	10%
My income has grown somewhat slower than the cost of living	34%	34%	35%	37%	34%	26%
My income has grown much slower than the cost of living	38%	34%	38%	39%	49%	51%
Don't know / Not sure	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	18–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+
My income has grown much faster than the cost of living	4%	13%	7%	3%	1%	0%
My income has grown somewhat faster than the cost of living	7%	15%	9%	5%	5%	2%
My income has grown about as fast as the cost of living	13%	16%	17%	11%	7%	13%
My income has grown somewhat slower than the cost of living	34%	26%	34%	35%	37%	37%
My income has grown much slower than the cost of living	38%	26%	31%	43%	47%	45%
Don't know / Not sure	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%

	<i>Total</i>	\$20k or less	\$20– 40k	\$40– 60k	\$60– 80k	\$80– 100k	\$100– 150k	\$150 – 200k	More than \$200k
My income has grown much faster than the cost of living	4%	5%	1%	3%	2%	6%	5%	4%	19%
My income has grown somewhat faster than the cost of living	7%	6%	3%	4%	5%	9%	9%	13%	14%
My income has grown about as fast as the cost of living	13%	5%	9%	11%	16%	14%	16%	12%	20%
My income has grown somewhat slower than the cost of living	34%	23%	30%	39%	33%	42%	35%	39%	27%
My income has grown much slower than the cost of living	38%	51%	53%	40%	40%	27%	32%	31%	20%
Don't know / Not sure	3%	8%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	1%

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

“Wages should be increased to at least keep up with the cost of living.”

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Strongly agree	50%	42%	57%	50%	48%	45%	49%
Agree	38%	44%	34%	38%	41%	41%	36%
Disagree	6%	8%	4%	7%	6%	5%	8%
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Don't know/Not sure	5%	6%	4%	4%	4%	7%	5%

	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Strongly agree	50%	54%	38%	66%	54%	46%
Agree	38%	37%	45%	26%	38%	36%
Disagree	6%	4%	11%	4%	0%	4%
Strongly disagree	1%	0%	2%	2%	6%	1%
Don't know/Not sure	5%	4%	4%	2%	2%	12%

	Total	18–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+
Strongly agree	50%	62%	61%	52%	50%	32%
Agree	38%	29%	30%	40%	38%	49%
Disagree	6%	5%	4%	2%	8%	9%
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Don't know / Not sure	5%	2%	3%	3%	4%	9%

	Total	\$20k or less	\$20–40k	\$40–60k	\$60–80k	\$80–100k	\$100–150k	\$150–200k	More than \$200k
Strongly agree	50%	51%	47%	45%	48%	50%	54%	52%	56%
Agree	38%	32%	41%	43%	38%	41%	35%	37%	34%
Disagree	6%	9%	6%	7%	6%	4%	6%	6%	7%
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	0%
Don't know / Not sure	5%	6%	5%	3%	6%	3%	3%	5%	2%

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

“Government policies do not have much influence on how fast wages grow.”

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Strongly agree	16%	19%	14%	14%	18%	14%	12%
Agree	23%	29%	19%	25%	22%	27%	25%
Disagree	26%	25%	27%	27%	24%	26%	28%
Strongly disagree	17%	17%	17%	17%	19%	17%	20%
Don't know / Not sure	17%	11%	23%	17%	18%	16%	16%

	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Strongly agree	16%	17%	17%	18%	14%	11%
Agree	23%	21%	29%	22%	20%	17%
Disagree	26%	30%	25%	21%	24%	17%
Strongly disagree	17%	13%	18%	23%	26%	22%
Don't know / Not sure	17%	19%	11%	17%	16%	33%

	Total	18–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+
Strongly agree	16%	23%	15%	19%	20%	9%
Agree	23%	22%	26%	28%	19%	23%
Disagree	26%	18%	26%	24%	23%	34%
Strongly disagree	17%	22%	20%	9%	17%	18%
Don't know / Not sure	17%	15%	14%	20%	21%	17%

	Total	\$20k or less	\$20– 40k	\$40– 60k	\$60– 80k	\$80– 100k	\$100– 150k	\$150– 200k	More than \$200k
Strongly agree	16%	17%	12%	15%	17%	18%	18%	20%	23%
Agree	23%	16%	21%	23%	20%	28%	28%	20%	26%
Disagree	26%	23%	26%	34%	27%	21%	25%	28%	24%
Strongly disagree	17%	15%	22%	13%	18%	20%	17%	12%	20%
Don't know / Not sure	17%	28%	19%	15%	19%	14%	13%	20%	7%

Which party do you feel has the better approach to the issue of cost of living/low wages growth?

The order of options 1 and 2 was randomised for each respondent.

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
The Labor Party	40%	45%	34%	36%	44%	39%	41%
The Liberal–National Coalition	33%	35%	31%	36%	28%	35%	30%
Don't know / Not sure	27%	20%	34%	28%	29%	26%	30%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>One Nation</i>	<i>Other</i>
The Labor Party	40%	74%	8%	44%	8%	20%
The Liberal–National Coalition	33%	6%	76%	18%	42%	5%
Don't know / Not sure	27%	19%	16%	38%	50%	75%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>18–29</i>	<i>30–39</i>	<i>40–49</i>	<i>50–59</i>	<i>60+</i>	<i>Metro</i>	<i>Regional</i>
The Labor Party	40%	46%	46%	39%	34%	35%	42%	33%
The Liberal–National Coalition	33%	30%	30%	30%	32%	38%	31%	38%
Don't know / Not sure	27%	24%	25%	30%	34%	26%	27%	29%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>\$20k or less</i>	<i>\$20–40k</i>	<i>\$40–60k</i>	<i>\$60–80k</i>	<i>\$80–100k</i>	<i>\$100–150k</i>	<i>\$150–200k</i>	<i>More than \$200k</i>
The Labor Party	40%	40%	33%	45%	33%	48%	46%	41%	33%
The Liberal–National Coalition	33%	20%	34%	27%	38%	33%	33%	32%	46%
Don't know / Not sure	27%	40%	33%	28%	29%	19%	21%	27%	21%

Who do you trust more on the issue of cost of living/low wages growth?

The order of options 1 and 2 was randomised for each respondent.

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
Opposition Leader Peter Dutton	24%	28%	20%	28%	18%	28%	21%
Prime Minister Anthony Albanese	36%	39%	33%	34%	38%	35%	34%
No difference on this issue	30%	26%	34%	28%	35%	26%	37%
Don't know / Not sure	10%	7%	13%	10%	9%	12%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>One Nation</i>	<i>Other</i>
Opposition Leader Peter Dutton	24%	6%	52%	13%	36%	6%
Prime Minister Anthony Albanese	36%	62%	12%	43%	12%	14%
No difference on this issue	30%	24%	26%	32%	46%	61%
Don't know / Not sure	10%	8%	9%	12%	6%	20%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>18–29</i>	<i>30–39</i>	<i>40–49</i>	<i>50–59</i>	<i>60+</i>
Opposition Leader Peter Dutton	24%	19%	16%	25%	21%	34%
Prime Minister Anthony Albanese	36%	43%	41%	33%	32%	32%
No difference on this issue	30%	26%	32%	34%	32%	28%
Don't know / Not sure	10%	13%	11%	8%	15%	6%

	<i>Total</i>	\$20k or less	\$20– 40k	\$40– 60k	\$60– 80k	\$80– 100k	\$100– 150k	\$150 – 200k	More than \$200k
Opposition Leader Peter Dutton	24%	15%	25%	20%	26%	24%	23%	27%	37%
Prime Minister Anthony Albanese	36%	29%	28%	38%	32%	40%	46%	42%	27%
No difference on this issue	30%	42%	35%	31%	30%	29%	26%	26%	21%
Don't know / Not sure	10%	13%	12%	11%	13%	8%	5%	5%	15%

Who do you trust more on the issue of cost of living/low wages growth?

The order of options 1 and 2 was randomised for each respondent.

	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Treasurer Jim Chalmers	26%	32%	19%	22%	27%	29%	19%
Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor	19%	22%	15%	24%	14%	19%	14%
No difference on this issue	35%	32%	39%	36%	39%	29%	45%
Don't know / Not sure	20%	13%	27%	18%	20%	23%	21%

	<i>Total</i>	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Treasurer Jim Chalmers	26%	47%	8%	26%	4%	15%
Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor	19%	6%	40%	12%	23%	3%
No difference on this issue	35%	29%	33%	41%	53%	55%
Don't know / Not sure	20%	19%	19%	22%	20%	28%

	<i>Total</i>	18–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+
Treasurer Jim Chalmers	26%	25%	20%	24%	25%	31%
Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor	19%	17%	15%	13%	15%	27%
No difference on this issue	35%	32%	41%	42%	39%	28%
Don't know / Not sure	20%	25%	23%	22%	21%	14%

	<i>Total</i>	\$20k or less	\$20–40k	\$40–60k	\$60–80k	\$80–100k	\$100–150k	\$150–200k	More than \$200k
Treasurer Jim Chalmers	26%	18%	20%	37%	22%	21%	29%	28%	36%
Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor	19%	17%	23%	14%	21%	15%	19%	23%	16%
No difference on this issue	35%	44%	33%	34%	35%	45%	31%	36%	25%
Don't know / Not sure	20%	21%	24%	15%	21%	19%	20%	12%	23%