

Declining legacy media influence on Australian elections

Yesterday's kingmakers, today's spectators

After decades of championing the winner, the majority of newspapers endorsed the losing party in 2022 and 2025. Neither News Corp nor Nine regularly reach more than 20% of voters in Victoria, a crucial state in the recent election. The first “high stakes” leaders debate attracted an audience equivalent to just 2% of enrolled voters. Parties no longer need legacy media’s permission to win, creating space for better, bolder politics.

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Summary

Securing newspaper endorsements was once a key part of running a successful Australian election campaign, through which Australian media shaped Australian politics. Televised debates between the prime minister and opposition leader were also major campaign events that allowed TV stations to shape the attitudes of a substantial number of voters. However, in the 2022 and 2025 elections, major media companies have been left to bellow from the sidelines.

The result of the 2025 federal election was proof that the influence of major media companies over voter opinion has declined. Neither the endorsements given by large media organisations nor the leaders' debates they staged had any measurable effect on voter behaviour. This is because declining regular readership means that fewer people than ever pay attention to what major media companies publish and broadcast.

In 2024, for the first time ever, most Australians said that their main source of news was either social media or online news. While the growing influence of alternative news sources is not new, the implications of the marked decline of traditional major media companies' influence are significant. Readership is now so low that metropolitan dailies no longer have the power to set political agendas. In the two most recent federal elections, the winning party was endorsed by fewer than half of all major newspapers.

Our analysis shows that:

- From 1996 to 2019, the winner of every federal election was endorsed by the majority of newspapers. In 2022 and 2025, most newspapers supported the loser.
- Albanese leads the first Australian Government to have, so far, never been endorsed by *The Australian* since the newspaper was founded in 1964.
- Neither News Corp nor Nine's newspapers are able to regularly reach more than 20% of Victorian voters.
- The first leaders' debate on Sky News attracted at best 2% of enrolled voters, signalling that leaders' debates can no longer influence large numbers of voters.

Although the spectre of media moguls as political kingmakers still looms large in the imagination of Australia's political class, the opinions and endorsements published by Australia's major media outlets now have little influence over how Australians actually vote. This means that governments should no longer fear retribution from media organisations opposed to important reforms. The path is now open to a different kind of politics, where Australia's leaders can govern with courage rather than in fear.

Introduction

Australia's legacy media once had substantial influence on Australian politics. Securing newspaper endorsements was once a key part of running a successful Australian election campaign. Televised debates between the prime minister and opposition leader were also major campaign events that shaped the attitudes of a decent number of voters.

However, in the 2022 and 2025 elections, legacy newspaper and TV media has been left to bellow from the sidelines. As this report shows, newspaper endorsements and televised debates now appear to have little to no influence on public opinion.

This decline has significant implications for the next chapter of Australian democracy. In the post-war era, large oligopolies carved up Australia's media markets, making politicians and parties "anxious to cultivate the support of the major media companies" or, at the very least, "intent on avoiding their censure".¹ For the past few decades, News Corp played the leading role as the "perceived powerful foe" of progressive politics in Australia.²

In the 2025 election, most major newspapers endorsed Peter Dutton, who led the Liberal-National Coalition to a historic defeat and lost his own seat. The obviously plummeting relevance of newspaper endorsements on the outcome of Australian elections is a clear flow-on effect of a changing news media industry. In the 1950s there were fifteen daily newspapers in Australia's capital cities, with ten different owners.³ In 2025 there are just ten daily newspapers, owned by four companies. The rise of digital news has shaken up the news media industry, driving cuts across the sector, and loosening the monopolistic grip of many publications over their cities' media markets.⁴

Although the spectre of media moguls as political kingmakers still looms large in the imagination of Australia's political class, the opinions and endorsements published by Australia's major media outlets now have little influence over how Australians actually vote. This means that governments should no longer fear retribution from media organisations opposed to bold, ambitious reforms. The path is now open to a different kind of politics, where Australia's leaders can govern with courage rather than in fear.

¹ Griffen-Foley (2003) *Party Games: Australian politicians and the media from war to dismissal*, Text Publishing, p 240

² Simons (2025) *As Australia's election result reminds us, News Corp no longer has the power to sway voters*, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/06/as-australias-election-result-reminds-us-news-corp-no-longer-has-the-power-to-sway-voters>

³ Predavec (2025) *Australia's paper tigers – the state of news competition* <https://australiainstitute.org.au/post/australias-paper-tigers-the-state-of-news-competition/>

⁴ Campell, Long & Predavec (2025) *Newspaper competition in Australia*, pp 2-3, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/report/newspaper-competition-in-australia/>

Newspapers are kingmakers no more

Newspapers once played a kingmaking role in Australian elections. In 1961, at the insistence of its proprietor Warwick Fairfax, the traditionally conservative *Sydney Morning Herald* endorsed the Labor Party in that year's election, which the Menzies Coalition Government almost lost.⁵ In 1972, News Corp (then News Limited) owner Rupert Murdoch played a "substantial role" (as he saw it) in the Labor Party's federal election victory by heartily endorsing Whitlam's agenda in *The Australian* newspaper.⁶

News Corp papers went on to back the popular Hawke government in 1984 and Kevin Rudd's successful campaign in 2007, entrenching the company's apparent influence.⁷ Since 2010, all of News Corp's publications (*NT News* in 2019 and 2022 being the only exception) have backed the Coalition at federal elections, but the country is no longer following their lead. Anthony Albanese leads the first Australian government to have, so far, never been endorsed by *The Australian* since the newspaper was founded in 1964.

Newspaper endorsements may reflect the twists and turns of a party's performance during an election campaign, but they are also indicative of a publication's broader editorial slant. They are therefore a useful (though not infallible) proxy for gauging a newspaper's political preferences.

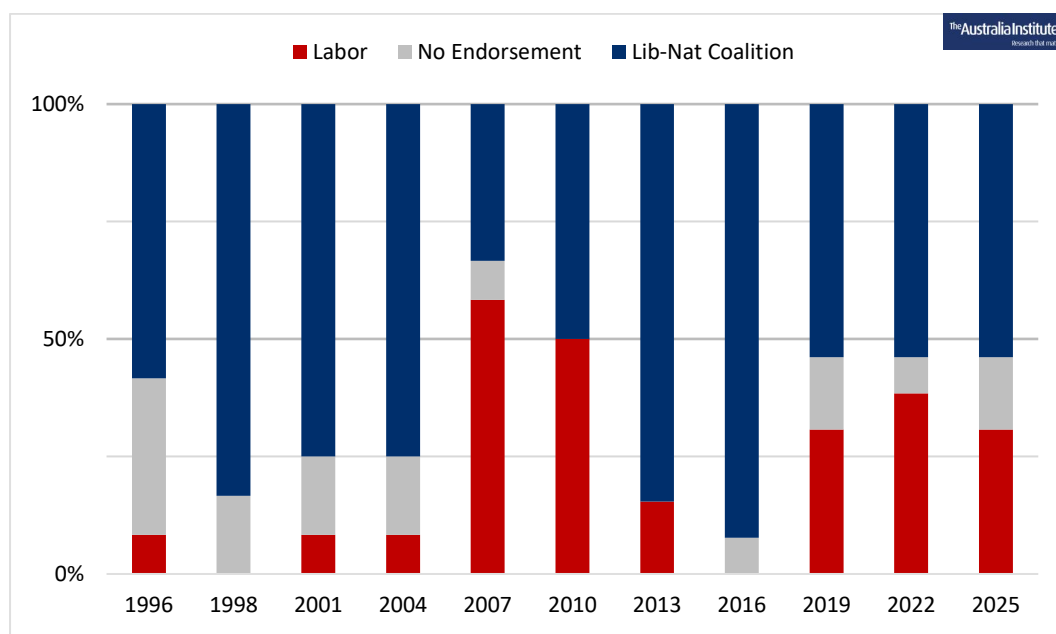
As seen in Figure 1, Australian newspaper endorsements have overwhelmingly favoured the Coalition over Labor in the past three decades, with 2007 and 2010 being the only exceptions.

⁵ Young (2023) *Media Monsters: The transformation of Australia's newspaper empires*, UNSW Press, p 264, p 268

⁶ Dorling (2013) *Whitlam radical, Fraser arrogant, Hawke moderate: Secret cables reveal Murdoch insights* <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/whitlam-radical-fraser-arrogant-hawke-moderate-secret-cables-reveal-murdoch-insights-20130520-2jvtl.html>

⁷ Belot (2013) "Murdoch's might: how much do News Corp papers influence elections?" <https://www.crikey.com.au/2013/08/28/murdochs-might-how-much-do-news-corp-papers-influence-elections/>

Figure 1: Australian federal election endorsements by major newspapers



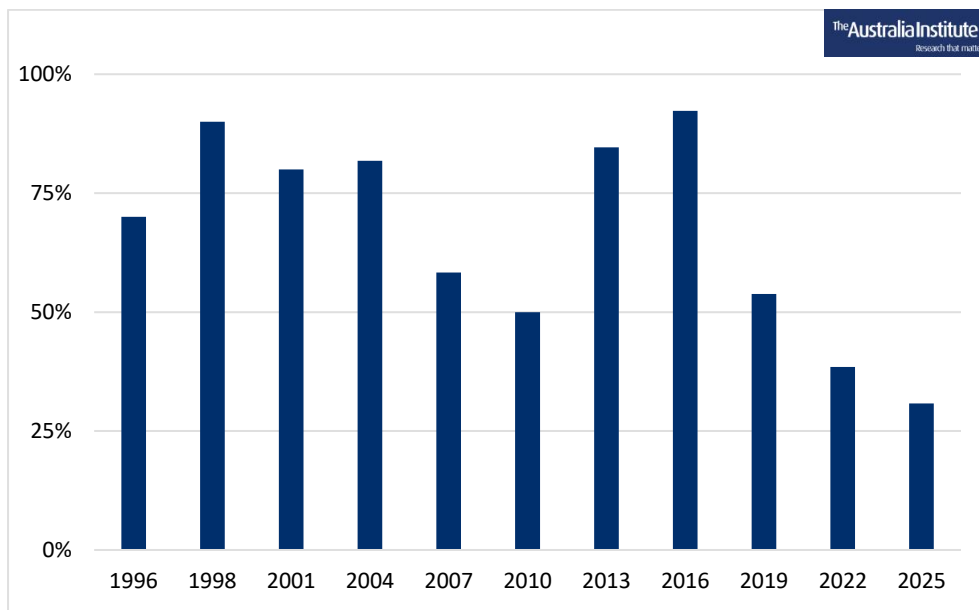
See Appendix for details of major (capital city daily and significant national publications) newspapers and their endorsements in each election

Figure 1 shows that over the past thirty years, a majority of newspapers have endorsed the Coalition at most elections. Between 1996 and 2019, only two elections saw half or more of the major newspapers endorsing the ALP, and in both cases they formed government. In 2007, 60% of major newspapers backed the election of the ALP after its eleven years in opposition. In 2010, the endorsements were effectively tied between the ALP and LNP, and the result was an evenly balanced parliament.

The collapse of the media's influence did not happen overnight. Federal elections in 1998 and 2016 saw Labor achieve swings of 4.6% and 3.1% (two-party-preferred) respectively in their favour, without securing a single major newspaper endorsement. In each case, the Coalition won the newspaper endorsement contest as well as the election.

In 2022, despite receiving a minority of major newspaper endorsements, Labor broke past the media gatekeepers, winning government with a large two party-preferred swing in their favour. In the 2025 election Labor lost one endorsement (*NT News*), bringing its share of newspaper endorsements to less than a third – and went on to increase its share of both seats and primary votes. As shown in Figure 2 below, the relevance of newspaper endorsements to election outcomes has markedly faded.

Figure 2: Share of major newspapers backing winning party in federal elections



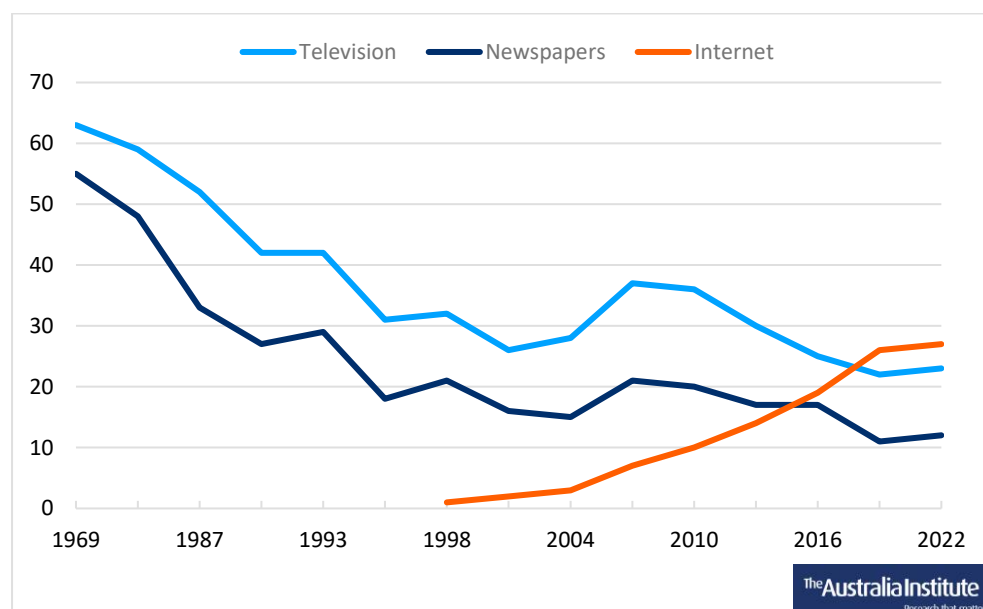
Sources: See Appendix

As Figure 2 shows, most Australian newspapers endorsed the winner of every election from 1996 to 2019. In the case of 2010, both the endorsements and the election itself resulted in an effective tie between the major parties. However, at the two most recent federal elections, fewer than half of all major newspapers backed the party that formed government. The newspaper editorials came down on one side, and the people came down on the other.

Why don't endorsements matter anymore?

More and more Australians get their news from alternative sources such as podcasts, social media, and digital publications, rather than newspapers. As seen in Figure 3, only 12% of Australians relied on newspapers to follow the 2022 federal election, compared with 55% in 1969. More than a quarter of voters used the internet to follow the 2019 and 2022 elections.

Figure 3: Share of Australian voters who followed election using each type of media



Source: Cameron & McAllister (2023) Australian Election Study Interactive Data, <https://australianelectionstudy.org/interactive-charts/>

“Internet” is a broad category that includes online newspaper content (and Australian Election Study survey respondents are not asked to differentiate within that category), but “internet” is also a highly diverse information source with minimal barriers to entry and a significantly larger number of voices.

In 2024 the University of Canberra’s Digital News Report found that, for the first time ever, most Australians said that their main source of news was either social media or online news.⁸ Although traditional news organisations have well-established online presence, digital news is an inherently more diverse space than traditional sources: the entry costs for setting up a new newspaper or TV station are high, while the barriers for a new social media page or website are almost non-existent. The party leaders were not blind to these trends.

⁸ Park, Fisher, McGuinness, Lee, McCallum, Cai, Chatskin, Mardjianto and Yao (2024) *Digital News Report: Australia 2024*, p 80, <https://www.canberra.edu.au/uc-research/faculty-research-centres/nmrc/digital-news-report-australia>

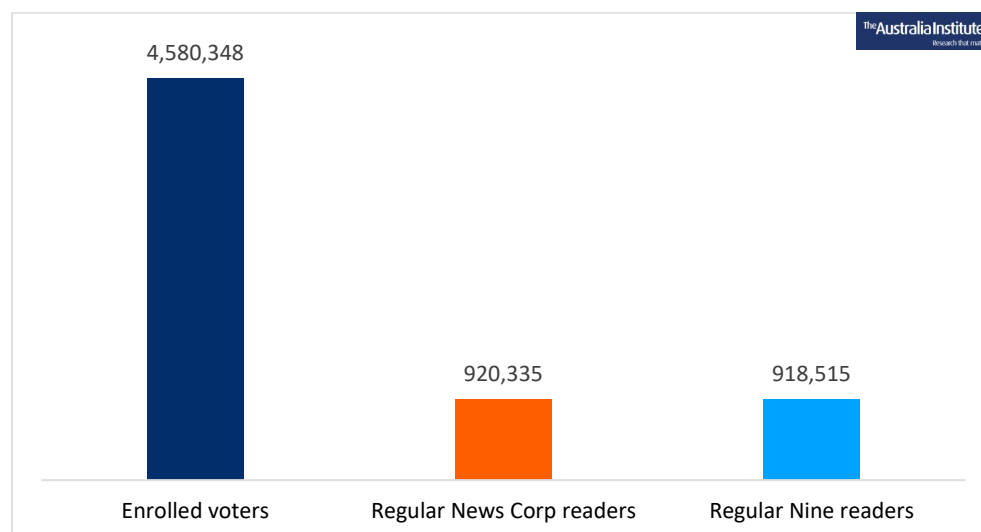
The growing number of podcast appearances led ABC Radio National to ask if 2025 was Australia's first "podcaster's election".⁹

While the growing influence of alternative news sources has been no surprise to Australian politicians, the implications of the marked decline of major media companies' influence are significant. Readership is now so low that metropolitan dailies no longer have the power to set political agendas.

Influencer Abbie Chatfield posted TikTok clips of her high-profile podcast interview with Albanese in February, with two attracting more than 600,000 views each and another reaching 590,000 viewers at the time of writing. Those figures suggest that Chatfield alone can reach an audience that rivals the regular readership of some capital city newspapers.

Figure 4 shows estimates of regular cross-platform readership for the outlets owned by News Corp (the *Australian*, *Herald-Sun*, and *Geelong Advertiser*) and those owned by Nine (the *Australian Financial Review* [AFR] and the *Age*) in the hotly contested state of Victoria.

Figure 4: Enrolled voters v regular newspaper readership in Victoria



Source: AEC (2025) *2025 federal election enrolment statistics*

https://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Enrolment_stats/national/2025-fe.htm; [Details of sources and methodology for regular readership in Appendix 2.](#)

According to many commentators, the Coalition's hopes of victory in the 2025 election hinged on success in Victoria, where major newspapers engaged in "relentless commentary"

⁹ ABC RN (2025) *Is this Australia's first 'podcaster's election'?*

<https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/radionational-breakfast/is-this-australias-first-podcasters-election/105240576>

about the unpopular state Labor government, its potential impact on the vote and the “decent haul” of seats in the offing for the Liberal Party.¹⁰

As shown in Figure 4, Nine and News Corp are essentially tied on an estimated 920,000 regular readers each in Victoria, a paltry sum compared to the more than four-and-a-half million Australians on the electoral roll in the state for the 2025 election. With such modest reach, it comes as little surprise that anti-ALP messaging in their newspapers yielded little. News Corp’s *Herald Sun*, for example, spent the 2025 election campaign criticising Labor on a state and federal level and endorsed Peter Dutton for PM, an effort which amounted to a 1% primary swing towards the ALP in Victoria (at time of writing).¹¹

This is not just a federal election phenomenon. Recent elections at the state level have also illustrated the declining influence of the Victorian press. Ahead of the 2018 and 2022 state elections, hostile newspapers sought to “bury” Labor premier Daniel Andrews “in attacks and innuendo”, but Labor won both elections convincingly.¹²

News Corp and Nine dominate the Australian newspaper market, and their inability to summon the attention of a large share of voters in Australia’s second largest state is telling. Victoria illustrates the broader decline of press influence on Australian politics.

¹⁰ Kolovos (2025) *Victorian Labor was bracing for a federal backlash – now Jacinta Allan sees vindication*, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/may/05/victorian-labor-was-bracing-for-a-federal-backlash-now-jacinta-allan-sees-vindication>; Butler, Jervis-Bardy and Dhanji (2025) *Final dash: these are the seats Labor and the Coalition will target, with Greens and teals the X-factor*, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/apr/28/final-dash-these-are-the-seats-labor-and-the-coalition-will-target-with-greens-and-teals-the-x-factor>; Strangio (2025) *The trouble with Labor in Victoria – and what reckoning there might be at the federal election*, <https://theconversation.com/the-trouble-with-labor-in-victoria-and-what-reckoning-there-might-be-at-the-federal-election-248118>

¹¹ See for example their 10 April front page which read “JACINTA MAYDAY” and discussed Victorian Labor’s “collapse in public support”

¹² Carney (2022) *How Dan Andrews pulled off one of the most remarkable victories in modern politics*, <https://theconversation.com/how-dan-andrews-pulled-off-one-of-the-most-remarkable-victories-in-modern-politics-194710>

Debatable value

The value of television for electioneering has also declined in recent years. In the late 1950s and 1960s, political parties began cultivating what they saw as the “mass T.V. vote”, and for decades thereafter, TV was the leading medium for current affairs.¹³

Televised leaders’ debates have been a common fixture of federal election campaigns since 1984.¹⁴ They were good at engaging voters and shaping public opinion.¹⁵ In 1993, according to the Australian Election Study, around 71% of voters said they watched at least one leaders’ debate.¹⁶ If true, that would represent an audience of more than 7.7 million voters. While those audiences declined in the twenty-first century, there were still 3.4 million viewers in the capital cities for the 2010 leaders’ debate between Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott.¹⁷

In the 2025 election, voters were given four opportunities (a new record) to watch the two major party leaders debate one another on Sky News Australia (only available to paying subscribers), the ABC, and the Nine and Seven networks. Despite the number of debates, the viewing figures indicate that they are no longer the crucial campaign events they used to be. Figure 5 shows the number of viewers for each 2025 federal election debate compared to the number of enrolled voters in Australia.

¹³ Griffen-Foley (2003) *Party Games*, p 83; Cameron & McAllister (2023) *Trends in Australian political opinion: Results from the Australian election study 1987 – 2022*, p 8, <https://australianelectionstudy.org/publications/#books-monographs>

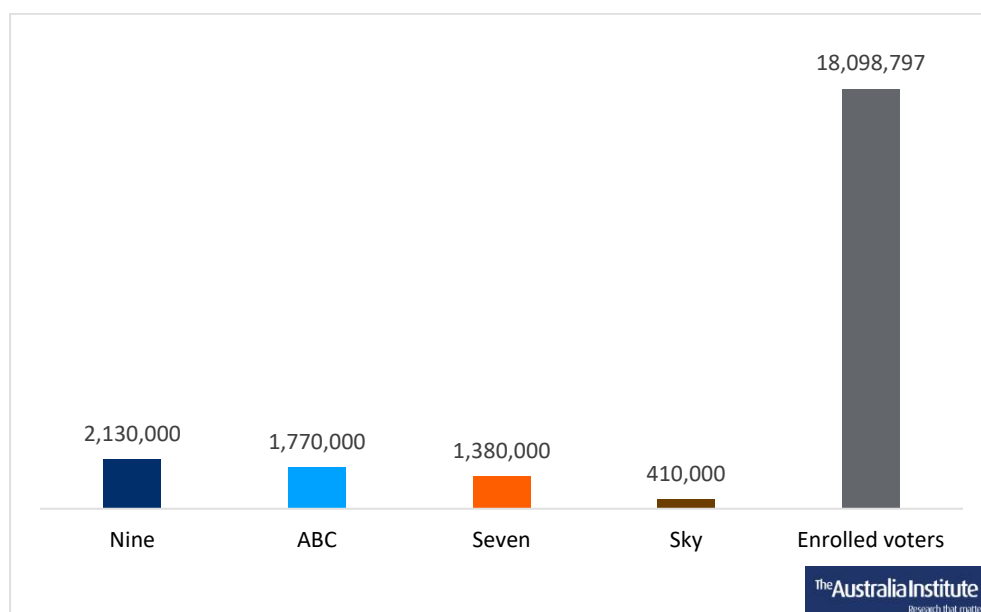
¹⁴ Black (2025) *Leaders’ debates can be useful, but no debate is better than a scrappy one*, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/post/leaders-debates-can-be-useful-but-no-debate-is-better-than-a-scrappy-one/>

¹⁵ Senior (2008) ‘Electoral impact of televised leaders’ debates on Australian federal elections’, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 43(3), <https://doi.org/10.1080/10361140802267241>

¹⁶ Cameron & McAllister (2023) *Trends in Australian political opinion: Results from the Australian election study 1987 – 2022*, p 9, <https://australianelectionstudy.org/publications/#books-monographs>

¹⁷ Craig (2012) ‘Debates, Town-Hall meetings and media interviews’ in Simms and Wanna (eds) *Julia 2010: The caretaker election*, ANU Press, p 112

Figure 5: Debate viewership v enrolled voters



Source: Jolly (2025) *Sky, ABC, Nine or Seven: Who won the debate ratings battle?*

<https://mumbrella.com.au/sky-abc-nine-or-seven-who-won-the-debate-ratings-battle-872381>; AEC

(2025) *2025 federal election enrolment statistics*

https://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Enrolment_stats/national/2025-fe.htm

Figure 5 still overstates the importance of the debate audiences because viewership figures likely include non-citizens, minors, and other non-voters. The most watched debate, on Nine, engaged an audience equivalent 12% of enrolled voters (ignoring non-voters), while the ABC and Seven networks attracted audiences equivalent to just 10% and 8% of the electorate at best.

Ahead of the first debate on Sky, the presenter declared the event to be a “high stakes moment for both Anthony Albanese and Peter Dutton”.¹⁸ TV hosts revving up their viewers is to be expected, but Figure 5 shows this debate was seen live by no more than 2% of voters. This nonetheless represented a record-breaking audience for Sky News (partly because most Australians cannot readily watch Sky’s subscription-only service).¹⁹ Online platforms were not reliable as an amplifier for the debates’ significance either. Of the roughly 30 excerpts published on Sky’s *YouTube* channel, the most visible netted only 49,784 views at time of writing.

While low viewership figures may be attributable in part to Albanese and Dutton’s strategies of “risk minimisation” resulting in few viral moments, their approach to debates is not a new

¹⁸ Sky News Australia (2025) *Federal Election 2025: Anthony Albanese and Peter Dutton to go head-to-head in Sky News/Daily Telegraph People’s Forum in Sydney*, <https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/politics/federal-election-2025-anthony-albanese-and-peter-dutton-to-go-headtohead-in-sky-news-daily-telegraph-peoples-forum-in-sydney/news-story/5b94ecacf36467295dad69e2e3450c49>

¹⁹ Jolly (2025) *Sky, ABC, Nine or Seven: Who won the debate ratings battle?*

one in Australia.²⁰ As electoral commentator Peter Brent has more directly put it, televised debates are about “not stopping votes from coming your way”, something which was as true 30 years ago as it is today.²¹ In the 1993 election, almost eight million voters watched a debate, while the most viewed this year drew an audience of only two million. This is a clear indicator of the declining influence of broadcast media on Australian federal elections.

At this election, other forms of voter engagement proved at least as popular as leaders’ debates. The ABC’s Vote Compass tool (designed to help voters compare their views with those of the parties and candidates) had recorded more than 1.5 million responses at the time of writing.²² That amounts to more than 8% of all registered voters, and four times the audience of Sky’s “high stakes” debate. A clip of Chatfield’s interview with Albanese, in which the PM mentioned *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, reached roughly 686,600 viewers (at the time of writing), well above the total audience figure for the Sky debate.

Television networks benefit commercially from hosting leaders’ debates, which provide opportunities to “showcase their stars” and “generate exclusives”.²³ However with three commercial networks and the public broadcaster all hosting their own debate in 2025, the leaders simply rehashed and recycled the same set-piece exchanges in each. The large number and low viewership of leaders’ debates in the 2025 election confirmed that these events are really about the broadcaster, and not the democratic needs of the country at large.

²⁰ Mills (2025) *In an election that played out on social media as much as TV, do leaders’ debates still matter?* <https://theconversation.com/in-an-election-that-played-out-on-social-media-as-much-as-tv-do-leaders-debates-still-matter-255771>

²¹ Brent (2020) *A matter of debate*, <https://insidestory.org.au/a-matter-of-debate/>

²² ABC (2025) *ABC Vote Compass: 2025 Australian Federal Election*, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/vote-compass/>

²³ Mills (2025) *In an election that played out on social media as much as TV, do leaders’ debates still matter?* <https://theconversation.com/in-an-election-that-played-out-on-social-media-as-much-as-tv-do-leaders-debates-still-matter-255771>

Conclusion

The 2025 election saw new media alternatives like podcasts play a leading role in shaping political discourse, while once powerful Australian news empires were pushed to the sidelines. From there, they can shout as loudly as they want, but they are no longer central players in the political arena.

The first election debate on Sky News was talked up by the channel as a “high stakes” moment for the party leaders. Just 2% of voters watched the debate, still enough to make it Sky’s largest TV event of the year. Even the most watched debate, on Nine, was seen by at best a meagre 12% of Australian voters.

Australian newspapers have not yet been completely displaced, but nor are they the kingmakers they once were. Major media companies were once able to say that their interventions could make the difference between election loss and election victory. However, the 2022 and 2025 elections have shown definitively that those days are over.

From 1996 to 2019, most Australian newspapers endorsed the winning party in every federal election, including in 2007 when the bulk of publications swung behind Labor’s return from the political wilderness after 11 years in opposition. Anthony Albanese’s victory in 2022 went against the tide, the first in at least a generation to be achieved without support from the majority of newspapers. This feat was repeated in stunning form in 2025, with Labor receiving fewer endorsements, more votes, and more seats.

When so few people read these newspapers or watch these debates anymore, it is no wonder that their influence is now so diminished. What matters is the implications of this change. Albanese has demonstrated that endorsements from major mastheads and TV debate performances no longer carry the power to make or break a Prime Minister. Following Albanese’s substantial victory without the press in his corner he now has an unprecedented opportunity to govern boldly, without fear of what major newspapers might say.

Appendix 1 - Endorsements

Table: Major newspaper endorsements in Australian elections

	1996	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019	2022	2025
Winner	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	Tie	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	ALP
News backing	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	Tie	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP
<i>SMH</i>	LNP	LNP	LNP	No	ALP	ALP	LNP	LNP	ALP	ALP	ALP
<i>Age</i>	LNP	LNP	ALP	LNP	No	ALP	ALP	LNP	ALP	ALP	ALP
<i>AFR</i>	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP
<i>Australian</i>	No	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP
<i>Herald-Sun</i>	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	ALP	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP
<i>Courier-Mail</i>	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP
<i>The Advertiser</i>	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	Oth*
<i>Hobart Mercury</i>	No	LNP	LNP	LNP	ALP	ALP	LNP	LNP	No	No	LNP
<i>Canberra Times</i>	No	No	No	ALP	ALP	ALP	LNP	LNP	No	ALP	ALP
<i>NTNews</i>	No	Oth*	No	No	ALP	ALP	LNP	LNP	ALP	ALP	No
<i>West Australian</i>	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP
<i>Guardian</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	ALP	No	ALP	ALP	ALP

Key: LNP – Liberal-National Coalition, ALP – Labor, No – None, N/A – Did not exist at the time, Oth* (counted as None for tabulation) – *NTNews* in 1998 endorsed statehood in referendum with no election endorsement, *The Advertiser* in 2025 endorsed a majority for either major party.

Newspapers included are capital city daily newspapers and major national publications *Australian Financial Review (AFR)*, *The Australian*, and online newspaper *The Guardian*.

Jaspan (2025) “Who’s backing who? Every major newspaper’s pick for prime minister” <https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/who-s-backing-who-every-newspaper-s-pick-for-prime-minister-20250501-p5lvup.html>; Editorial (2019) “Voting Labor on Saturday is best for the Northern Territory as Bill Shorten looks likely to become our new Prime Minister” <https://www.ntnews.com.au/news/opinion/voting-labor-on-saturday-is-best-for-the-northern-territory-as-bill-shorten-looks-likely-to-become-our-new-prime-minister/news-story/48dcf64cbc93cbf1b20de7fac46e47cf>; *The Australian* (2016) “Federal Election 2016: Who the papers are backing” <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/media/federal-election-2016-who-the-papers-are-backing/news-story/24bab7dbd2509a08cb84988a99dcefb>; Economou (2008) *Leading or Following?: Editorials, Alignments, Elections and the 2007 Federal Election*, p 12, <https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/informit.427117321174749>; Gans & Leigh (2011) *How Partisan is the Press? Multiple measures of Media Slant*, p 19, <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.virtual.anu.edu.au/doi/full/10.1111/j.1475-4932.2011.00782.x> ; Pre-2007 editorials for *NTNews* and *The Mercury* were sourced directly.

Appendix 2 - Newspaper readership

Due to limited transparency in published audience and subscriber data for News Corp and Nine's newspapers, we have derived an estimate of regular Victorian readership for each title using the information available.

For News Corp, we used published Monday to Friday average print readership for *The Australian*, *Herald-Sun*, and *Geelong Advertiser*, and subscriber counts for *The Australian* and *Herald-Sun*.²⁴ We have estimated *The Australian's* Victorian readership from national figures using the state's proportion of the population, assuming that Victorians engage with News Corp papers to the same extent as national average.

For Nine, due to lack of subscriber data, we derived an estimate of regular readership (Monday to Friday average print readership + digital subscribers) by comparing 12-month cross platform audience figures for their publications and each News Corp equivalent (comparing the *AFR* and *Australian*, and the *Age* with the *Herald Sun*).²⁵ As with *The Australian*, we have estimated the *AFR's* Victorian readership from national figures using the state's proportion of the population.

²⁴ Di Stefano (2023) "News Corp tabloids struggle to hit ambitious subscriptions targets" <https://www.afr.com/companies/media-and-marketing/news-corp-tabloids-struggle-to-hit-ambitious-subscriptions-targets-20230816-p5dx1x>; Daily Telegraph (2024) "Roy Morgan figures reinforce the Herald Sun's title as Victoria's number one media brand" <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/victoria/roy-morgan-figures-reinforce-the-herald-suns-title-as-the-most-read-daily-newspaper-in-australia/news-story/a51af6257a113ddf83a2dedfbc1beabd>; Madden (2024) "The Australian's readership hits fresh highs" <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/media/the-australians-readership-hits-fresh-highs/news-story/a8a1a058fb9fe39922ffb3e0bf31dc9c>; Geelong Advertiser (2025) "Geelong Advertiser reaches 388k readers: new data" <https://www.geelongadvertiser.com.au/news/geelong-advertiser-reaches-388k-readers-new-data/news-story/a2ed6f5619bca4e8137301c41c752fd5>

²⁵ The Age (2024) "The Age maintains position as Victoria's most read masthead" <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/the-age-maintains-position-as-victoria-s-most-read-masthead-20240225-p5f7ne.html>; Nine Brands (2025) "The Financial Review remains Australia's most read premium business title" <https://www.nineforbrands.com.au/media-release/the-financial-review-remains-australias-most-read-premium-business-title-5/>