

Young People at the Polling Booth

Federal Election Poll Report 2022

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Introduction

There are more than 1.6 million young people age 18–24 enrolled to vote in the federal election.¹ In most electorates across the country, there are enough young voters to decide the outcome of the election. We believe that young people have the power to make a difference and that elected candidates must work alongside them to take action on their priorities.

We asked young people age 18–25 to complete an online survey and share what is most important when deciding how to vote at the election. The survey was conducted between March and April 2022 and the total sample size is 520.

Australian Youth Affairs Coalition

Australian Youth Affairs Coalition is the national voice and advocate for young people. We're a team of advocates and policy experts dedicated to ensuring that young people are respected and have the power to lead change for a better world. You can learn more at www.ayac.org.au.

The team at Australian Youth Affairs Coalition is available to provide more information at media@ayac.org.au and on 0416 881 511.

Acknowledgment

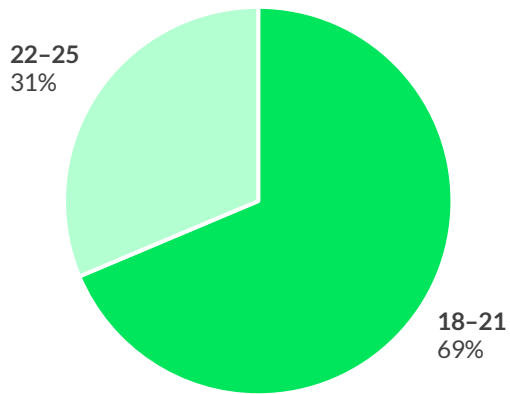
This report was written on the lands of the Wurundjeri People and Boonwurrung People of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

¹ Australian Electoral Commission, *Elector Count by Division, Age Group and Gender* (21 April 2022).

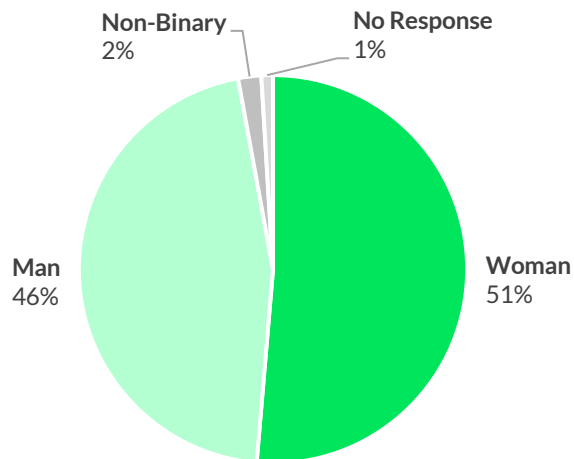
Demographics

We received 520 valid responses to the survey of young people between the ages 18-25. A majority of survey respondents are 18-21 (69%), while approximately one-third are 22-25 (31%). Approximately half of the respondents are women (51%), while fewer are men (46%) and non-binary (2%).

Age



Gender



Demographics

We asked young people to share more information about their identity and experiences when they completed the survey. We also asked young people to describe their current employment and study status.

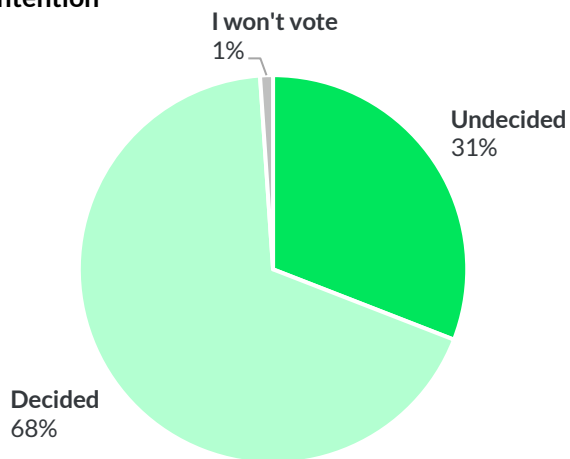
Identity	Percent
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	4%
Carer	2%
Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse	19%
Disabled/Have a Disability	5%
Experience of Homelessness	2%
LGBTQIA+	15%
Experience of Mental Ill-Health	23%
Religious/Person of Faith	24%
Rural or Regional	8%

Employment and Study	Percent
High School Student	3%
TAFE Student	6%
University Student	78%
Employed Full Time	8%
Employed Part Time	16%
Employed Casually	26%
Unemployed or Underemployed	7%

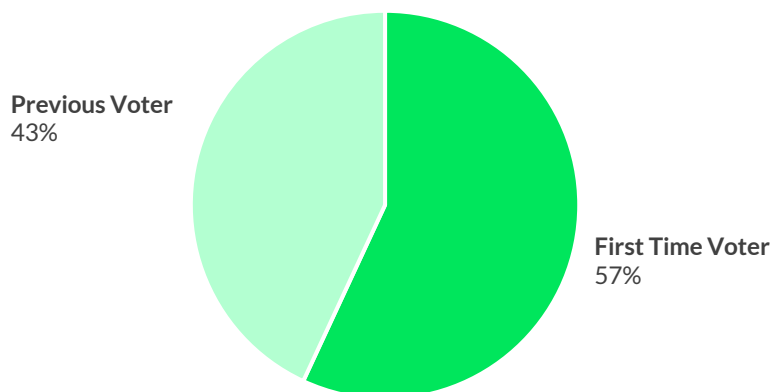
Voting Intention

We asked respondents who they intend to vote for at the upcoming federal election. A majority of young people have decided how they will vote at the election (68%). There is still a large number of undecided young voters (31%), while a very small group stated they will not vote at the election (1%). A greater number of first-time voters completed the survey (57%) when compared to previous voters (43%).

Voting Intention



Voting Experience

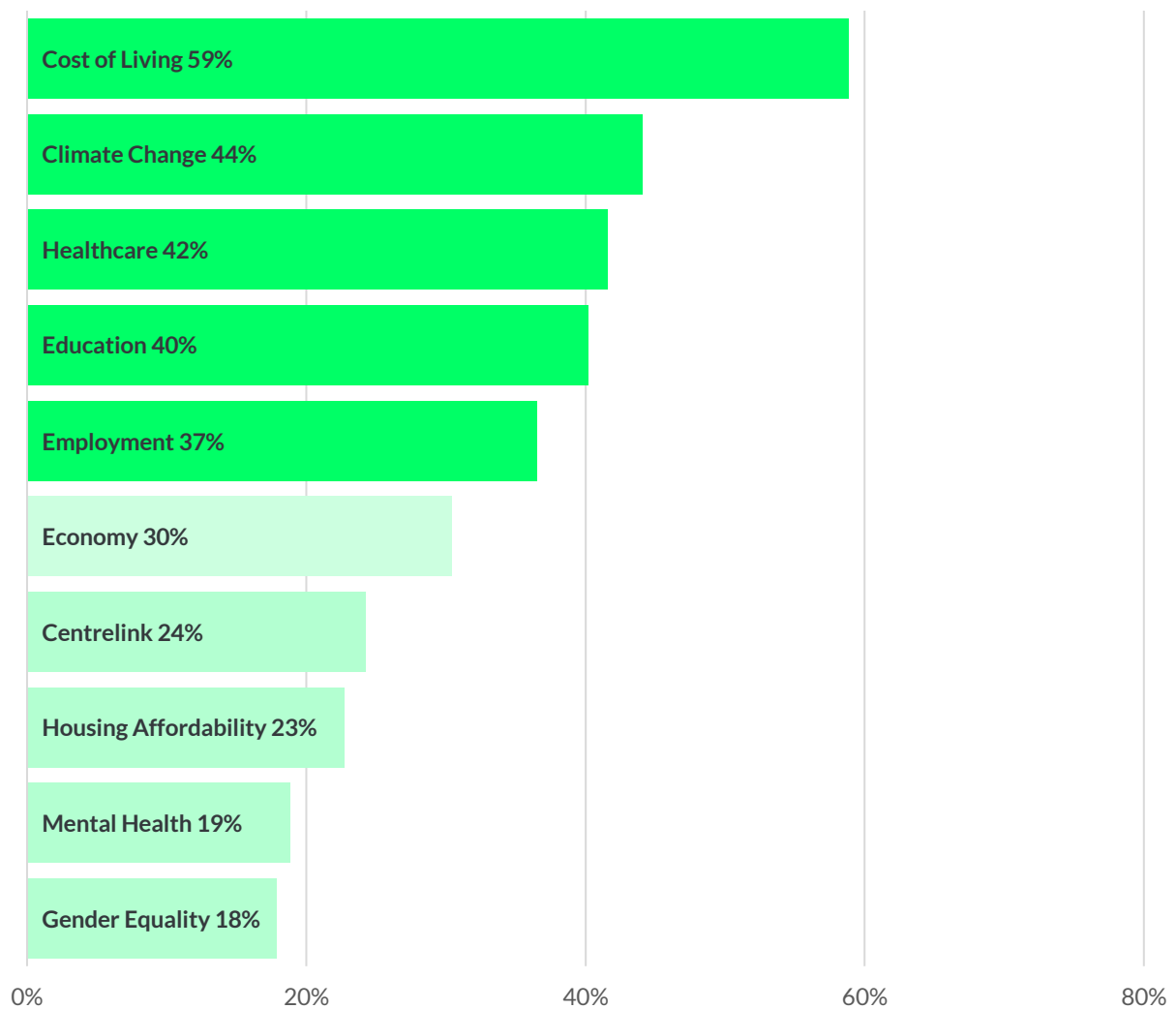


Priorities

We asked respondents which topics are the most important when deciding their vote at the upcoming federal election. A group of young people reviewed the topics before publication and respondents were able to select a maximum of five topics.

The majority of young people selected cost of living as an important priority when deciding their vote at the election (59%). This was followed by climate change (44%), healthcare (42%), education (40%) and employment (37%).

Priorities



“**Cost of living** has become a major issue for young people because of the rising costs of housing, fuel and groceries. I have been living, studying and working in Tasmania, with low incomes and high rents, so I’m experiencing first-hand the financial stress of inadequate social security payments. The next government needs to address wage growth, increase social security payments and make housing more affordable.”

Tyler, 25

Electorate of Bass, Tasmania

“Climate change needs to be addressed by the government now because future generations deserve a world that is habitable and healthy. We have been striking and marching for years and we need **climate justice** to be achieved before it’s too late.”

Saoirse, 18

Electorate of Kingsford Smith, New South Wales

“Employment is one of the most important issues this election because too many young people are relying on insecure and casual work to afford housing, food and an education. Young people are the most vulnerable in **employment** and are often exploited through wage theft, underemployment and poor working conditions.”

Shaylah, 21

Electorate of Fenner, Australian Capital Territory

“As someone who has gone through the public school system, I have encountered the gaps in content and skills when approaching further study and work. I truly believe a quality education sets the foundations for a young person to achieve their potential and that is why **education** policy will be influencing my vote.”

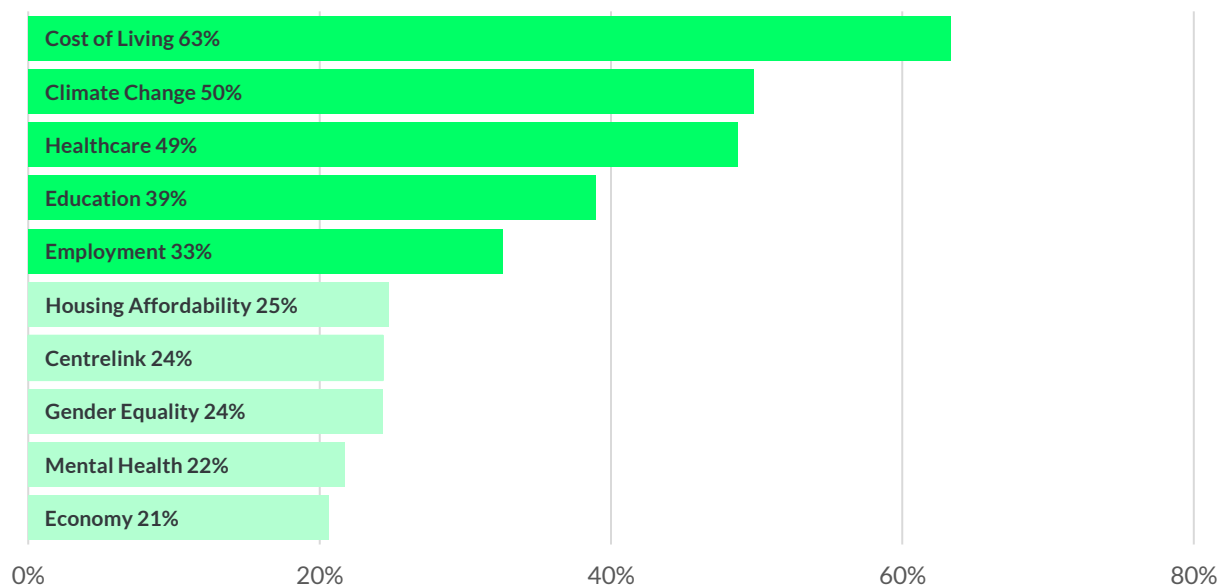
Imogen, 22

Electorate of Macnamara, Victoria

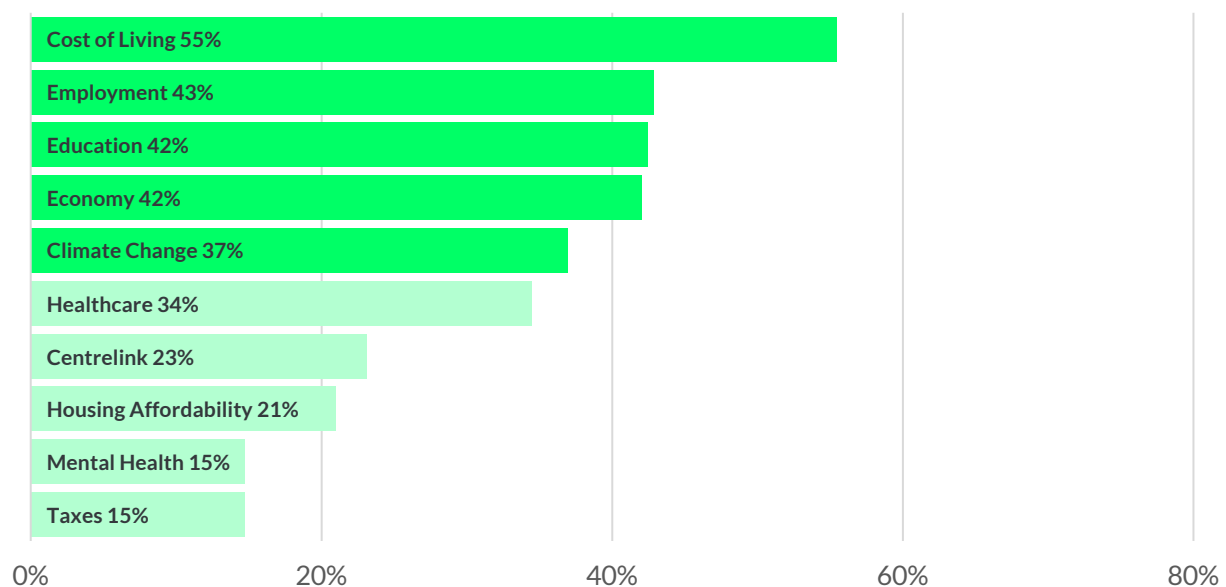
Priorities and Gender

We reviewed the responses to identify different priorities between men and women. The majority of both men and women selected cost of living as an important priority when deciding how to vote at the election. We did not receive enough responses from non-binary people to conduct an analysis of priorities.

Women



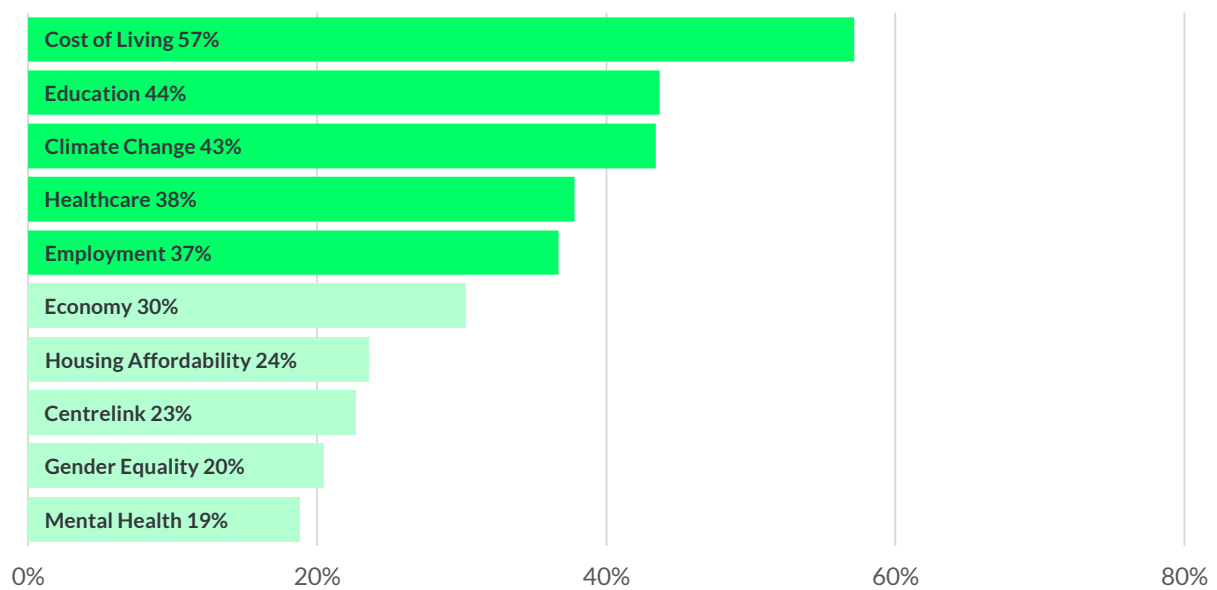
Men



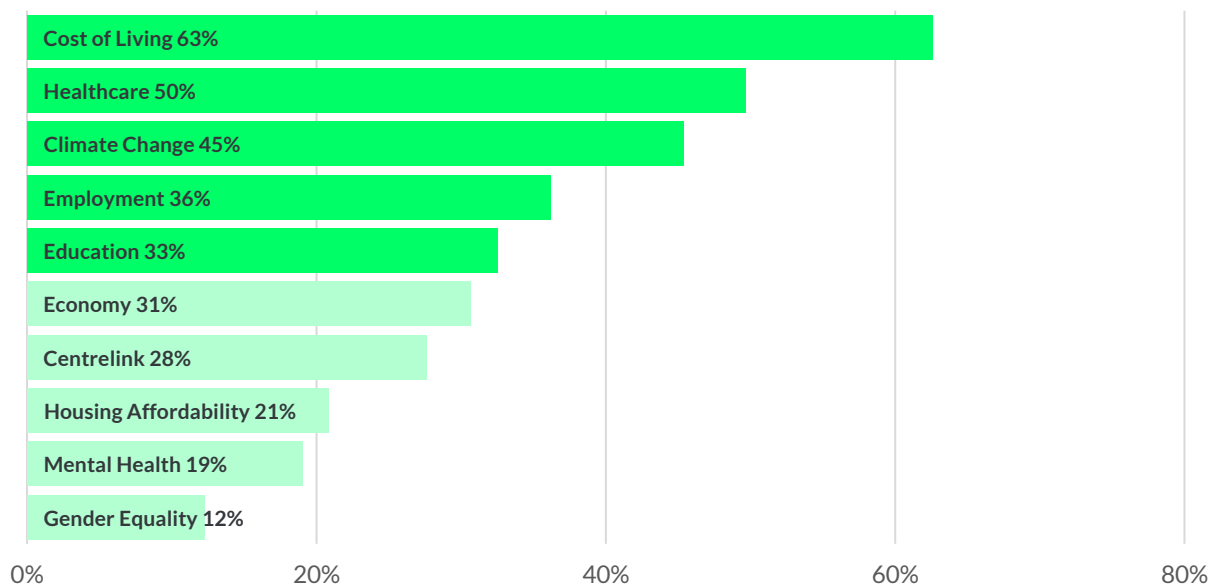
Priorities and Age

We reviewed the responses to identify different priorities between age groups. Those between 18–21 more frequently selected education as a priority (44%), while those 22–25 more often selected healthcare (50%).

18–21



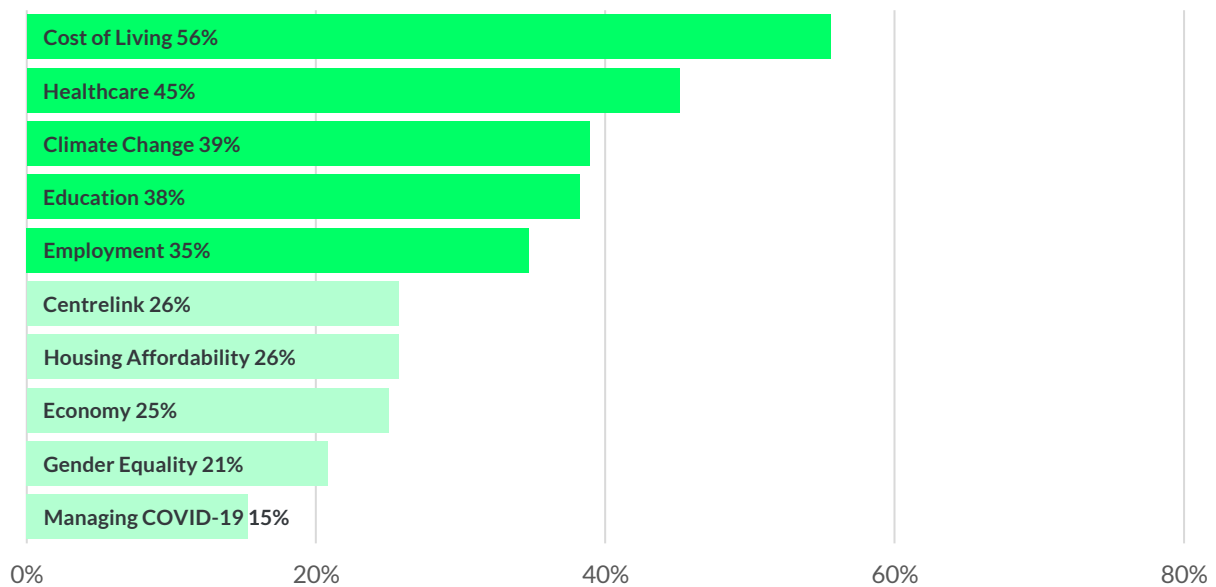
22–25



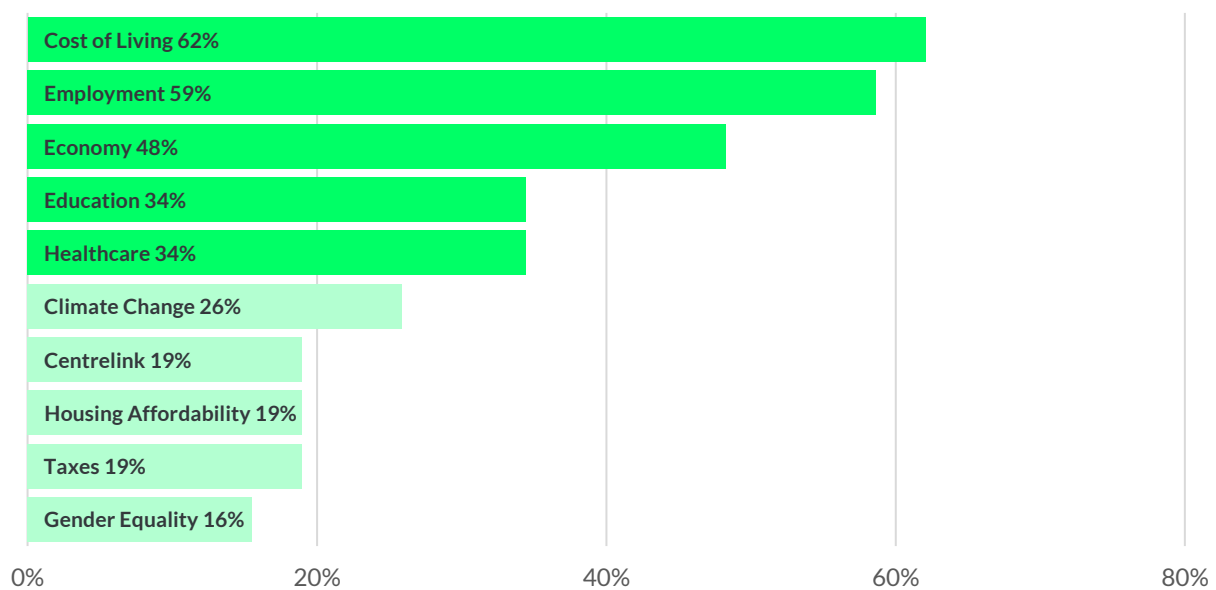
Priorities and Voting Intention

We reviewed the responses to identify different priorities between undecided voters and Coalition, Labor and Greens voters. Cost of living was the most frequently selected priority for undecided voters as well as Coalition and Labor voters.

Undecided Voters



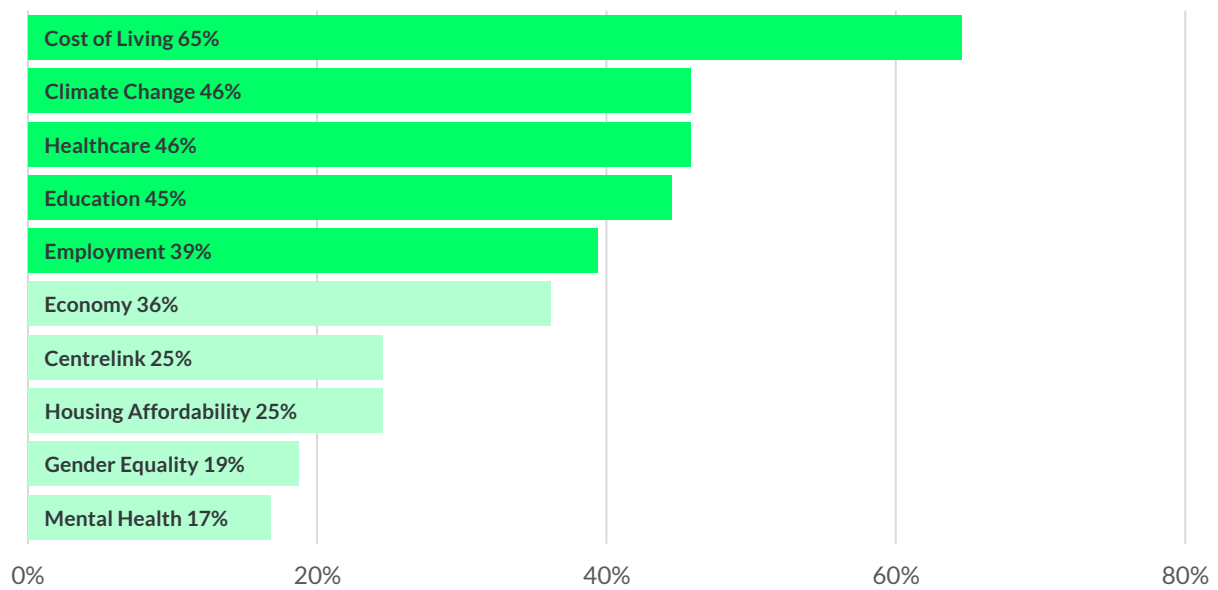
Coalition Voters



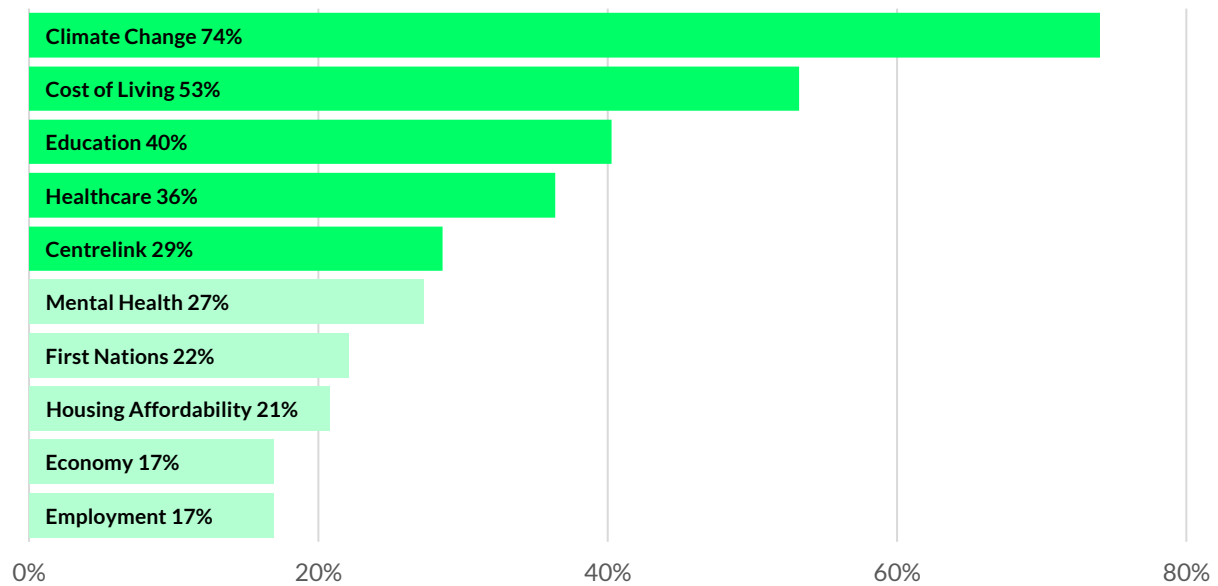
Priorities and Voting Intention

Climate change was the most frequently selected priority for Greens voters (74%) and the second most commonly selected priority for Labor voters (46%).

Labor Voters



Greens Voters



Resources

We asked young people to identify what other information they wanted to know about the election. Most young people stated they want more information about party policies (55%), while approximately one third want to hear directly from candidates (34%).

Resources

