

# Election Research

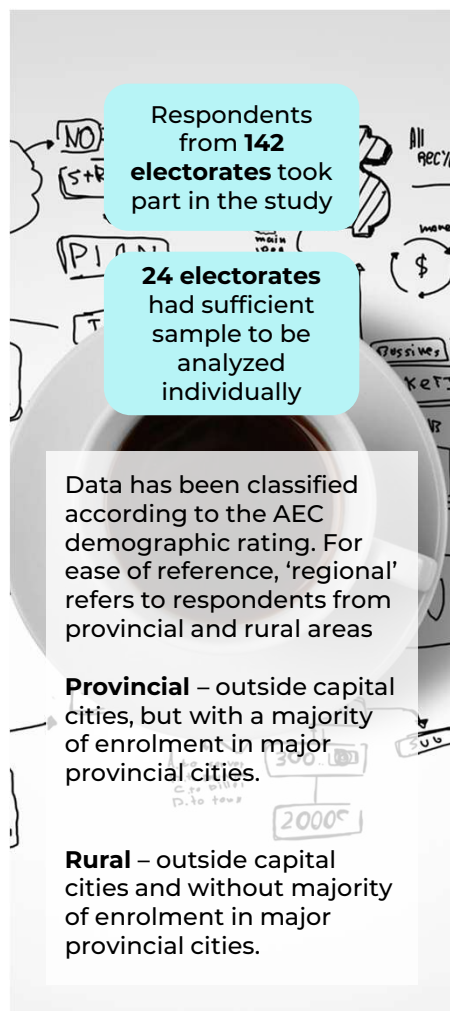
## 2025 Federal Election

*February 2025*

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project please contact Laura Allen  
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## Research background

- Ahead of the 2025 Australian Federal election being called, ACM conducted a reader survey which was promoted widely across the ACM daily and Agri-network, and supported by the Chi Squared panel.
- Field was conducted from Thursday 20 February until Sunday 2 March, 2025.
- A total of 7,894 respondents completed the research.
  - All respondents had to be over the age of 18 and eligible to vote, noting that eligible was defined as *"you are already enrolled to vote or will be able to enroll by the 2025 Australian Federal Election."*
- Survey conforms to the Market Research Code of Conduct with all lists randomised and all scales reversed.

Note: This research is not representative of the Australian population as a whole, nor regional Australia.

# Early predictions had the election decided on the basis of cost of living, the economy and health

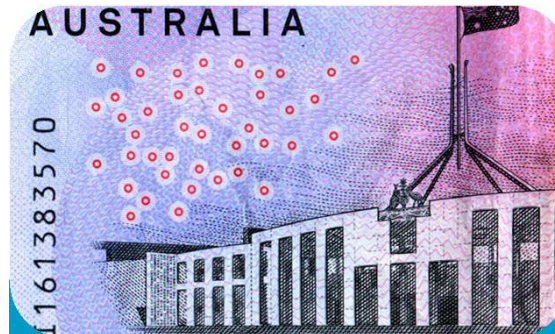
*All respondents (Nett: Top 3 Rank)*



## Household cost of living

35%

ranked this issue in their top 3



## The economy

34%

ranked this issue in their top 3



## Health

34%

ranked this issue in their top 3

Q8. Which 3 issues are most likely to influence your vote in the 2025 federal election?  
Nett: Top 3 rank



# Household cost of living

## *Reasons why this is their number 1 issue*

### **Wage stagnation**

*"Because I'm watching my savings going backwards and my income is not keeping up with costs."*  
Male, 50, ACT

*"Everything is ridiculously expensive and wages do not keep at pace."* Male, 35

*"Prices are rising across the board, but wages remain stagnant. It's becoming increasingly difficult to afford the cost of living & having to choose which bills to pay, surviving on basic foods that lack nutritional balance, and forgoing air conditioning on scorching days due to the expense. It's absurd."*  
Male, 67, NSW

### **Inflation**

*"Land tax, rates, insurance, groceries, are all up +20%, a block of cheese is \$12 and a block of chocolate is \$6, and Gov't incompetence is causing it!"* Male, 61, NSW

*"Under the current government, our weekly cost of living has risen 30% with no change in the items we purchase. Being self-funded retirees, we are being "thrown out with the dishwater" under this government."* Male, 77

### **Interest rates and housing costs**

*"I'm at risk of losing my home after repeated rates rises - 1 or 2 rate cuts barely touch the surface..."* Female, 59, ACT

*"My wife and I both work full time, but we struggle to save any money with our mortgage increases and cost of living, especially last 2 years."* Male, 42, TAS

*"I own a house and with interest rates so high, it's hard to afford the bills and the mortgage and other living expenses"* Female, 30





# The economy

*Reasons why this is their number 1 issue*

## Economic management

"The money wasted by government just keeps increasing our debt. Imagine if we didn't have to pay the millions of dollars in interest we now pay what could be done"  
Male, 73, ACT

"The current government has arrogantly managed Australia's economy and will leave the taxpayer with years of debt."  
Male, 73, TAS

## Flow on effects in everyday life

"The economy feeds everything else so a healthy economy ensures all other aspects of society and community can function at their best."  
Male, 51, VIC

"The economy forms the basis of the ability to manage all other important issues such as the environment, health, education etc"  
Female, 73, ACT

## Future-proofing

"In the current world climate, we need a strong economy to face the possible challenges ahead"  
Female, 63, NSW

"Without a healthy economy, we cannot afford to support our communities to have the services and facilities they need and expect. Also a healthy economy will support a better standard of living and give people hope for the future."  
Female, 58, VIC



# Health

## *Reasons why this is their number 1 issue*

### Lack of regional access

*"Despite the influx of people to our regional towns our health facilities have never been worse. No doctors, no specialists, no rehab units, no midwives! It's like going back to the 1920's."*  
Female, 62, NSW

*"The lack of adequate health care and access to GP in regional and remote NSW."*  
Male, 31

*"We are an aging population which means we will be putting more pressure on the health system. The current Albury and Wodonga hospitals are clearly not coping, and it will only get worse. We deserve to have better representation and we deserve a first class hospital. I've been treated in Melbourne recently and found their waiting times are amazing when you consider the large area that they cater to. Dialysis waiting times here are clearly unsatisfactory when you consider that visitors to the area cannot access our dialysis machines. Justin Clancy and Sussan Ley have both dropped the ball!"* Female, 71, NSW

### Shortage of staff

*"Our Healthcare System is in dire needs. Waiting times are through the roof and our emergency services are stretched out way to thin."*  
Female, 45

*"There is a doctor shortage in the country. Emergency department waits in hospitals are at least 4-5 hours, not enough staff. Health services are totally inadequate."* Female, 69, NSW

*"The amount of time that it takes for patients to receive treatment urgently needs addressing. More medical staff are needed in rural areas. The lack of quality of care at small rural hospitals needs addressing"* Female, 54, NSW



# Health

## *Reasons why this is their number 1 issue*

### Expense

*"I am sick of paying to visit a doctor. There is very limited bulk billing in regional & rural Australia."*

*Female, 62, NSW*

*"I wish I didn't pay so much and get so little back from medicare."*

*Male, 40, ACT*

*"Due to the out of pocket cost to see a GP, when Medicare was meant to be universal free healthcare."*

*Male, 45, NSW*

*"Health has an effect on everyone and it is important that everyone should have equal access and the chance to stay healthy, it should not only be the right of the wealthy."*

*Male, 52, NSW*

*"I am concerned that many people cannot afford dental, doctors visits and other set which are conducive to healthy bodies."*

*Female, 79, NSW*

*"The cost of health has been rising over the past 20-30 years, yet the level of services particularly in rural and regional areas has declined. GP's who bulk bill are almost non-existent in our community despite what the current government is claiming to have increased it."*

*Female, 62, NSW*

## Environment and energy policy were also suggested to play a potential key role in influencing votes

*All respondents (Nett: Top 3 Rank)*

Household cost of living	35%	Education	13%
The economy	34%	Aged care	10%
Health	34%	Jobs & wages	8%
Environment & climate change	33%	Agricultural policy	6%
Energy policy	27%	Racism	5%
Housing affordability/availability	20%	Gambling reform	4%
Immigration	19%	Regulation of social media	3%
National security & defence	19%	Disability support	3%
Crime & safety	18%	Childcare	1%

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Q8. Which 3 issues are most likely to influence your vote in the 2025 federal election? Nett: Top 3 rank.

Base: All respondents who did not select 'none of these' n = 7,997





# Environment & Climate Change

## *Reasons why this is their number 1 issue*

### **Sustainability of life on Earth**

*"As an elderly person my concern is for my grandchildren - will there be an earth for them to live on? It is getting scorched"*  
Female, 83, NSW

*"Climate & the environment are not replaceable. We're destroying the earth & our grandchildren will inherit a dust bowl."* Female, 59

*"Without the environment in tact we have nothing."*  
Female, 29, NSW

### **Critical to every other issue**

*"Every other issue (health, cost of living, food security, fewer extreme weather events, stable economies) depends on a stable climate & ensuring a liveable planet for future generations."* Female, 39

*"Climate change impacts everything else in our lives - health, insurance, access to food and overall cost of living. I don't want my children living with that level of anxiety."* Female, 30

### **Sustainable policies**

*"Important that a government does more in betterment of future generations and nature and wildlife, not selfishly focusses on policies which will only benefit a small number of people."* Female, 32

*"I think our evolving climate underpins every other issue... cost of living, quality of life, health, energy supply. It's deeply scary raising children while seeing the effects of climate change while policy moves so slowly."*  
Female, 44



# Energy Policy

*Reasons why this is their number 1 issue*

## Net Zero policy

*"The current policy of net zero by 2050 is unsustainable as energy prices have skyrocketed and energy supply is unstable. Renewable energy zones over farming lands will lead to increased food prices as we are forced to import food. NSW Farmers Association is right to be fighting the Government's compulsory acquisition of farming lands." Female, 53.*

*"Renewables stop wasting money. Need baseload power. Get out of Paris agreement and net zero. Pursue emission goals but don't destroy the country by rolling out renewable technology that will be obsolete before it's built and only lasts 20 years." Female, 64*

## Unreliable sources of energy

*"Why are you still pursuing and funding renewables and shutting down coal fired power and allowing policy directions to drive investment away from gas and coal reliable baseload power sources? The current energy policy will soon result in no power often for many. How can businesses survive on unreliable and extremely expensive energy. The flow on of energy costs goes throughout the entire economy causing inflation and sending businesses broke. All for 1 Percent of global emissions from Australia whilst China powers on using Australian coal and selling renewable infrastructure back to us. Why are you doing this?" Female 64*



# Energy Policy

*Reasons why this is their number 1 issue*

## Related to environment and climate change

*"This is inherently linked to climate change, and Australia's direction as far as renewables vs non renewables will have impacts long term economically for the country and individuals, and for the environment. Energy policy sits at the intersection of these other issues." Female, 39*

*"I do not believe that nuclear energy is right for Australia. Renewable energy is much more environmentally responsible, economically sustainable and important." Male, 58, NSW*

*"Energy policy is important as the weather is getting worse due to global warming. Energy is something everyone uses so it needs to be looked at closely." Female, 57, ACT*

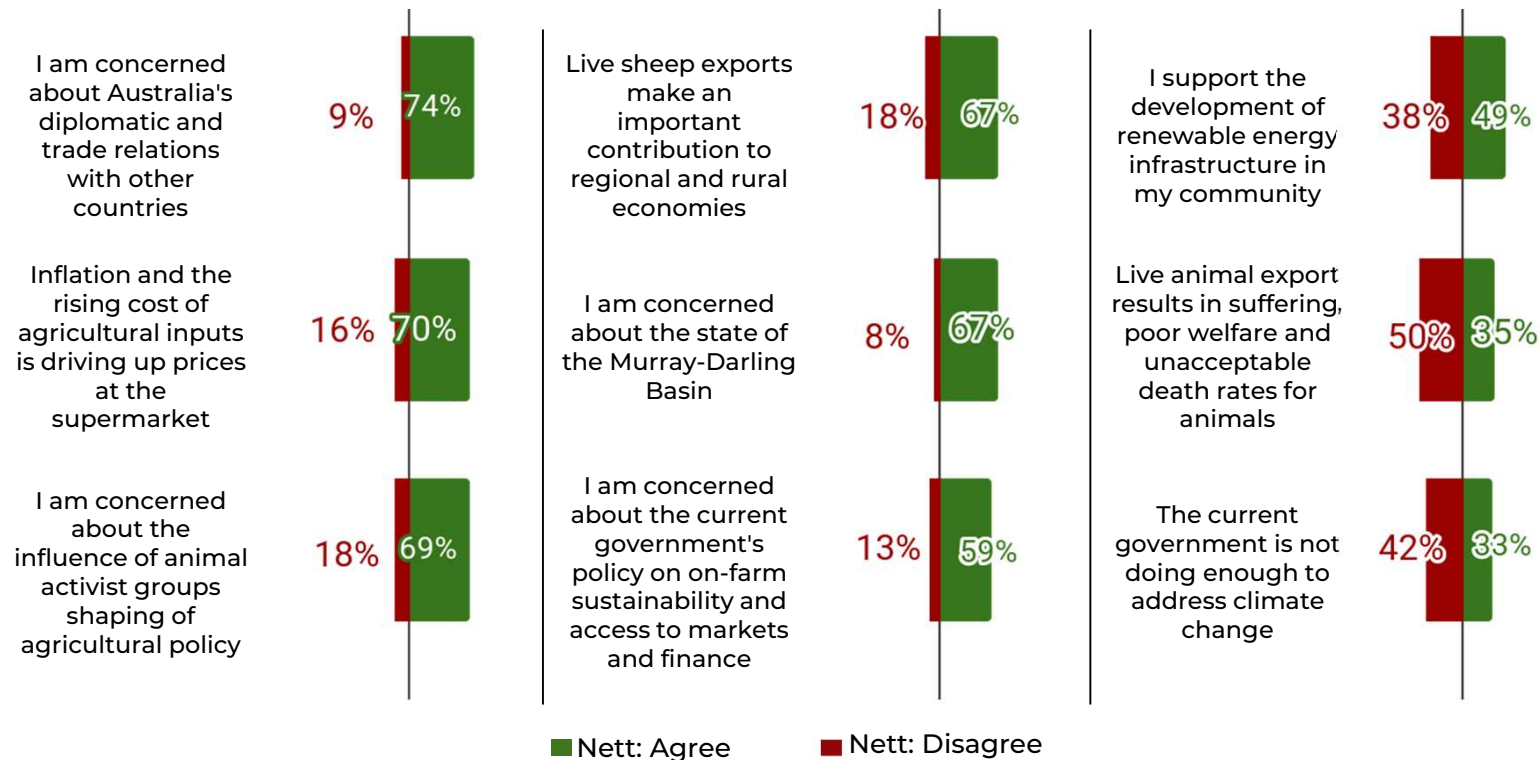
## Impacting on cost of living pressures

*"Higher energy prices are a primary cause of cost of living increases." Female, 49, NSW*

*"Energy Policy has an impact of business, cost of living and a factor of most other issues affecting everyone." Female, 57, NSW*

*"Australia has abundant supplies of energy of which we are not taking advantage. the cost of electricity and gas is ridiculously high and it should not be. The current government's policy is not in the consumers interest." Male, 75, VIC*

## Among the agricultural respondents surveyed, diplomatic and trade relations, and inflation were key concerns



Q10. There are a number of issues currently influencing Australian farmers and agricultural communities. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. Base: Those involved in farming, n=1,977

February 2025 saw Albanese are the preferred PM by a narrow margin, although a quarter of survey participants wished there were another option

*Preferred Prime Minister*



**Peter Dutton**

35%



**Anthony Albanese**

38%



**I wish there was another  
option**

27%

Q12. Who is your preferred prime minister?  
Base: All respondents n=7,894



# Respondents were looking for an honest, trustworthy, visionary, strong and decisive leader

*Most important qualities in an Australian Prime Minister*



## Honest and trustworthy

*"Be honest. Don't just say things because you think that's what people want to hear."  
Female 59 ACT*



## Vision for the future

*"Toughen up, ignore misinformation and lies be visionary and create policies for the future." Male 69 NSW*



## Strong and decisive

*When are any of you going to grow a backbone, make decisive decisions and become actually likeable and effective in your chosen profession of politician." Male 61 ACT*

Q13. What are the 3 most important qualities you want in an Australian prime minister? Nett: Top 3 rank  
Base: All respondents n=7,796

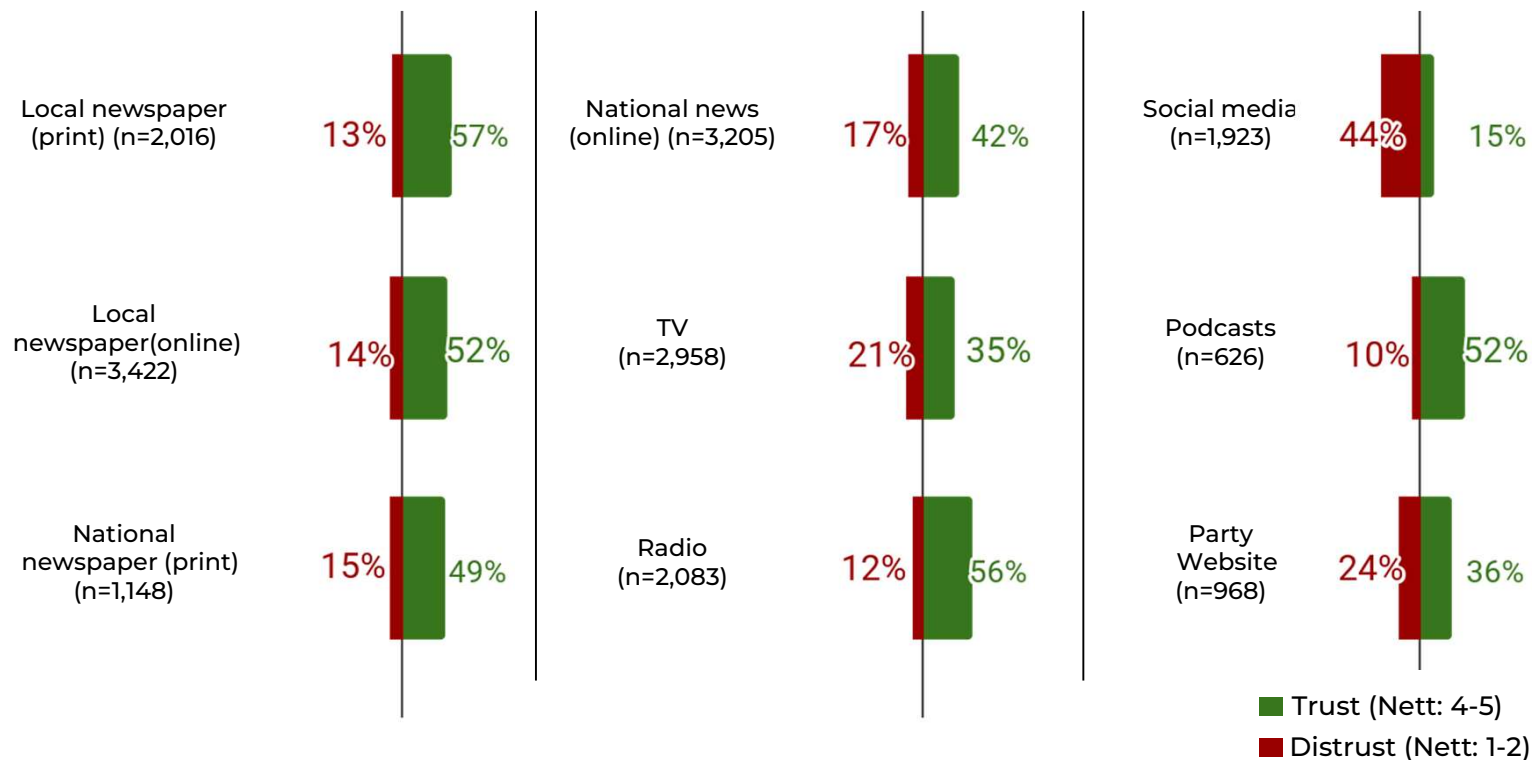
## 29% of respondents look for information on their local candidates in their local newspaper, ranking third

<b>National newspaper (Nett: print or online)</b>	<b>48%</b>	National newspaper (print)	15%
National newspaper (online)	41%	<b>Local newspaper (print)</b>	<b>12%</b>
TV	37%	Party website	12%
<b>Local Newspaper (Nett: print or online)</b>	<b>29%</b>	Somewhere else	8%
Radio	26%	Podcasts	8%
Social media	24%	How to vote cards	6%
<b>Local newspaper (online)</b>	<b>19%</b>	<i>I don't look for information</i>	6%
Mailbox flyers	15%	<i>I don't know</i>	<1%

**29%**  
look for  
information in  
their local news  
(nett: print and  
online)

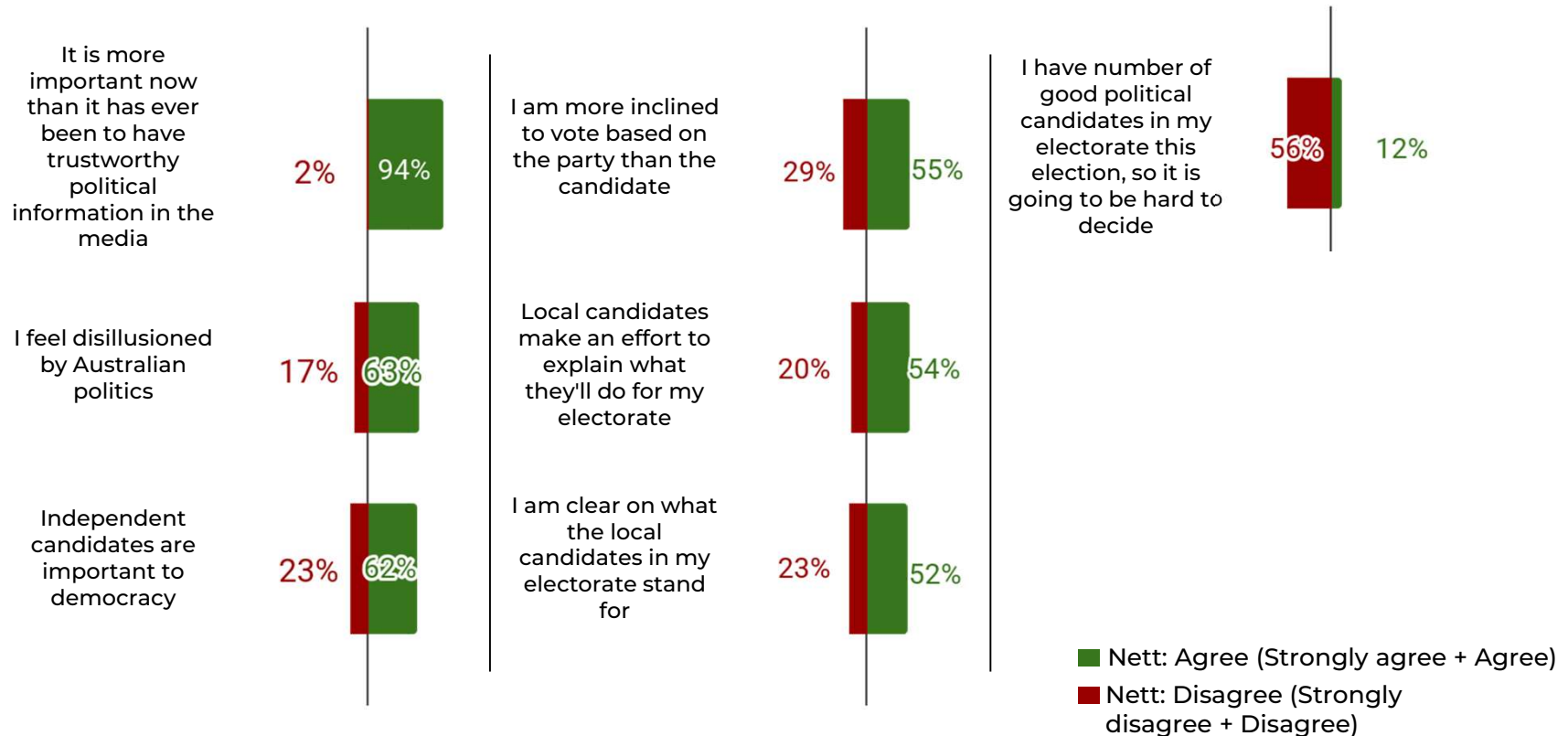
Q15. Where do you look for information on the political candidates in your electorate?  
Base: All respondents n=7,894

## Local news (print) was the most trusted source of candidate information, followed by radio, local news (online) and podcasts



Q16 And how trustworthy are the following media sources at covering the political candidates in your electorate.  
Base: Among those who use the channel for information

## Respondents overwhelmingly felt it is important to have trustworthy political information in the media



Q17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
Base: All respondents n=7,894