

# 100 DAYS TO THE VICTORIAN STATE ELECTION 2026 MID-YEAR STATE OF PLAY

Commissioned by



# Victoria is at a tipping point, and business is watching from the sidelines

York Park Group and ReithGordon asked Fleetwood Strategy a different question from the one most polls will answer between now and November. Not who will win, but how Victorians see the choice in front of them, why, and what they are prepared to reward with their vote.

The topline finding is that 69 per cent of voters say Victoria is on the wrong track. In three decades of Australian polling under compulsory voting, once wrong-direction sentiment settles above 60 per cent, governments change. Neither of the last two Victorian elections came close. Two-thirds say Victoria is a worse place to live than five years ago; one in five have seriously considered leaving.

In response, voters want a leader of conviction. Conviction is not authenticity, and it is not being relatable; 85 per cent told us relatable isn't enough. Conviction is the voter's judgement of whether politicians will actually do what they say, and not revert to business as usual the moment the votes are counted. The behaviours that demonstrate conviction are the ones that carry a personal cost to the leader. Such as ruling something out and holding the line, giving a straight answer, admitting what your own side got wrong.

For business the lessons are uncomfortable. Just 8 per cent of Victorian voters see business and community leaders as leading the debate about how to fix the state. The argument about who should run Victoria, and how, is being made by everyone except the people whose operating environment turns on the result. The best way for business to fill the leadership vacancy is with people who commit to something specific, put their name to it, and see those things through no matter what. Business leaders who do that will be heard, in this election and in whatever follows it. Those who wait for the politics to settle will find that it already has moved on without them.

What follows is our analysis of how Victorians see the contest today, and what it will take to earn their vote.

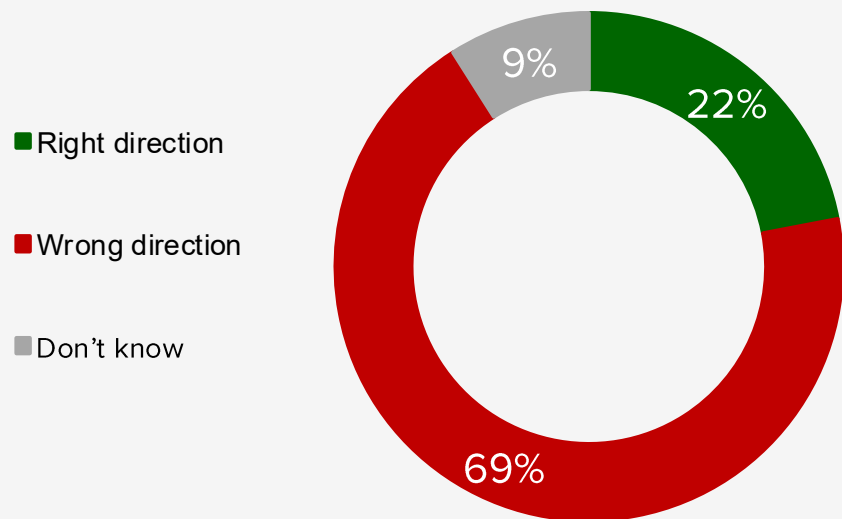
**Andrew Laidlaw**  
Partner, Fleetwood Strategy



# State of Play – Victoria August 2026

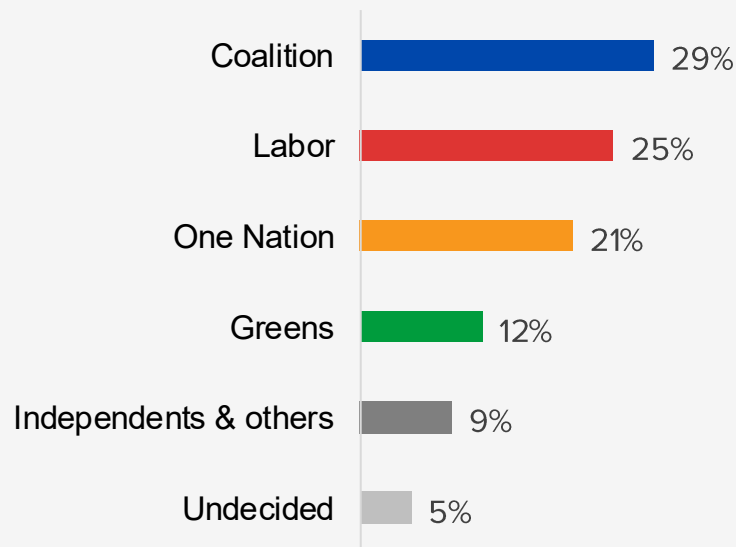
## Victoria has passed the tipping point.

Do you think things in Victoria are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

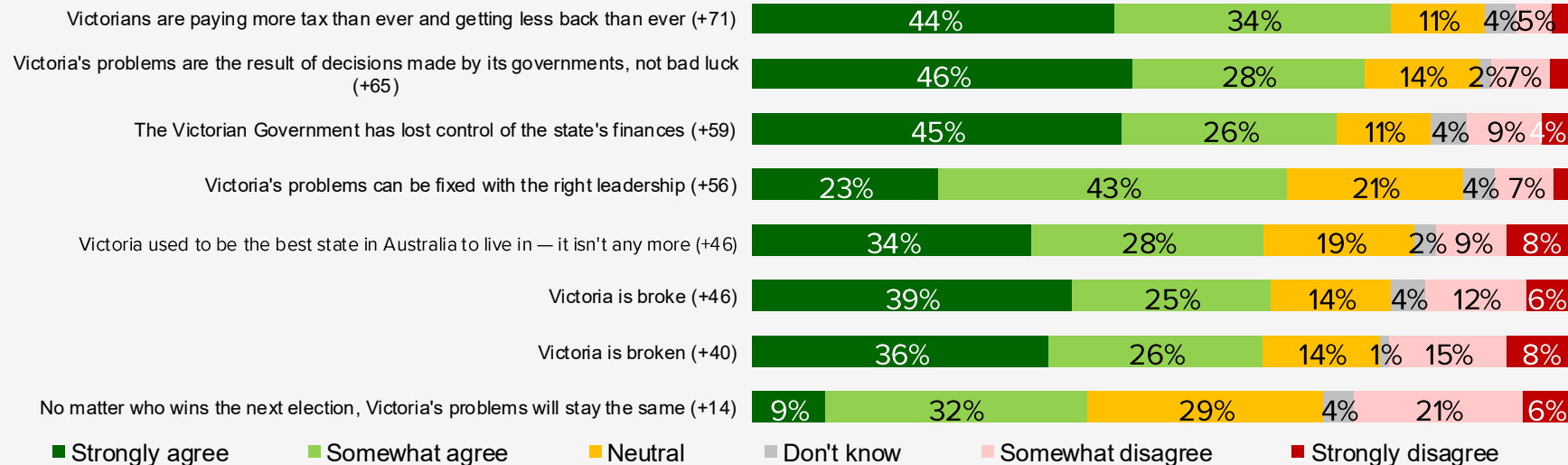


## The race: three-way and unsettled.

First preference vote intention, Legislative Assembly  
(squeezed vote – undecideds shown, not removed)



# Victorians feel broke and broken



**66%**

Say Victoria is a worse place to live than five years ago

**46%**

Have cut back on groceries or essentials in the past year

**39%**

Have dipped into savings to pay everyday bills

**21%**

Have seriously considered leaving Victoria altogether

# Voters are looking for personal conviction, not a party, to fix Victoria

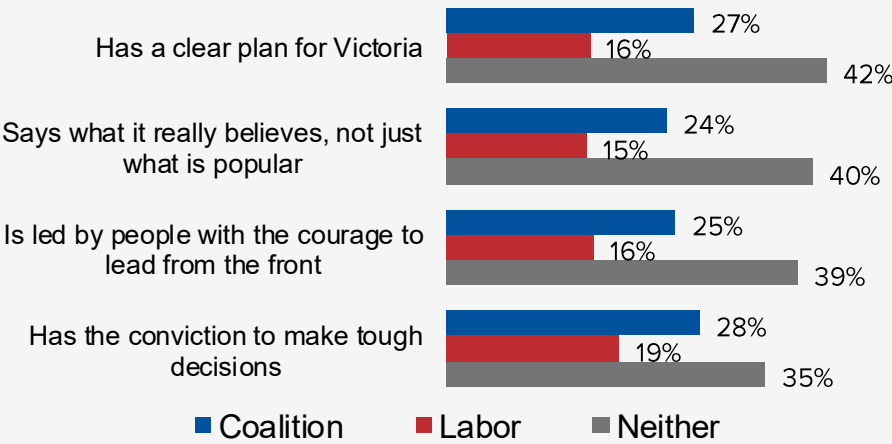
A leader with real conviction, even if I don't agree with everything they say 72%

A leader I mostly agree with, but who avoids taking a stand 13%

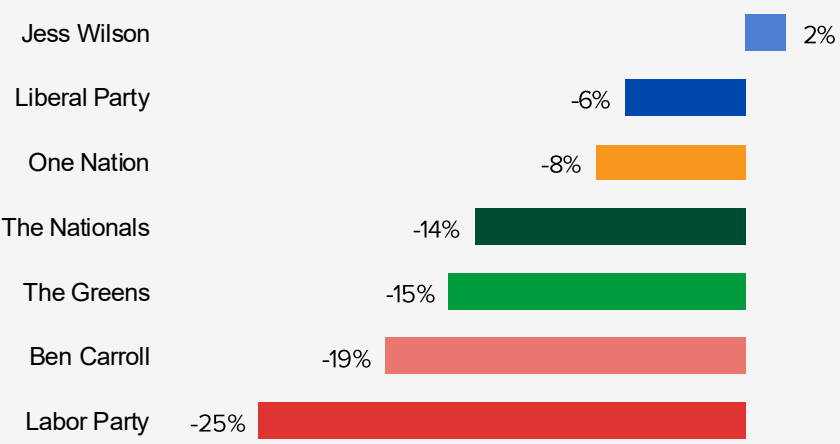
A leader who shows real conviction about fixing Victoria 70%

A leader who is relatable and down to earth 21%

## Attribute Equities

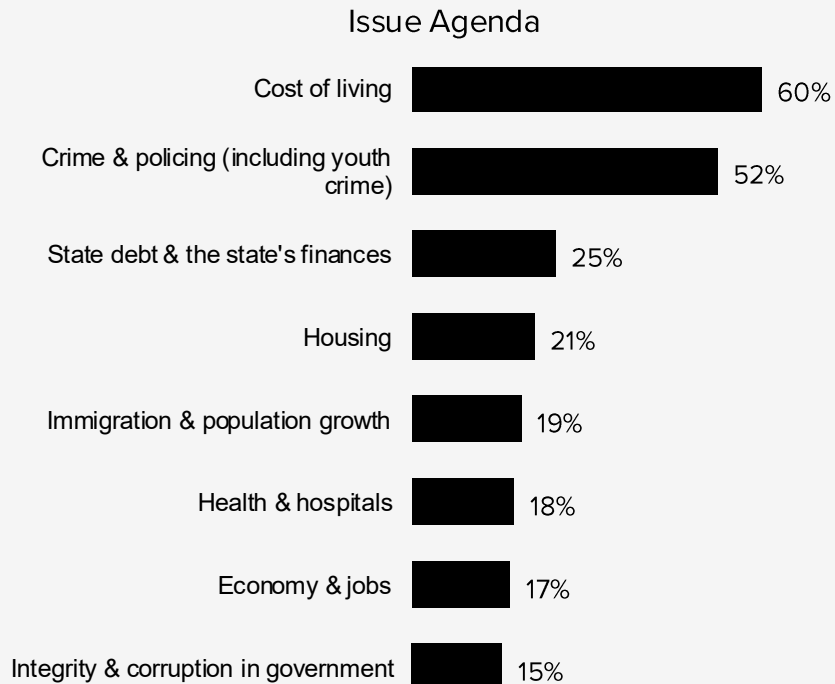


## NET Favourable - Unfavourable

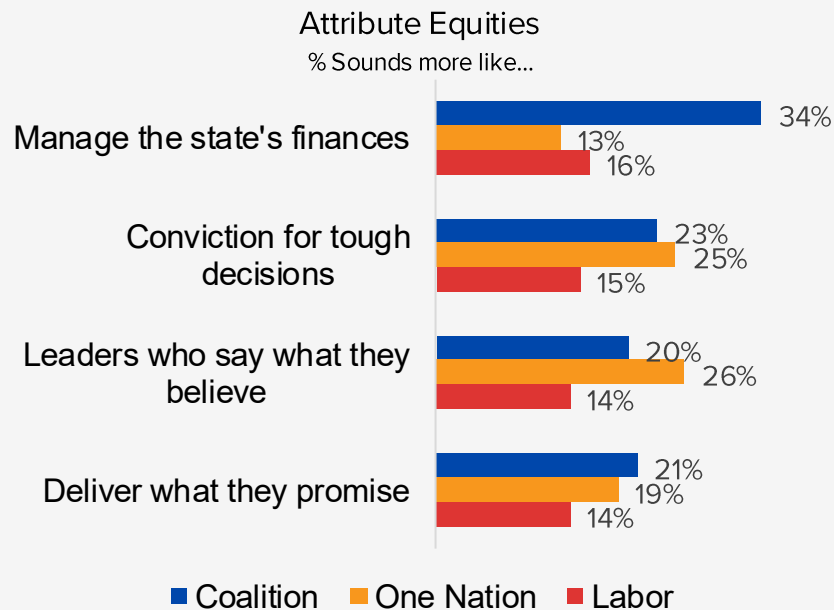


# Issue positioning alone won't decide the outcome

## Everyone is running on the same issues



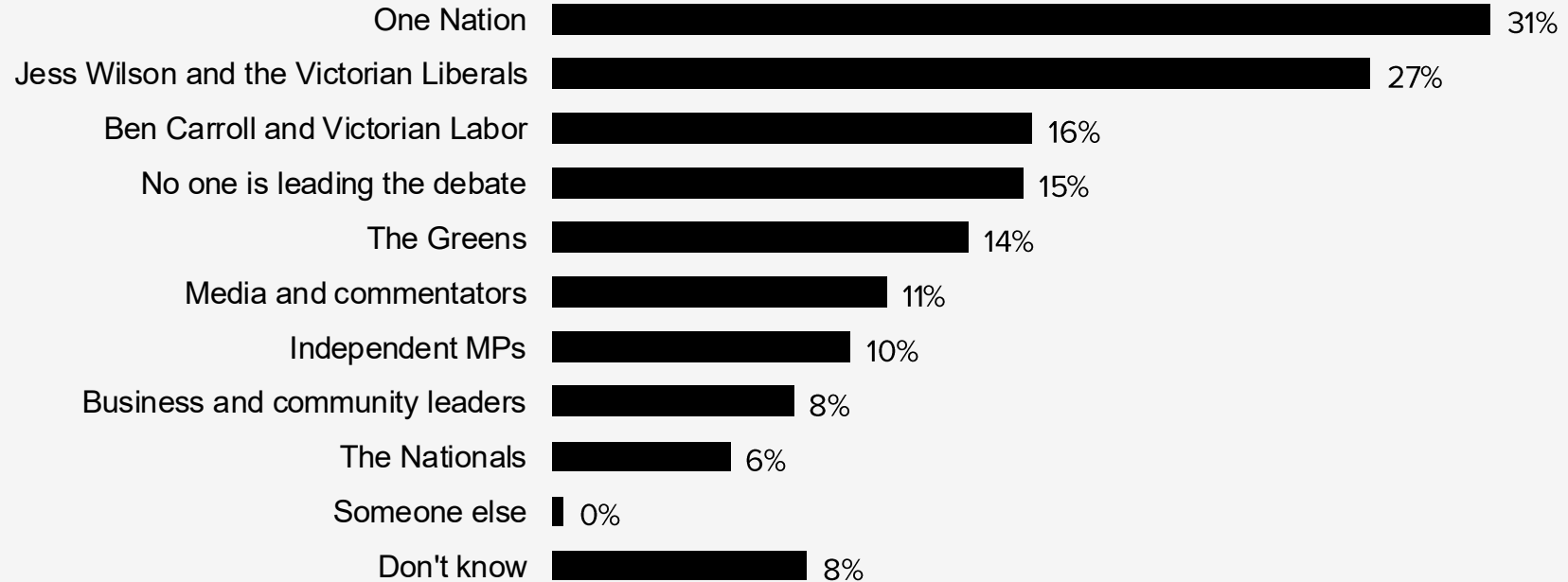
## ... and no party owns conviction



Greens, "all/none" and don't know not shown. The Liberals lead on managing finances; One Nation edges them on conviction and on "say what they really believe"

# One Nation is seen to be leading the debate – business is not

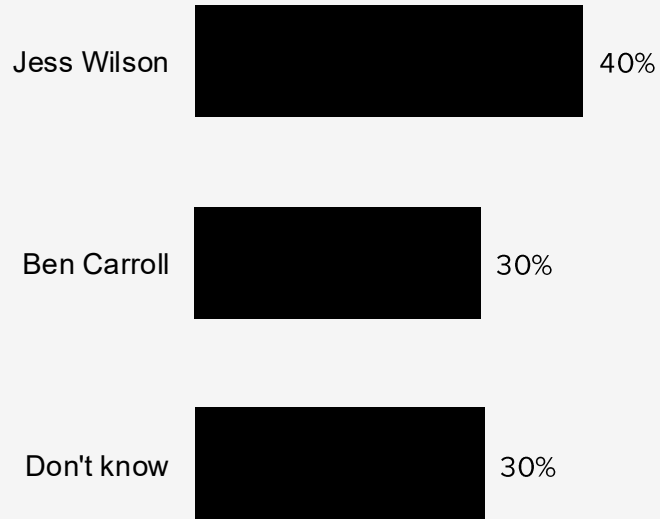
Who is leading the debate about how to fix Victoria's biggest problems?



Don't know 8%. Coalition vs One Nation is within the margin of error. Among current One Nation voters, 80% say One Nation is leading the debate; among current Liberal voters, 7% say business and community leaders are.

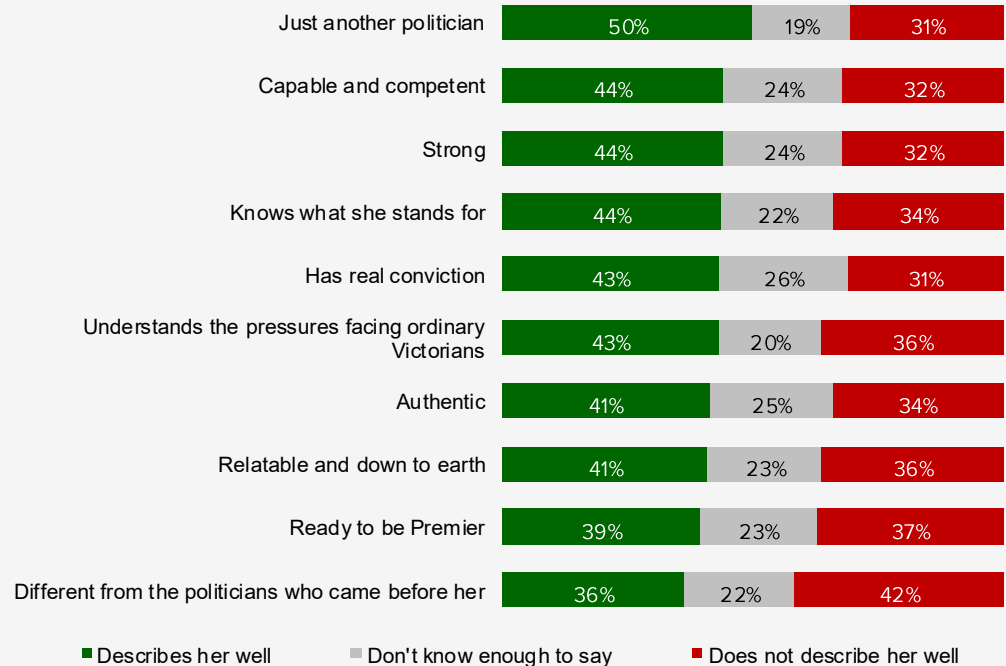
# Jess Wilson is closest to the brief, with work still to do

Regardless of how you intend to vote, who do you think would make the better Premier of Victoria?



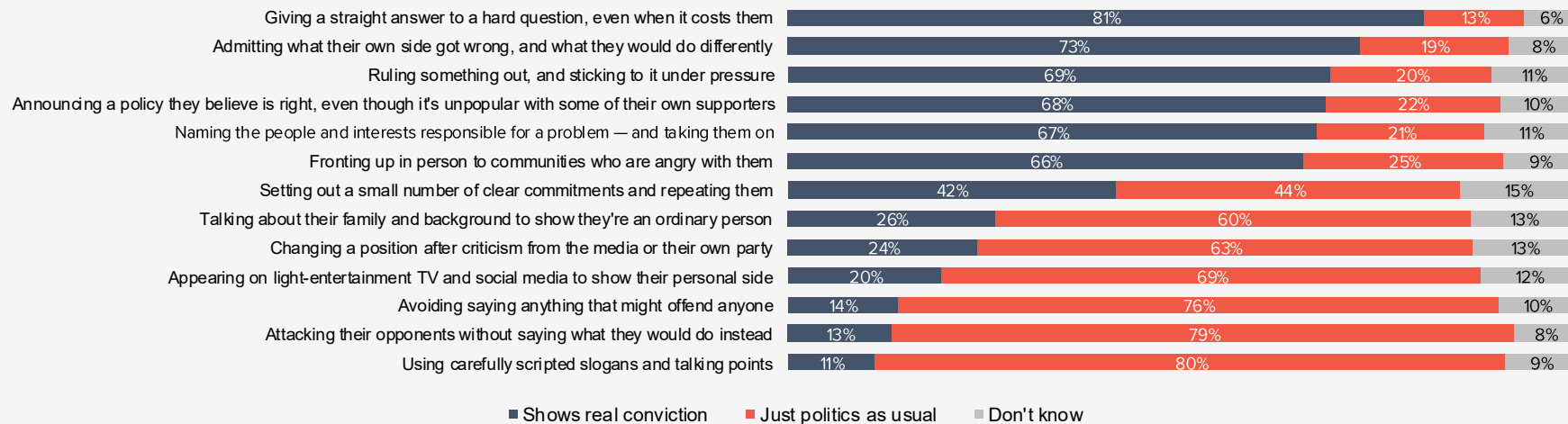
Jess Wilson is the only figure tested with a net-positive favourability (+2). Carroll sits at -19.

How well does each describe Jess Wilson?



# What conviction looks like to voters and what doesn't

For each behaviour: does it show real conviction, or is it just politics as usual?



## 87%

Would rather a leader who tells them the hard truth about Victoria's finances than one who pretends everything is fine

## 85%

Agree being relatable isn't enough. They want to know what a leader would actually fight for

## 39%

Say conviction means "a clear plan, seen through", which is the top definition, ahead of saying what you believe even when unpopular

# Methodology

**Victoria**

Statewide

**600**

Respondents in total

**+/- 4.0%**

Margin of error

**5 – 12 Aug**

Fieldwork dates

## Victoria:

- Target Audience: State-representative cross-section of the Victorian electorate aged 18 and over
- Quota & weights: Gender, age, region, education and 2022 state vote



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