

'Double Haters' will decide the next federal election

Twelve months out from the next election, a minority federal government is a live possibility.

According to an exclusive Multilevel Regression with Poststratification (MRP) poll conducted by Accent Research and the RedBridge Group, a hung parliament and a Labor majority are almost equally likely outcomes, while there is essentially zero probability at this stage the Liberal-National Coalition will win more seats than Labor.

The results published in today's Australian Financial Review show that support for the non-major parties remains at record highs with around 20 seats in play for minor parties and independent candidates.

The 'Double Haters', a phenomenon first coined in the United States to describe those voters that don't support either major party or candidate, now make up nearly one third of the electorate in Australia and is consistent with the record non-major party vote at the 2022 federal election of 31.7 per cent.

"The 'Double Haters' are continuing to disrupt the Australian political landscape and twelve months out from the federal election it looks like they are well positioned to decide the government, particularly if interest rates and inflation remain high," said Tony Barry, a Director at the RedBridge Group,

Dr Shaun Ratcliff, Principal at Accent Research, said that while topline polling results indicate little movement in the overall vote share since the last election, this is hiding localised movements, and an electoral geography that will make it hard for the Coalition to win enough seats to form government.

"Labor is losing primary votes, particularly in the outer suburbs and regional centres, while the Coalition has gained small primary vote swings everywhere except rural electorates," said Dr Ratcliff.

"While the Coalition is within striking distance of some outer suburban and regional seats held by Labor, such as Robertson, Gilmore and Lyons, they do not appear to be winning back the seats they lost at the last election, and may be challenged by independents in some regional seats.

"Additionally, Labor is competitive in some Liberal-held seats, such as Menzies and Deakin in suburban Melbourne. This electoral geography makes it very difficult for the Coalition to regain government, or to even look competitive," Dr Ratcliff said.

"The problem for both major parties is their votes are being cannibalised by minor parties and independents," said Kos Samaras, a Director at RedBridge.

"The trend from 2022 continues, with many wealthier and more highly educated areas increasingly leaning to the Left, while poorer areas are opting for independents and non-institutional players. Labor is losing support in the outer suburbs of major cities, but the Liberal Party has been unable to capitalise on this discontent."

"Simultaneously, the Greens' surge 2022 in the inner city appears to have stalled, largely due to older Millennials shifting to Labor, offsetting Labor's losses among younger voters in inner Melbourne and Brisbane. This Labor versus Green dynamic could ultimately threaten the Greens in Brisbane," said Mr Samaras.

This research was based on a survey of 4,040 Australian voters conducted between February and May 2024. It was based on the current AEC boundaries for 151 seats, noting that new federal boundaries will be released for the states of Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales in September and October 2024 which result in a net loss of one electorate.

Opinion polls, including MRPs, are not predictive tools but are a snapshot in time over the research period.

The figure below shows the number of seats estimated seats gained or retained by each party, and the table details the key seats changing hands or too close to call.

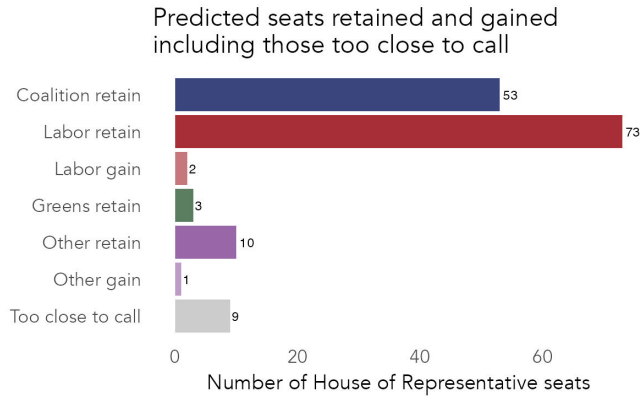


Figure 1: Estimated most likely number of seats gained, lost or retained by each party.

Table 1: Seats predicted to be changing hands, or too close to call

Division	First preference share				Two-candidate preferred			
	Coalition	Labor	Greens	Other	Coalition	Labor	Greens	Other
Changing hands								
Cowper	37	18	9	36	48			52
Fowler	19	36	13	32		54		46
Menzies	40	33	16	12	49	51		
Too close to call								
Aston	41	33	13	12	50	50		
Brisbane	41	29	22	8	50		50	
Curtin	40	16	10	34	50			50
Deakin	42	33	14	11	50	50		
Gilmore	40	33	11	16	50	50		
Lingiari	33	30	8	29	50	50		
Lyons	37	28	13	23	50	50		
Moore	41	32	14	13	51	49		
Robertson	43	35	10	12	50	50		