Trends in Australian Political Opinion
Results from the Australian Election Study
1987–2019

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AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

A E S AUSTRALIAN
ELECTION STUDY

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>

australianelectionstudy.org

> Access complete data files and documentation to conduct your own analysis

> Explore interactive charts to examine differences in political attitudes by age, gender, education level and vote

> Download Australian Election Study reports and articles

The Liberal-National Coalition win in the 2019 Australian federal election came as a surprise to the nation. The media and the polls had provided a consistent narrative in the lead up to election day that Labor was headed for victory. When we have unexpected election results, how do we make sense of why people voted the way they did?

The Australian Election Study (AES) provides the most sophisticated and comprehensive source of evidence ever collected on political attitudes and behaviour in Australia. A representative public opinion survey, the AES has been fielded after every federal election since 1987. The survey asks a wide range of questions to discover what shaped voters' choices at the ballot box—including considerations in the vote decision, the importance of different policy issues, and attitudes towards the political parties and leaders. This provides a wealth of information to understand voter behaviour and how that feeds into election results.

This monograph presents the long-term trends over time in voter attitudes and behaviour in Australia. Situating the 2019 election in historical context highlights unique factors in this election. Many indicators point to citizen detachment from the major political parties, including record low political partisanship (p. 28), rising voter instability (p. 21) and voter distrust in government (p. 99). Compared to previous elections, voters saw clear differences between the parties (p. 27).

The results also highlight how voter attitudes contributed to the election result. Factors advantaging the Coalition in the 2019 election include: the focus on economic issues (p. 32), an area in which the Coalition has a strong advantage over Labor (p. 34); and Bill Shorten's low popularity in comparison to other party leaders over the past thirty years (p. 88). Although the Coalition won the election, there were factors benefitting Labor. Climate change and the environment were more important issues in this election than in any other election on record (p. 33), an area where Labor's policies are preferred to the Coalition's (p. 39). And a majority of voters disapproved of the way the Liberal Party handled the 2018 leadership change from Malcolm Turnbull to Scott Morrison (p. 95).

In most cases, our trends run from 1987 until 2019; in some cases, the same questions have been asked in surveys conducted in 1967, 1969 and 1979, allowing us to extend the time series back another two decades. The 1987 to 2019 trends are based on the Australian Election Study (AES) surveys, comprehensive post-election surveys of political opinion that have asked the same questions and used substantially the same methodology. The 1967, 1969 and 1979 surveys are also comprehensive academic surveys of political opinion; all three surveys were conducted by Don Aitkin, who pioneered the use of mass public opinion surveys in the academic study of politics in Australia.

In 2019 two further surveys are available to complement the AES. The first is Module 5 of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project (www.cses. org). This survey used the Social Research Centre's 'Life in Australia' panel and was fielded just after the election. In addition to fielding the Module 5 questionnaire, the survey also included a variety of other questions relevant to the election. The second is the 2016-19 panel survey, which re-interviewed 968 respondents between the two elections and provides a unique insight into the factors influencing changes in political attitudes and behaviour between the two elections.

In this monograph, we draw on the main recurring themes of the AES to trace long-term changes in the political opinion of the electorate. The appendix provides an overview of the methodology used in each survey.

Further details on the dynamics shaping the 2019 election are provided in our accompanying report, *The 2019 Australian Federal Election: Results from the Australian Election Study*. These reports and a range of other resources including codebooks, technical reports and an interactive tool to explore the data online, are available on the AES website: australianelectionstudy.org

Sarah Cameron
Ian McAllister

December 2019

Acknowledgements

The election campaign
Voting and partisanship
Election issues
The economy
Politics and political parties
The left-right dimension
The political leaders
Democracy and institutions
Trade unions, business and wealth
Social issues
Defence and foreign affairs
References
Appendix: Methodology

Followed the election in the mass media

- Television
- Radio
- Newspapers
- Internet
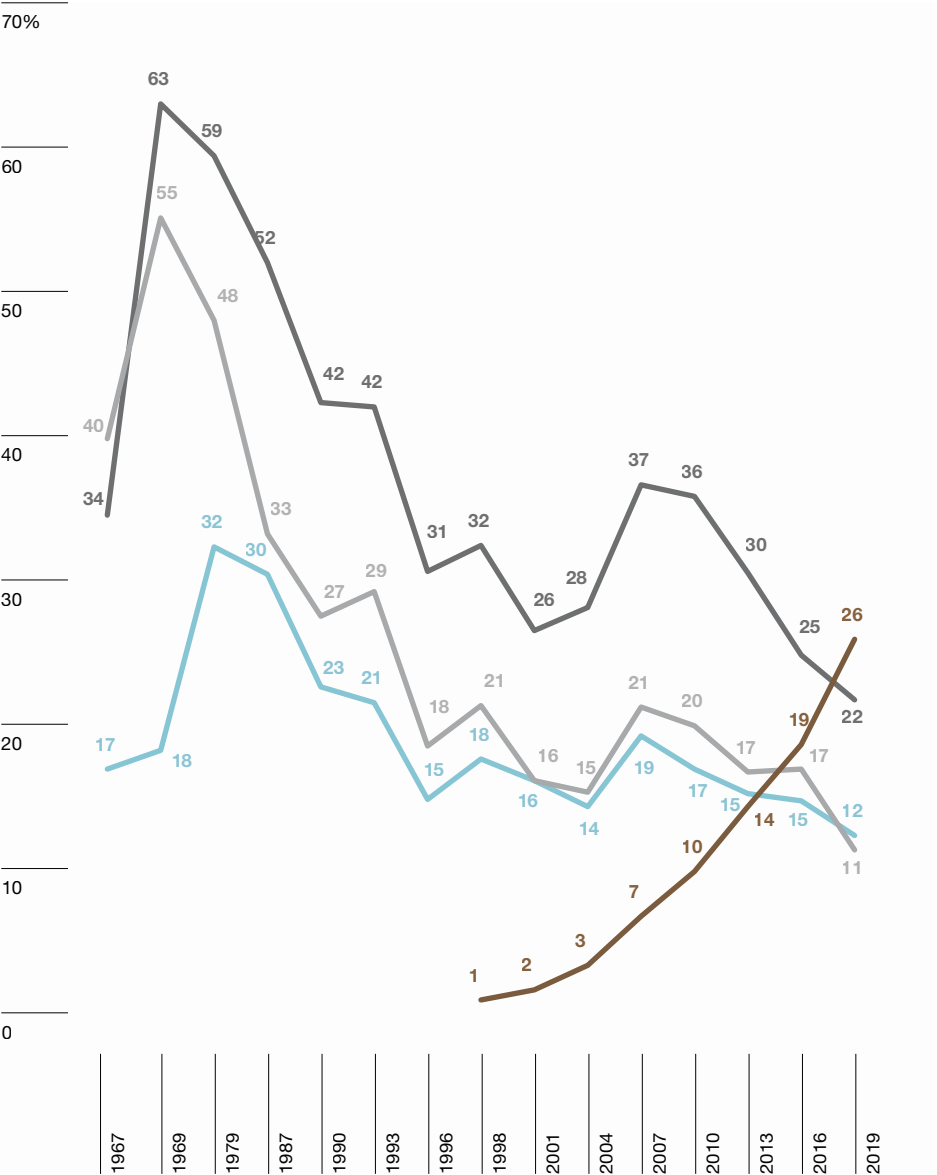
Watched the leaders' debates

- Watched debate
- Did not watch debate
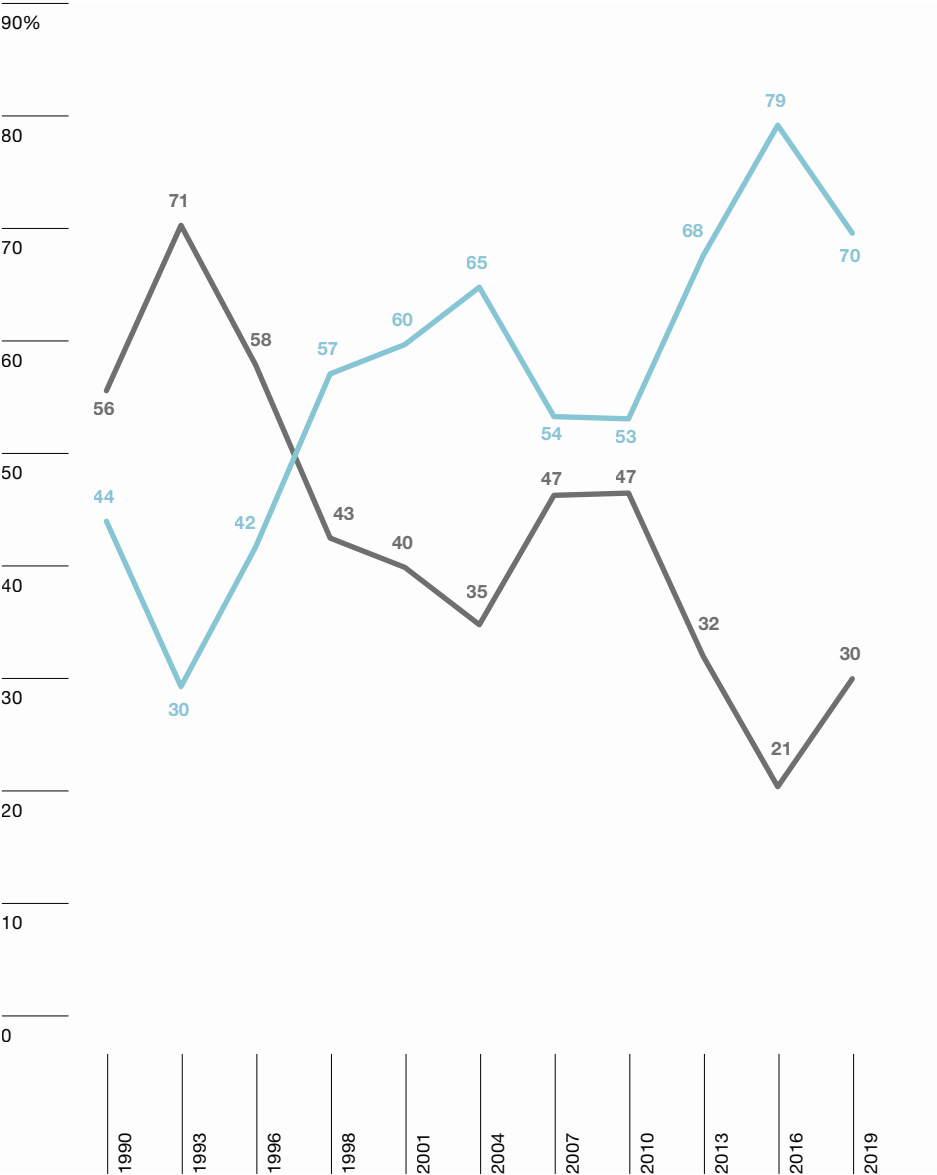
Interest in the election

━━━ **Care a good deal who wins the election**
━━━ **A good deal of interest in the election**

90%
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

60
66
79
83
75
74
65
72
76
68
68
65
69

50
34
38
31
30
40
34
33
30
32

1967 1969 1987 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
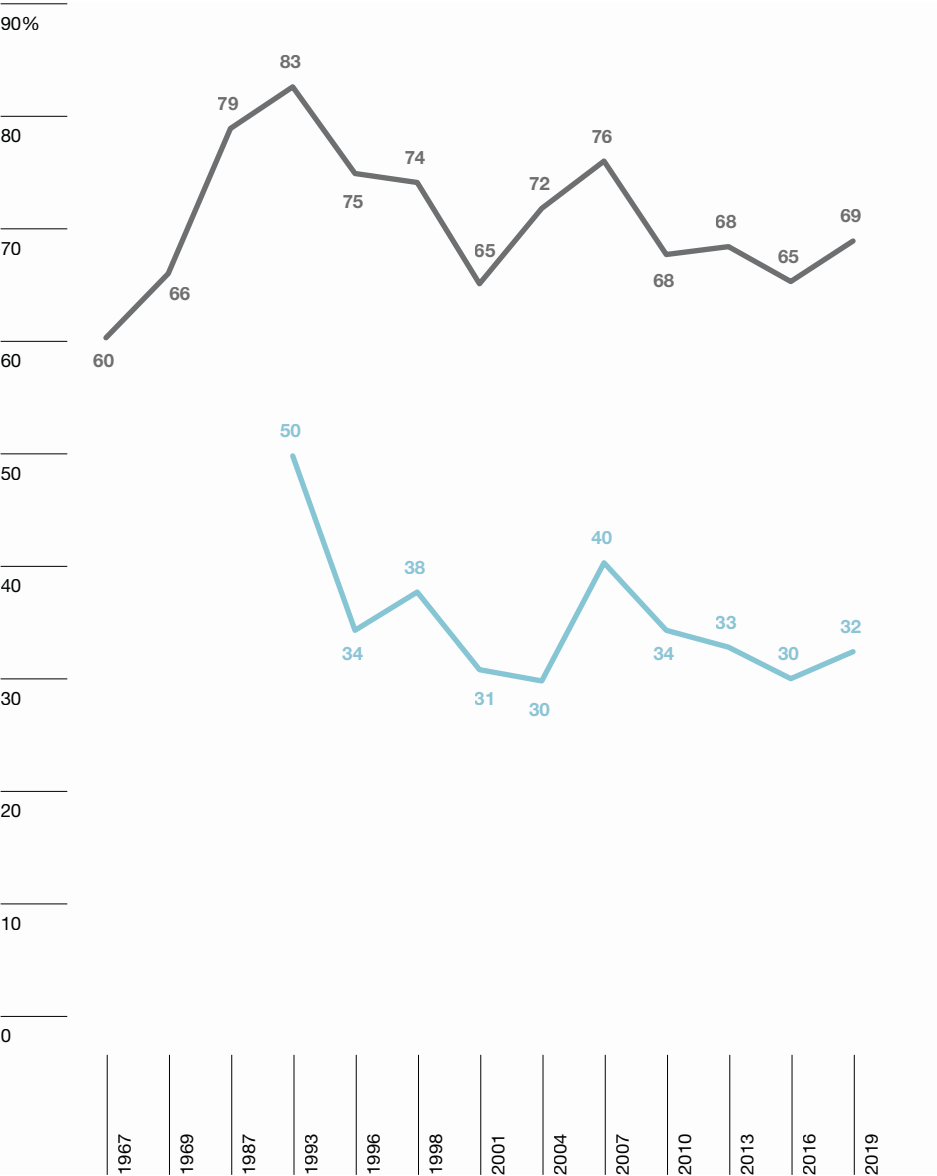
Contacted by candidate or political party

━━━ **Contacted by a party during the campaign**
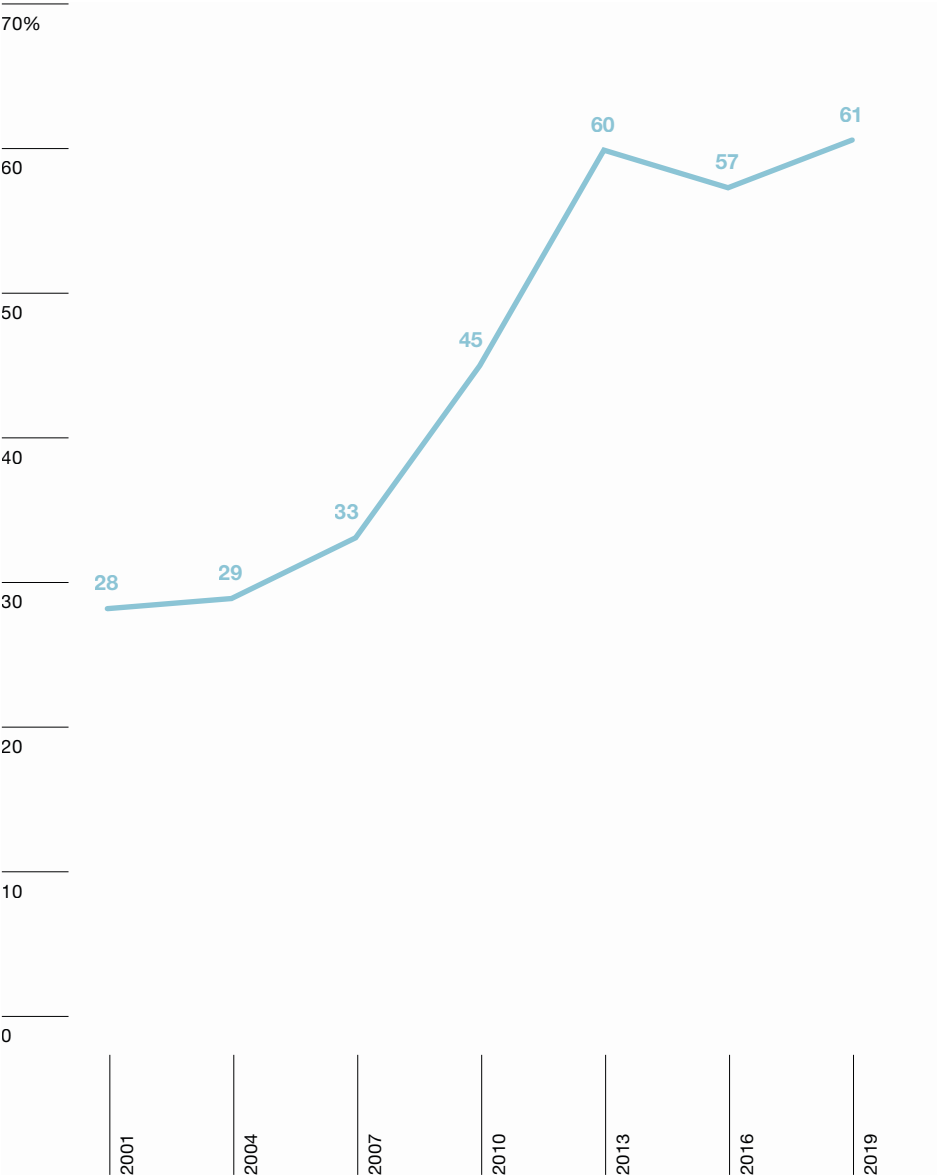
70%
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

28
29
33
45
60
57
61

2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Discussing the election campaign with others

━━━ Discuss politics
━━━ Persuade others how to vote

100%
88
82
84
80
67
68
75
76
73
72
74
60
49
42
40
35
20
15
18
14
14
15
18
11
0

1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Involvement in the election campaign

━━━ Attend meeting
━━━ Work for party or candidate
━━━ Contribute money to a political party or election candidate

14%
12
12
11
10
10
8
9
8
8
7
6
5
5
4
3
3
4
4
4
3
3
3
3
3
3
2
2
2
2
2
3
3
0

1969 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
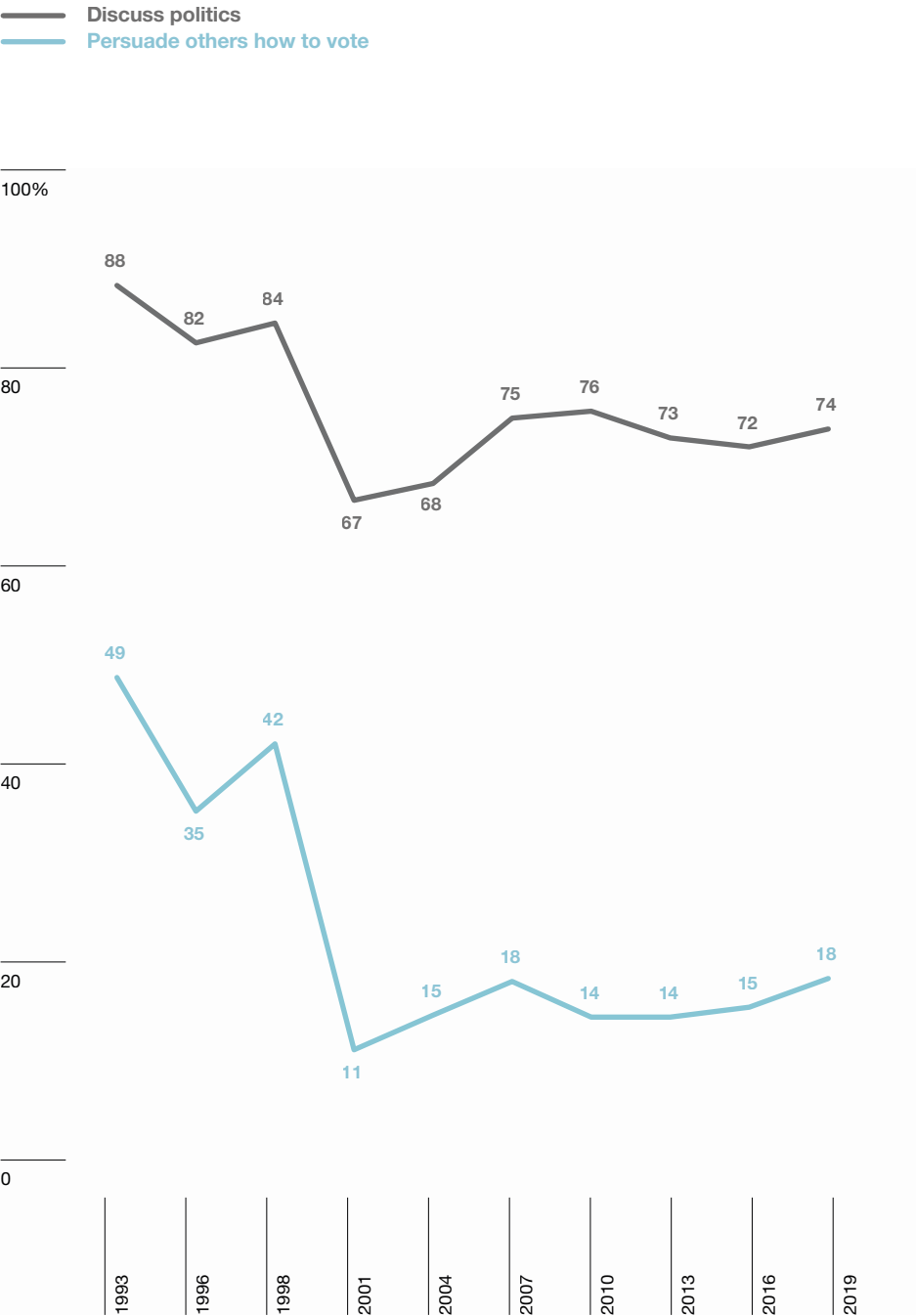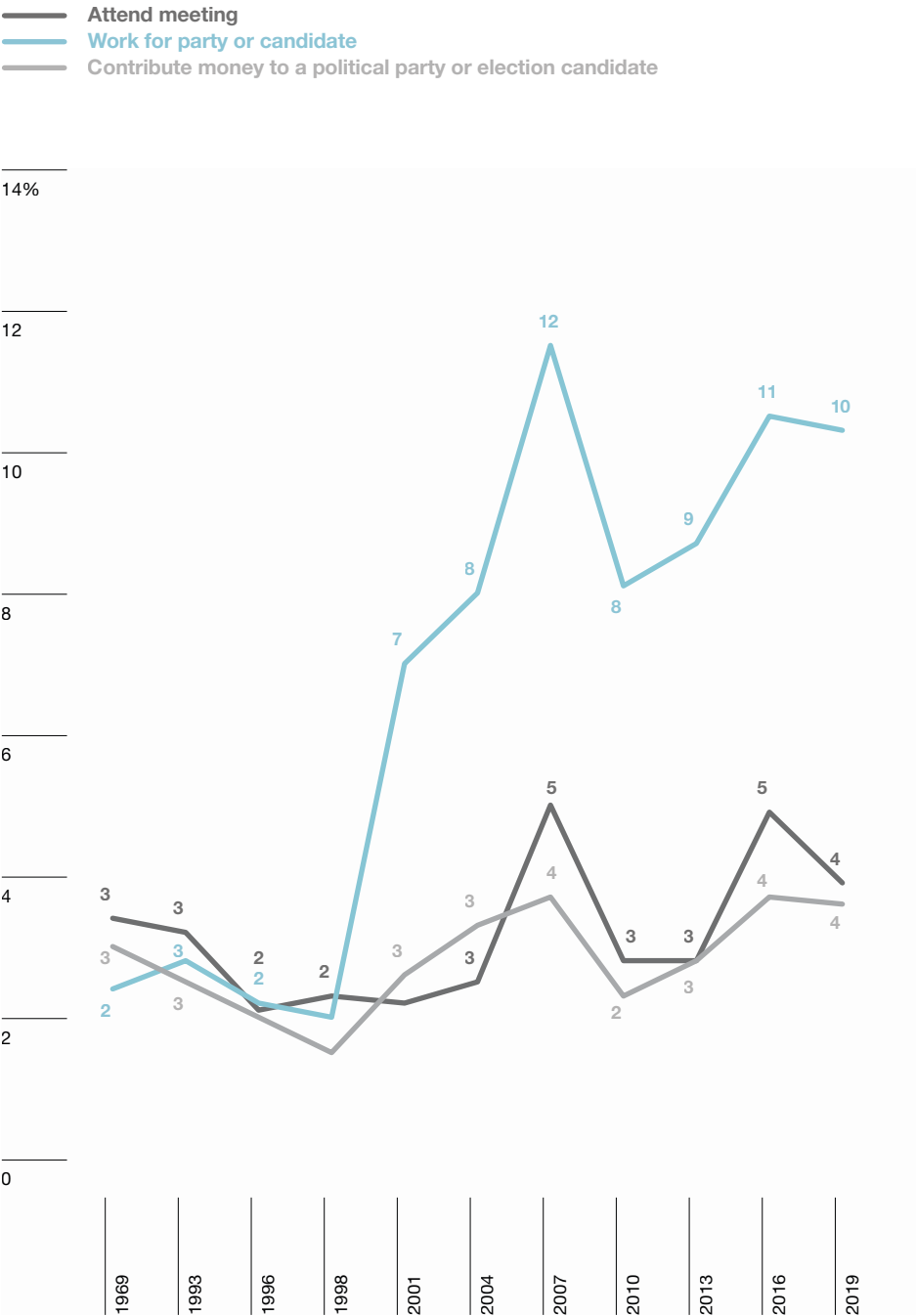
Websites accessed during the election campaign

- **Party or candidate campaign sites**
- **Mainstream news media**
- **Federal Parliament**
- **Australian Electoral Commission**
- **Unofficial online videos**
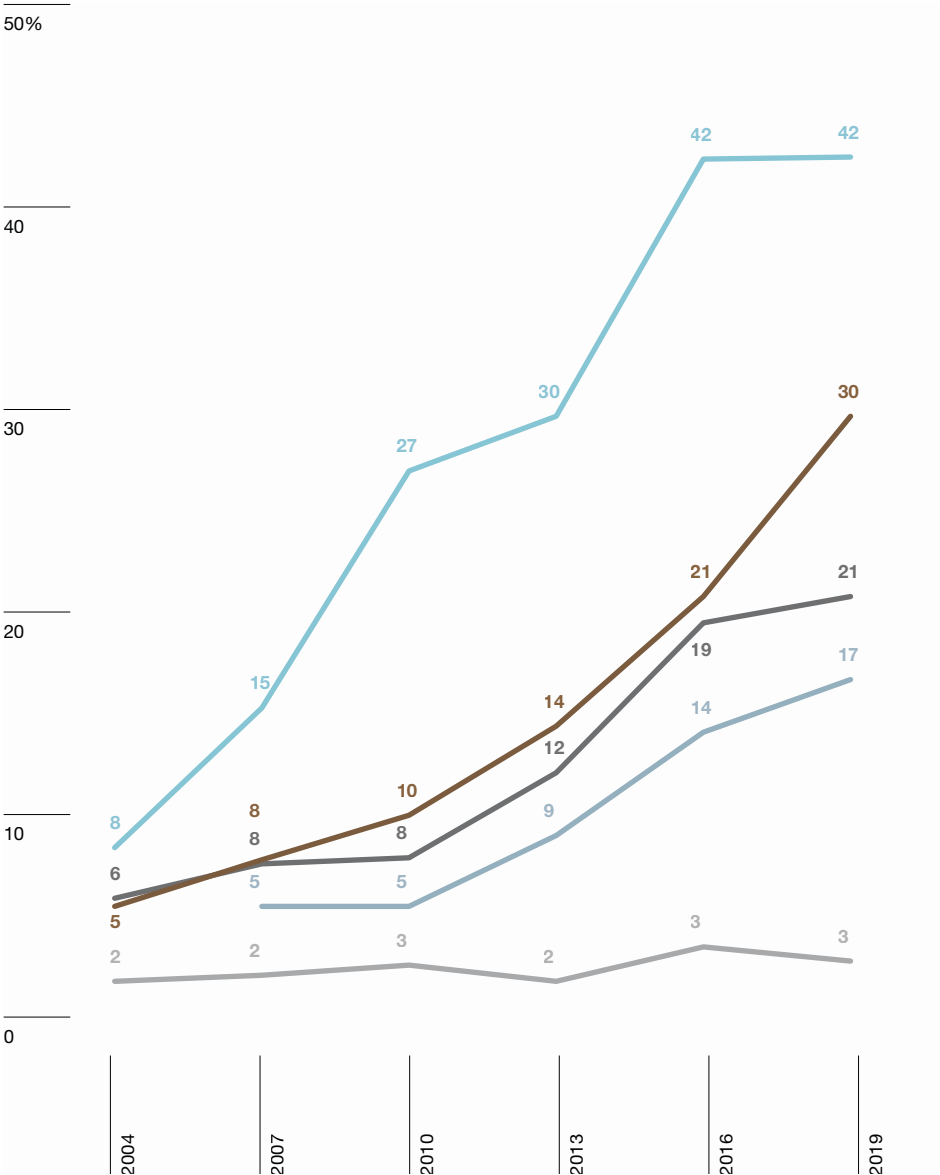
Online activity during the election campaign

- **Signed up to receive information from a party or candidate**
- **Shared unofficial political content online**
- **Joined a political group on a social networking site**
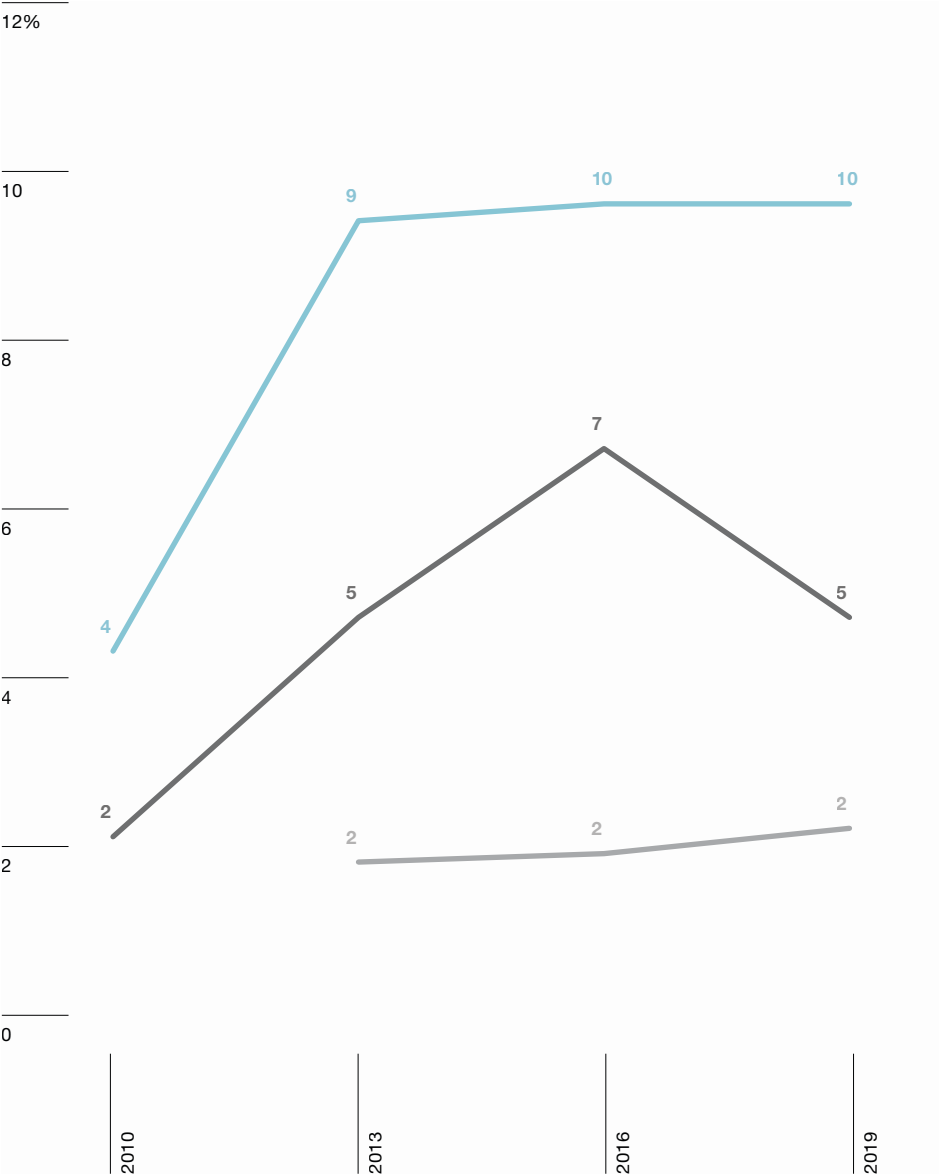
Notes

Followed the election in the mass media
Response categories for television, radio and newspapers are: (1967-1979) 'yes'; (1987-1990) 'often'; (1993-2019) 'a good deal'. Response categories for internet are: (1998-2004) 'many times'; (2007-2019) 'a good deal'.

Watched the leaders' debate
Watched debate includes respondents who watched one or more of the debates in the election campaign. Elections 1990 and 1998-2016 each had one leaders' debate, in 1993 and 1996 there were two debates, and in 2019 there were three debates.

Contacted by candidate or political party
For contacted by a party during the campaign, the response categories are: (2001-2007) 'Yes'; (2010) 'Yes, by telephone', 'Yes, by mail', 'Yes, by face-to-face', and 'Yes, by email or through the web'; (2013-2019) 'Yes, by telephone', 'Yes, by mail', 'Yes, (2013: by) face-to-face', 'Yes, by text message or SMS', 'Yes, by email', and 'Yes, by social network site or other web-based method'.

Discussing the election campaign with others
For 2001–2016 estimates combine 'frequently' and 'occasionally'.

Involvement in the election campaign
For attend meeting, the response categories are: (1969) 'yes'; (1993-2019) 'go to any political meetings or rallies'. For work for a party or candidate, the response categories are: (1969) 'yes'; (1993-1998) 'do any work for a political party or election candidate'; (2001- 2019) 'show your support for a particular party or candidate by, for example (2019: e.g.), attending a meeting, putting up a poster, or in some other way'. For contribute money to a political party or election candidate, the response categories are: (1969) 'yes'; (1993-2007, 2013-2019)

'contribute money to a political party or election candidate'; (2010) combined responses to 'contribute money to a political party or election candidate by mail or phone' and 'contribute money to a political party or election candidate using the internet'. For 2001-2019 all estimates combine 'frequently' and 'occasionally'.

Websites accessed during the election campaign
For party or candidate campaign sites the response categories are: (2004-2007) 'party site', 'your own MP's site', 'individual candidate site in your electorate' and 'other candidate/MPs sites outside your electorate'; (2010-2013) 'party or candidate campaign sites'; (2016) 'official party or candidate campaign sites'; (2019) 'official party or candidate campaign sites (e.g. home pages, blogs, official Facebook profiles, official YouTube channels)'. For unofficial online videos, the response categories are (2007) 'YouTube; (2010-2013) 'unofficial online videos'; (2016) 'unofficial online content (i.e. non-party produced campaign material (e.g. YouTube))'; and (2019) 'unofficial online content (i.e. non-party campaign material e.g. YouTube)'.

Online activity during the election campaign
For 'signed up to receive information from a party or candidate' this includes registering as their follower/friend/supporter on social media.

Timing of the voting decision

▬▬ A long time ago
▬▬ During the election campaign
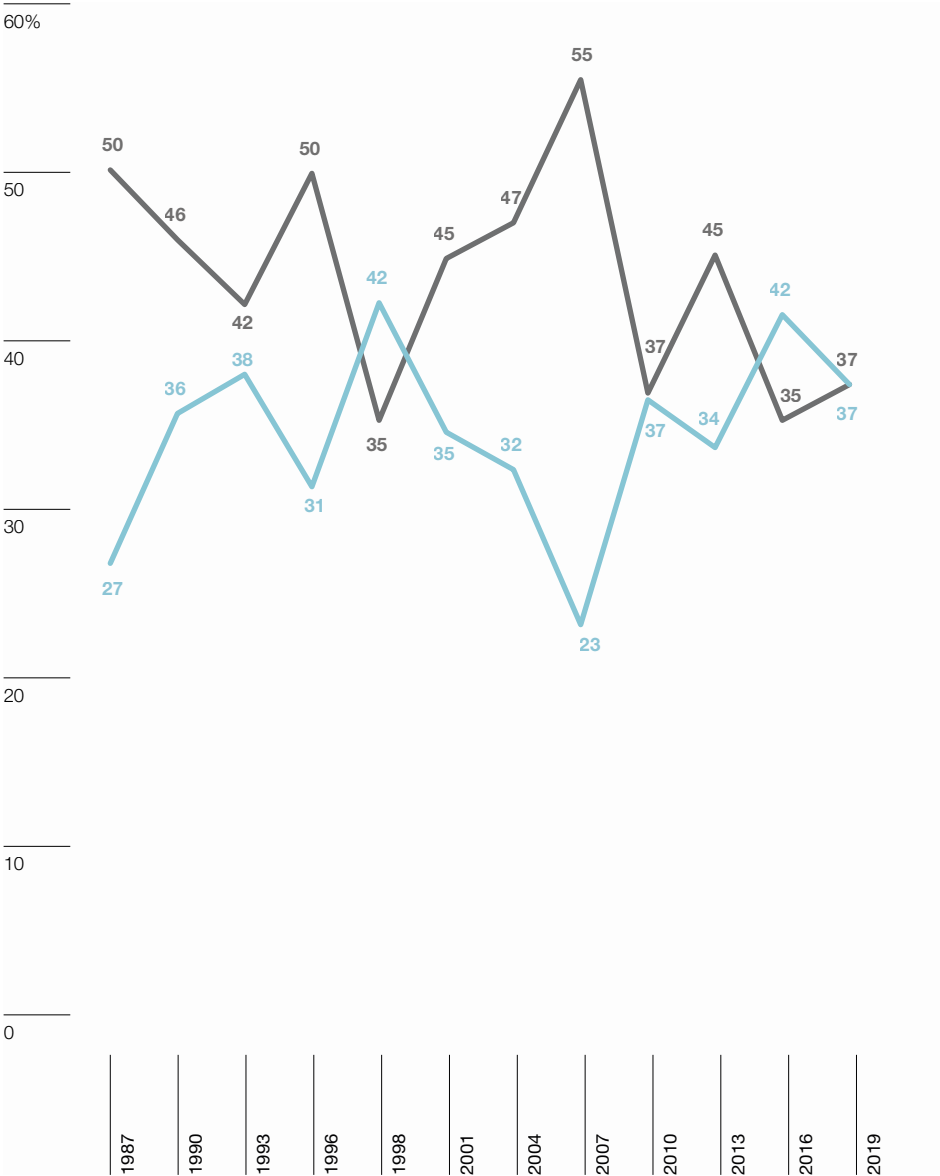
The use of voter prompts on polling day

▬▬ Followed 'How to Vote' card for House of Representatives
▬▬ Voted above the line for Senate
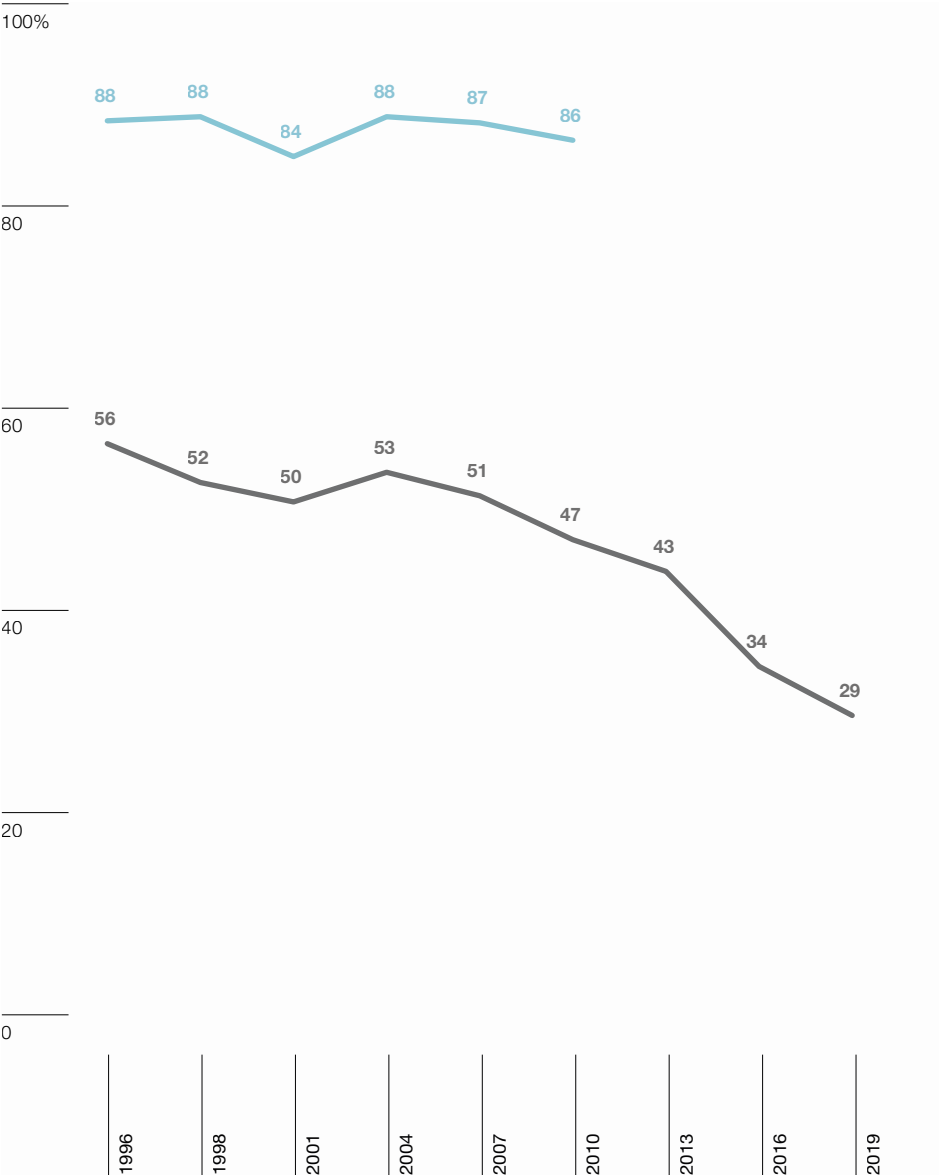
Split ticket voting — cast different vote in House of Representatives and Senate

Split ticket voting — cast different vote in House of Representatives and Senate

─── **Split tickets**

40%

35

30 30

30

29

27 27 27 27

22

20

17
16 16

10

0

1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
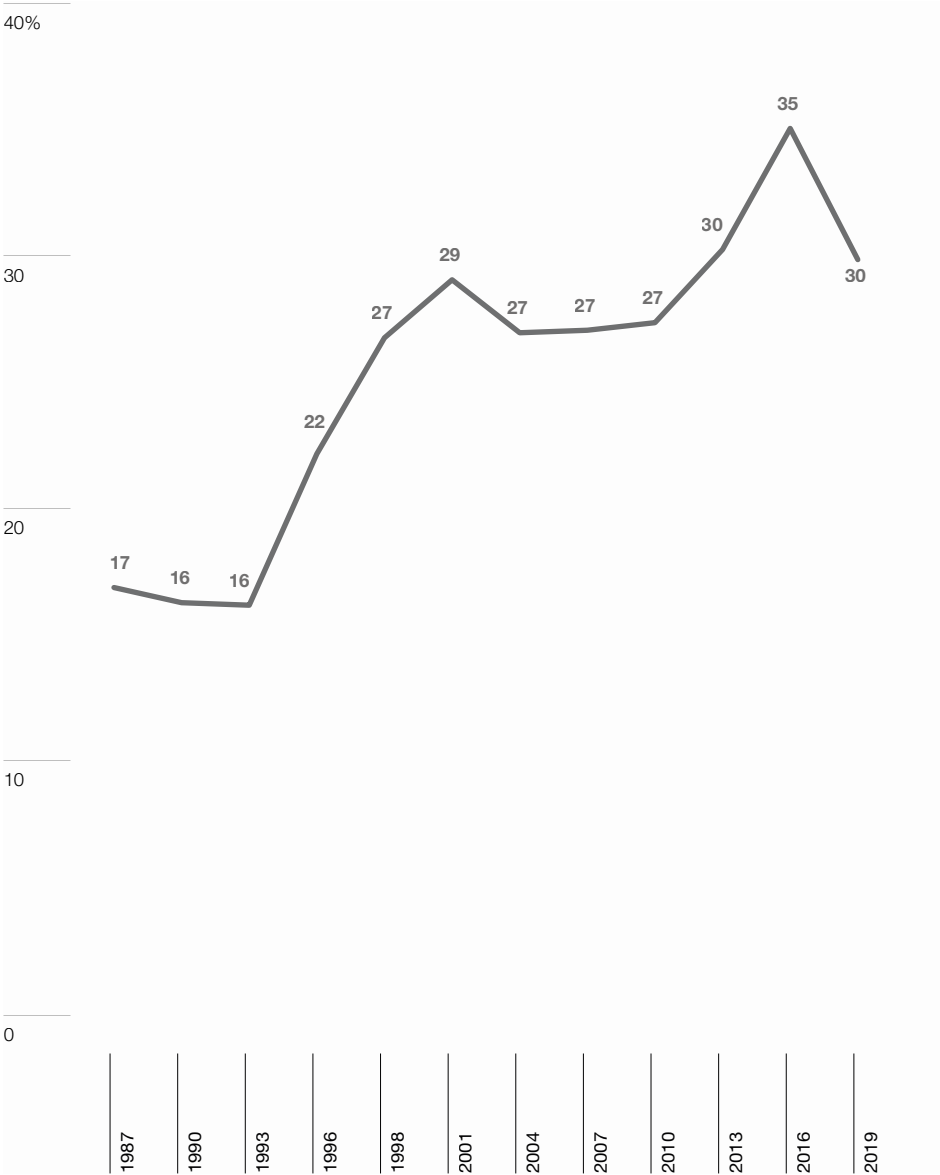
The extent of voting volatility

─── **Always voted for same party**
─── **Considered voting for another party**

80%

72
69

63
61 60

55
53
49 48 50 52
46
45
40 39

34 34
30 30
29 29 29
25 25 25
23
22

70

60

50

40

30

20

10

0

1967 1969 1979 1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
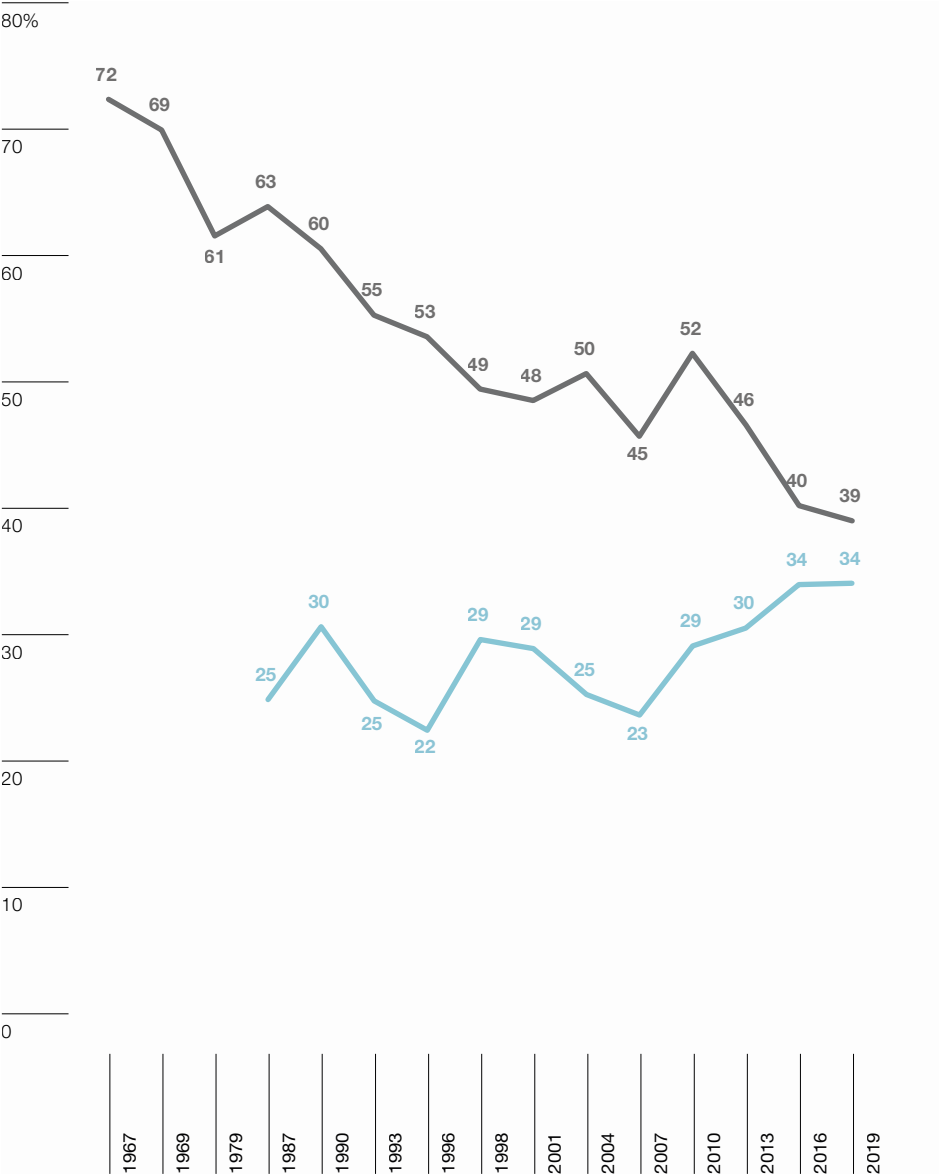
Considered changing vote during campaign

━━━ Liberal-National voters
━━━ Labor voters

Liberal-National voters: 23, 24, 18, 16, 27, 20, 17, 17, 20, 19, 25, 24
Labor voters: 22, 30, 27, 27, 27, 31, 28, 25, 33, 37, 36, 40

Years: 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019
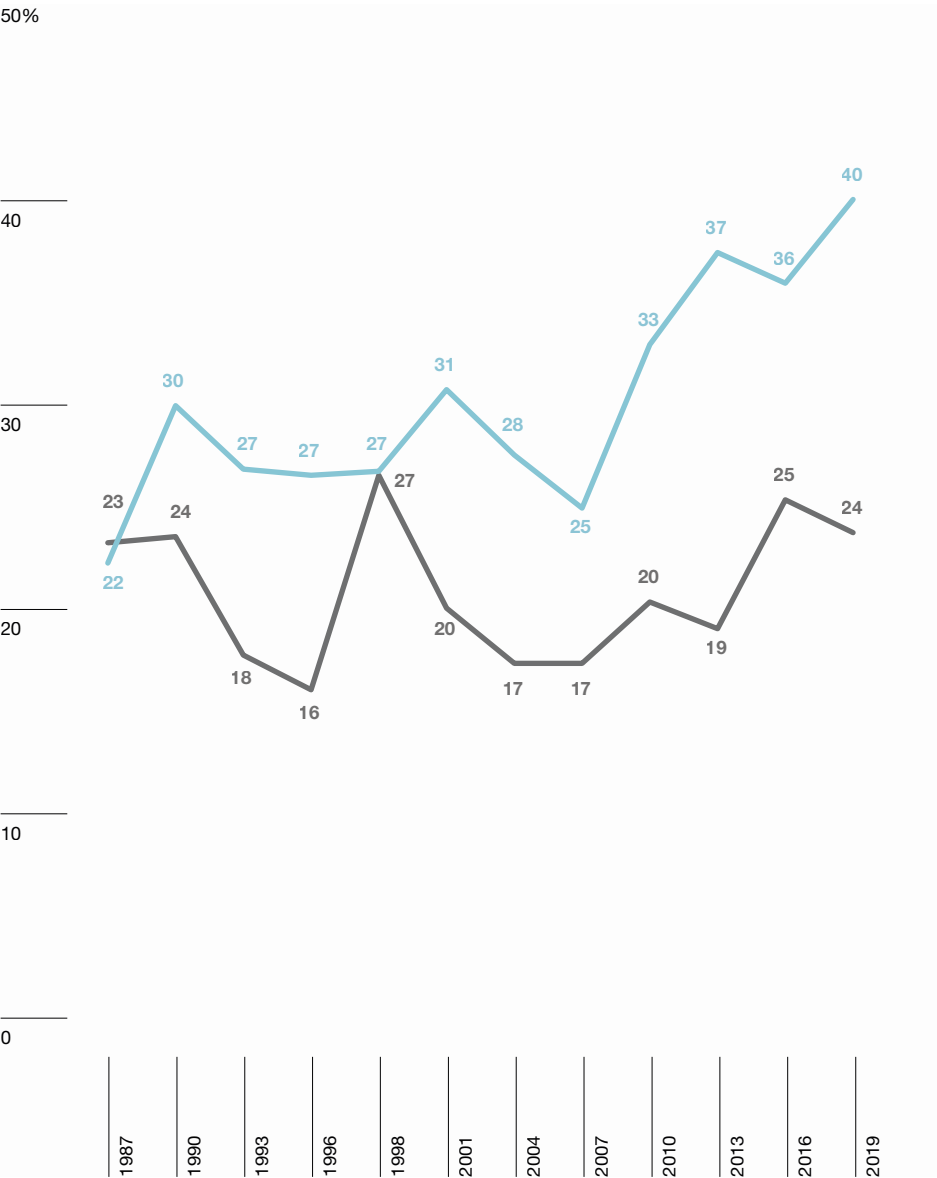
Lifetime voting

━━━ Stable Liberal-National
━━━ Stable Labor

Stable Liberal-National: 36, 35, 27, 24, 25, 23, 20, 20, 25, 22, 25, 22, 19, 17
Stable Labor: 32, 32, 33, 38, 27, 29, 23, 23, 21, 19, 18, 22, 17, 14, 14

Years: 1967, 1969, 1979, 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019
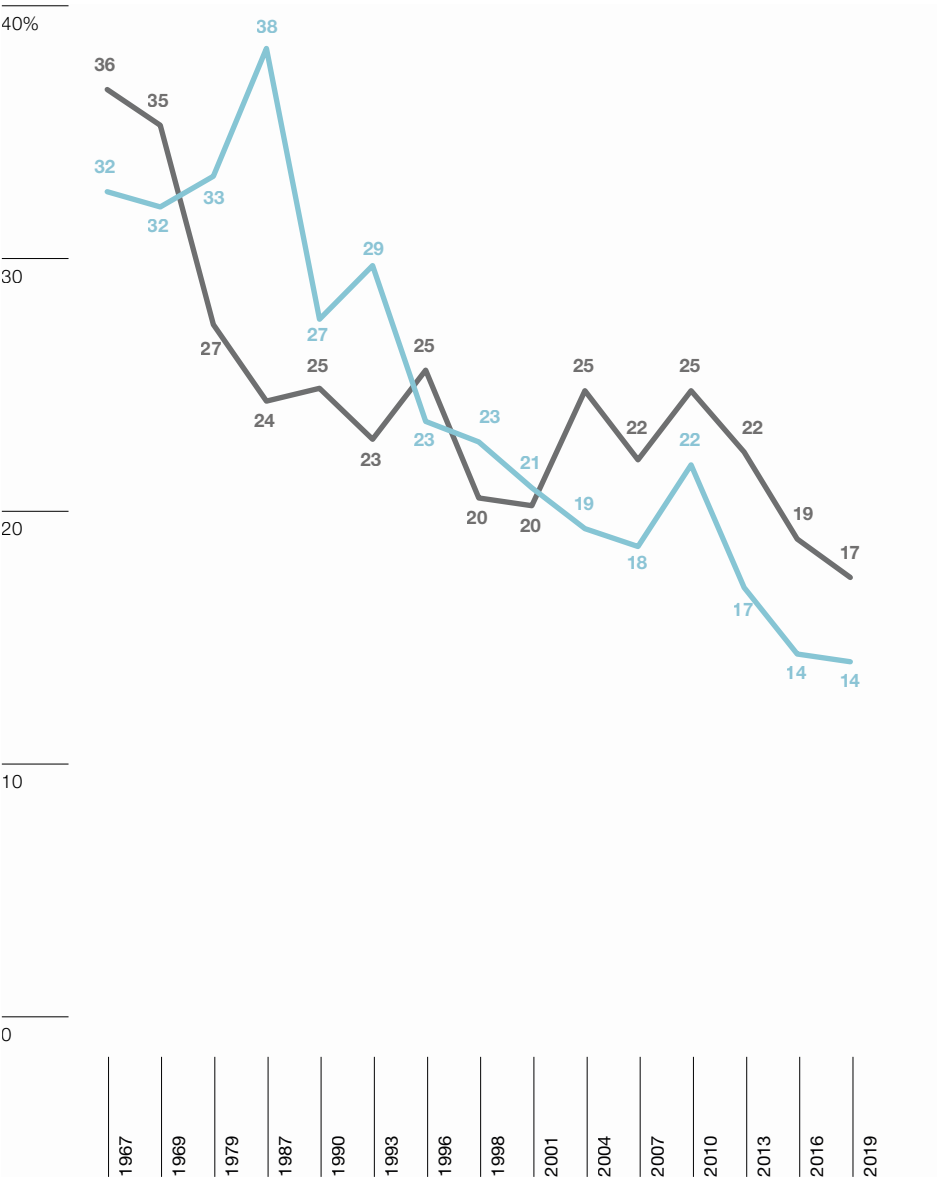
Considerations in the voting decision

Party leaders
Policy issues
Candidates in your electorate
Parties taken as a whole

Policy issues: 49, 66, 47, 49, 52, 52, 54, 59, 66
Parties taken as a whole: 29, 20, 26, 26, 26, 25, 24, 23, 19
Party leaders: 15, 9, 18, 19, 16, 15, 14, 9, 7
Candidates in your electorate: 7, 6, 9, 6, 6, 8, 8, 9, 8

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
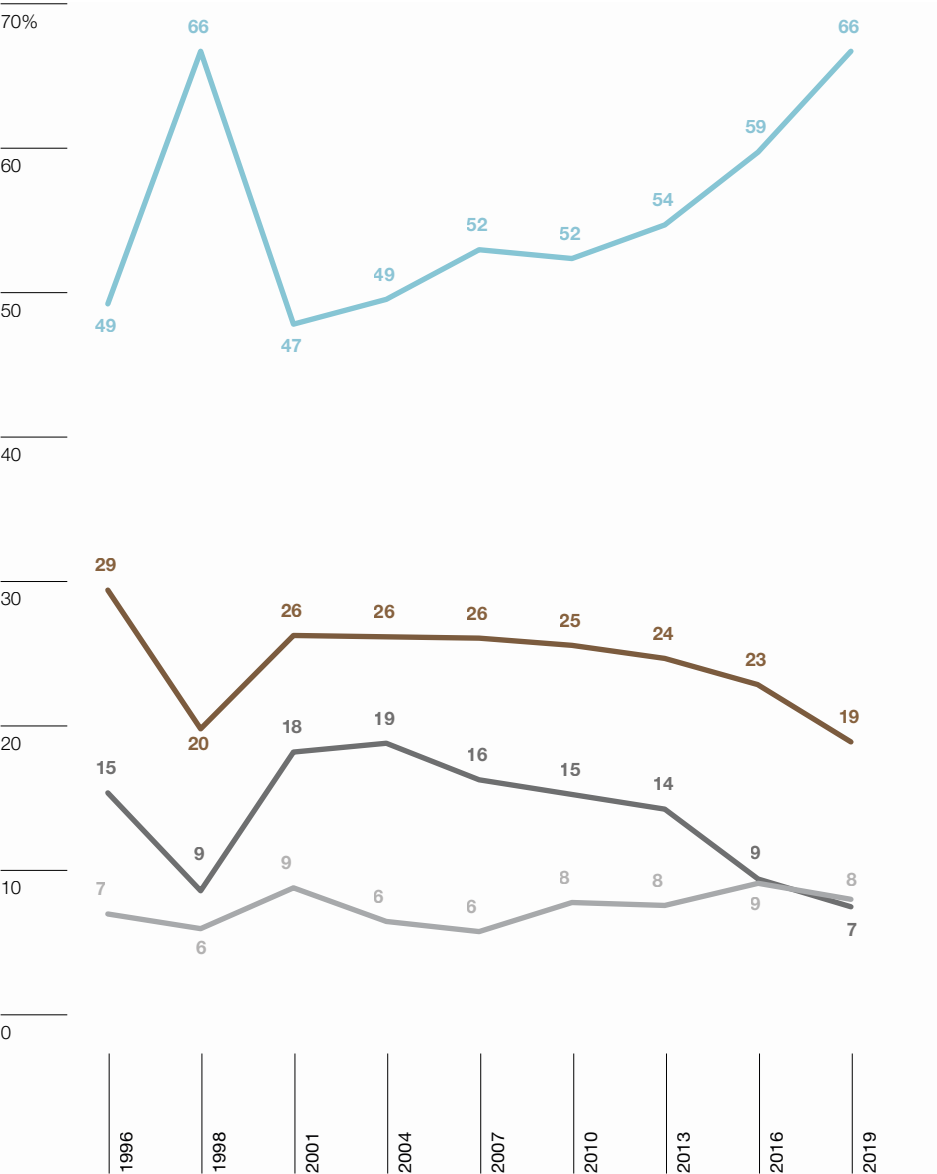
Destination of minor party votes in the House of Representatives

Liberal-National
Labor
Not sure / don't know

Liberal-National: 44, 36, 35, 41, 34, 35, 20, 26, 21
Labor: 35, 41, 40, 38, 47, 47, 51, 50, 54
Not sure / don't know: 22, 24, 24, 22, 19, 18, 29, 24, 25

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
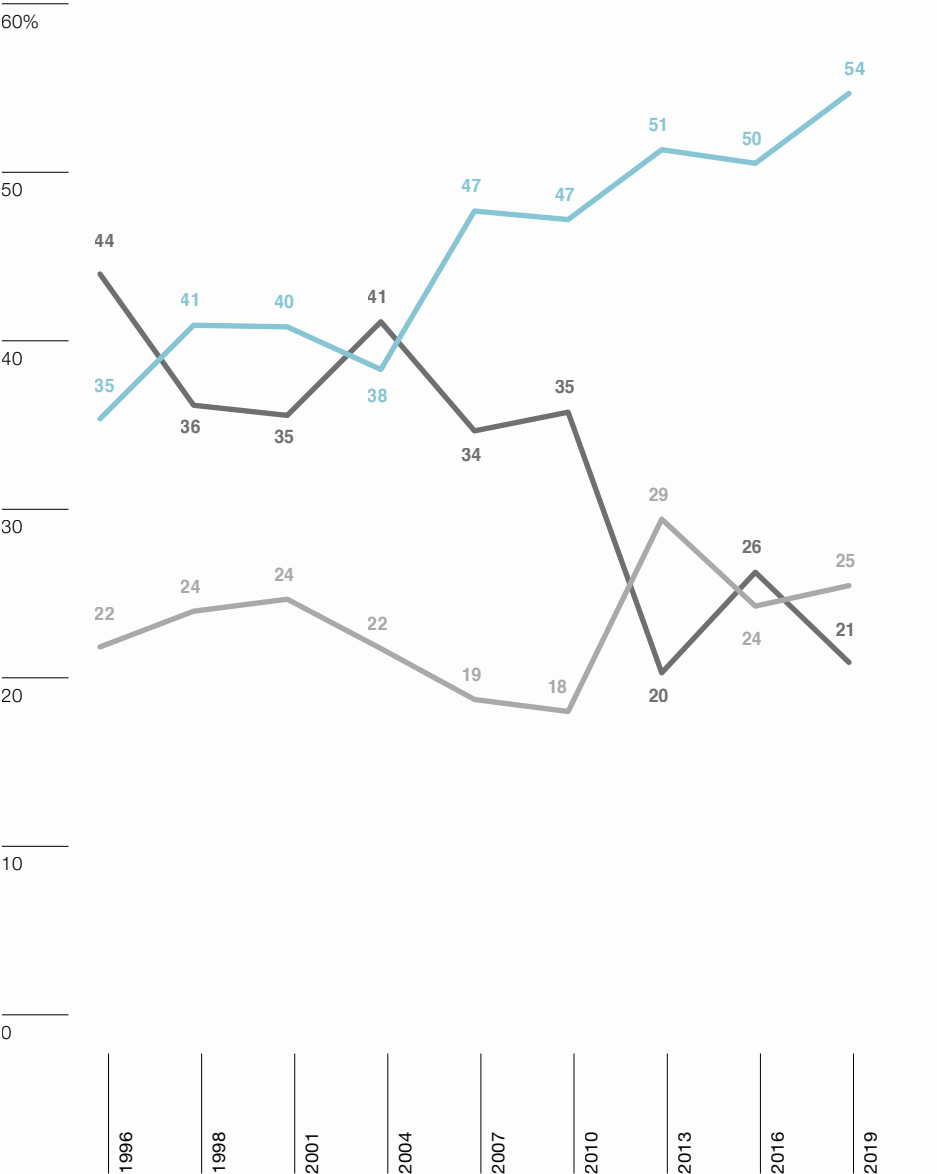
Destination of minor party votes in the Senate

━━━ Liberal-National
━━━ Labor
━━━ Not sure / don't know
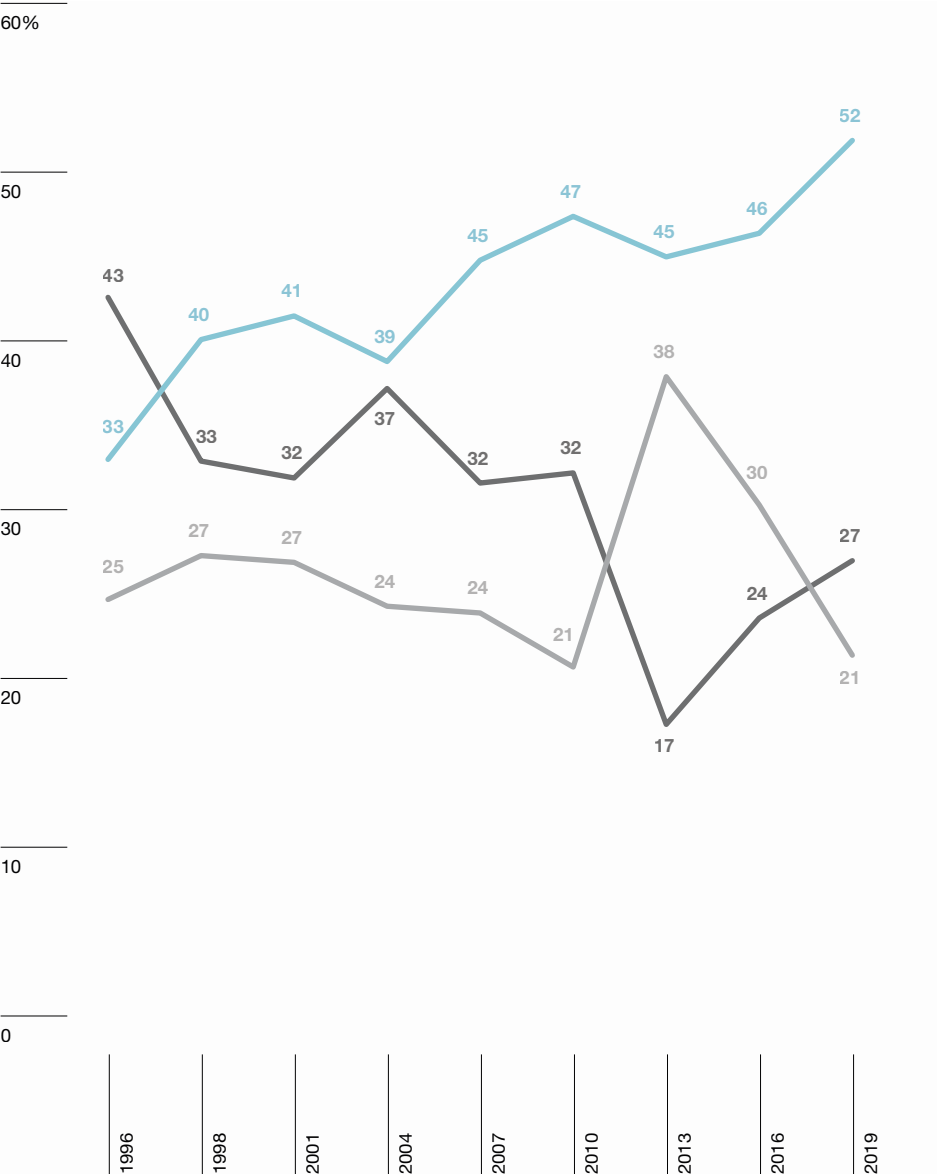
Difference between the parties

━━━ Good deal of difference
━━━ Some difference
━━━ Not much / no difference
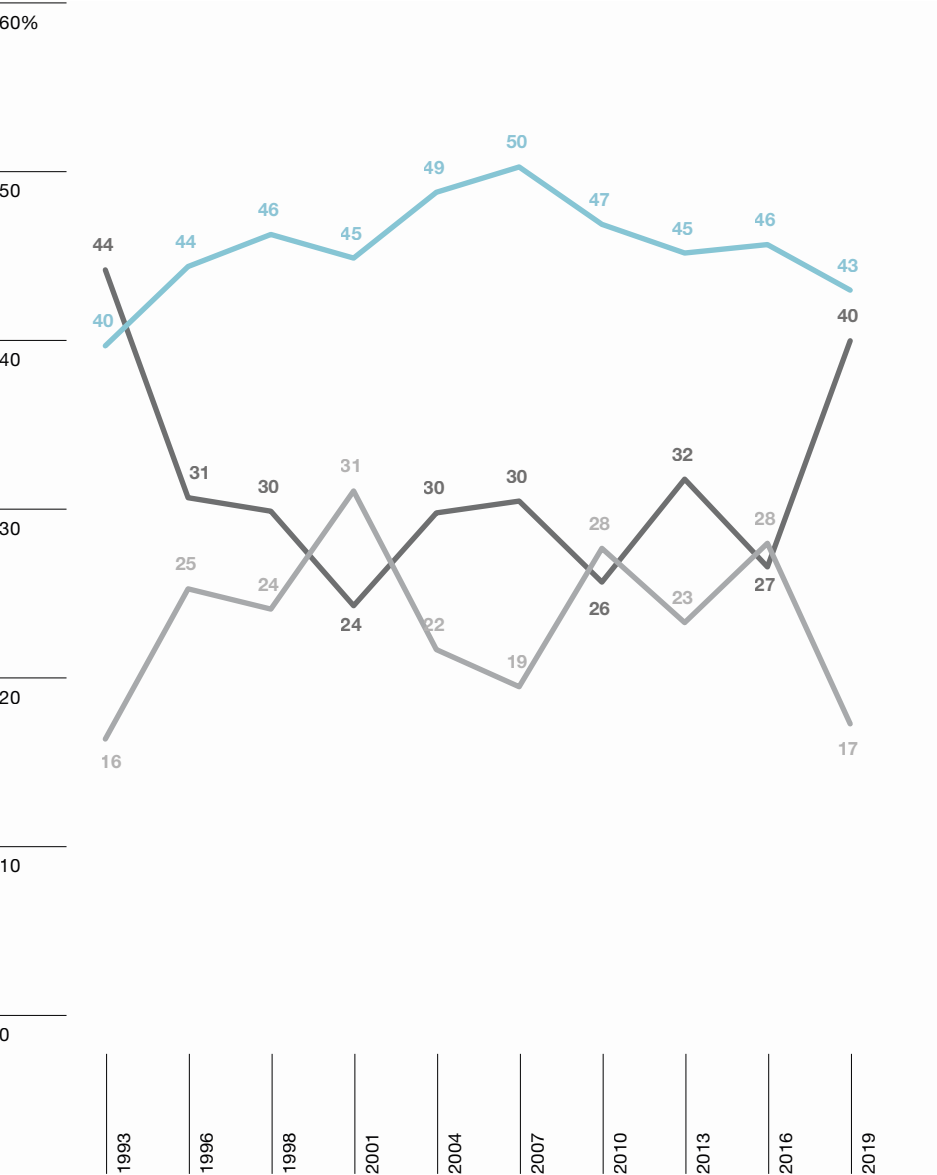
Direction of political partisanship

Legend:
- Liberal
- Labor
- Greens
- None

Chart data points:

Liberal: 1967: 41, 1969: 40, 1979: 36, 1987: 34, 1990: 36, 1993: 37, 1996: 34, 1998: 38, 2001: 42, 2004: 37, 2007: 36, 2010: 36, 2013: 34, 2016: 33, 2019: 32

Labor: 1967: 38, 1969: 42, 1979: 49, 1987: 47, 1990: 44, 1993: 37, 1996: 41, 1998: 36, 2001: 32, 2004: 36, 2007: 38, 2010: 35, 2013: 30, 2016: 30

None: 1967: 11, 1969: 10, 1979: 14, 1987: 6, 1990: 4, 1993: 12, 1996: 17, 1998: 14, 2001: 15, 2004: 16, 2007: 16, 2010: 14, 2013: 17, 2016: 19, 2019: 21

Greens: 1996: 1, 1998: 2, 2001: 3, 2004: 5, 2007: 6, 2010: 6, 2013: 6, 2016: 9, 2019: 9

Years axis: 1967, 1969, 1979, 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019

Y-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60%

Strength of political partisanship

Legend:
- Very strong
- Fairly strong
- Not very strong

Fairly strong: 1967: 44, 1969: 48, 1979: 47, 1987: 47, 1990: 48, 1993: 49, 1996: 46, 1998: 50, 2001: 48, 2004: 48, 2007: 49, 2010: 52, 2013: 50, 2016: 50, 2019: 50

Not very strong: 1967: 23, 1969: 18, 1979: 19, 1987: 33, 1990: 35, 1993: 32, 1996: 36, 1998: 32, 2001: 34, 2004: 32, 2007: 27, 2010: 29, 2013: 29, 2016: 29, 2019: 28

Very strong: 1967: 33, 1969: 34, 1979: 34, 1987: 20, 1990: 18, 1993: 19, 1996: 19, 1998: 18, 2001: 18, 2004: 21, 2007: 24, 2010: 19, 2013: 21, 2016: 21, 2019: 22

Years axis: 1967, 1969, 1979, 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019

Y-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60%

Notes

Timing of the voting decision
For 1990–2019 during the election campaign combines 'in the first few weeks of the campaign', 'a few days before election day' and 'on election day'.

Split ticket voting
Estimates are based on voters preferring a different party in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Liberal and National parties are treated as a single group.

The election campaign
Voting and partisanship

Election issues

The economy
Politics and political parties
The left-right dimension
The political leaders
Democracy and institutions
Trade unions, business and wealth
Social issues
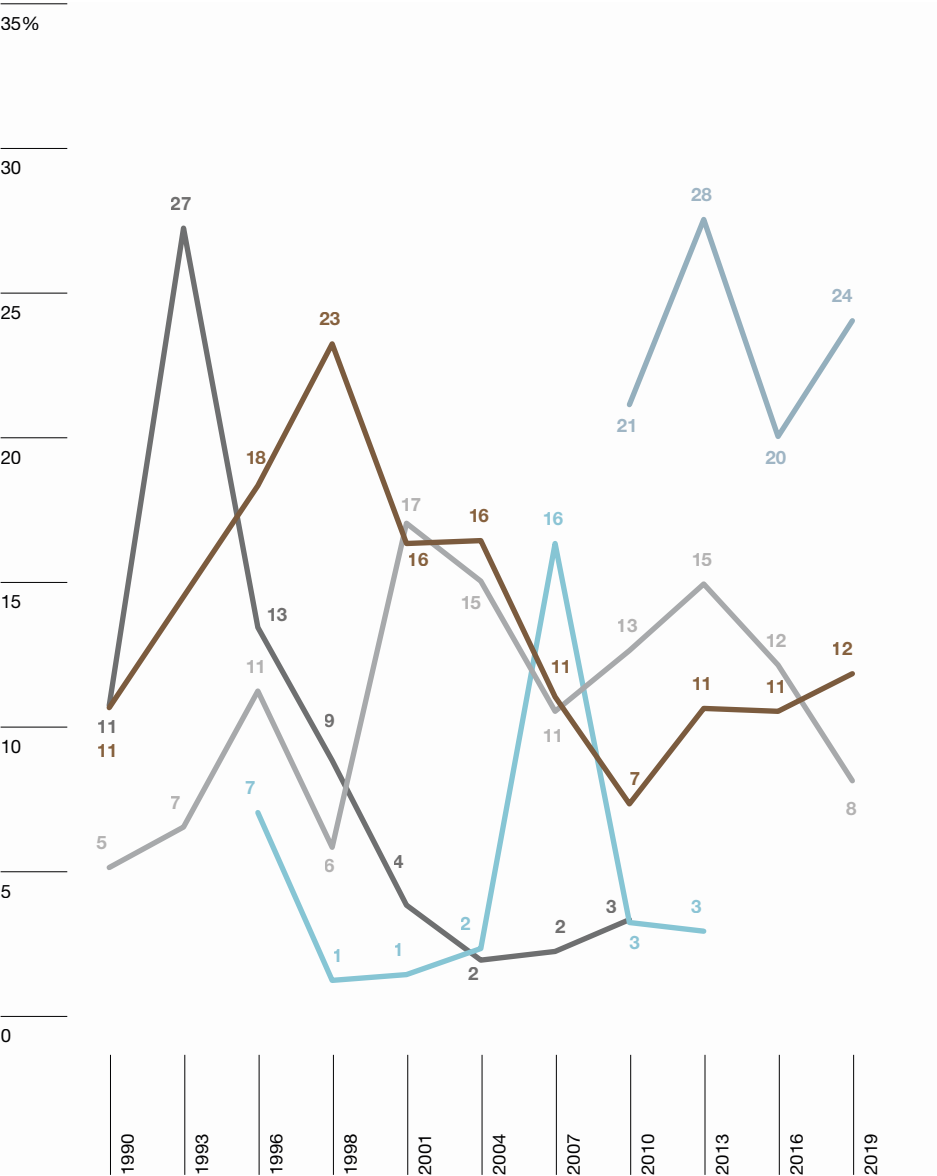Defence and foreign affairs
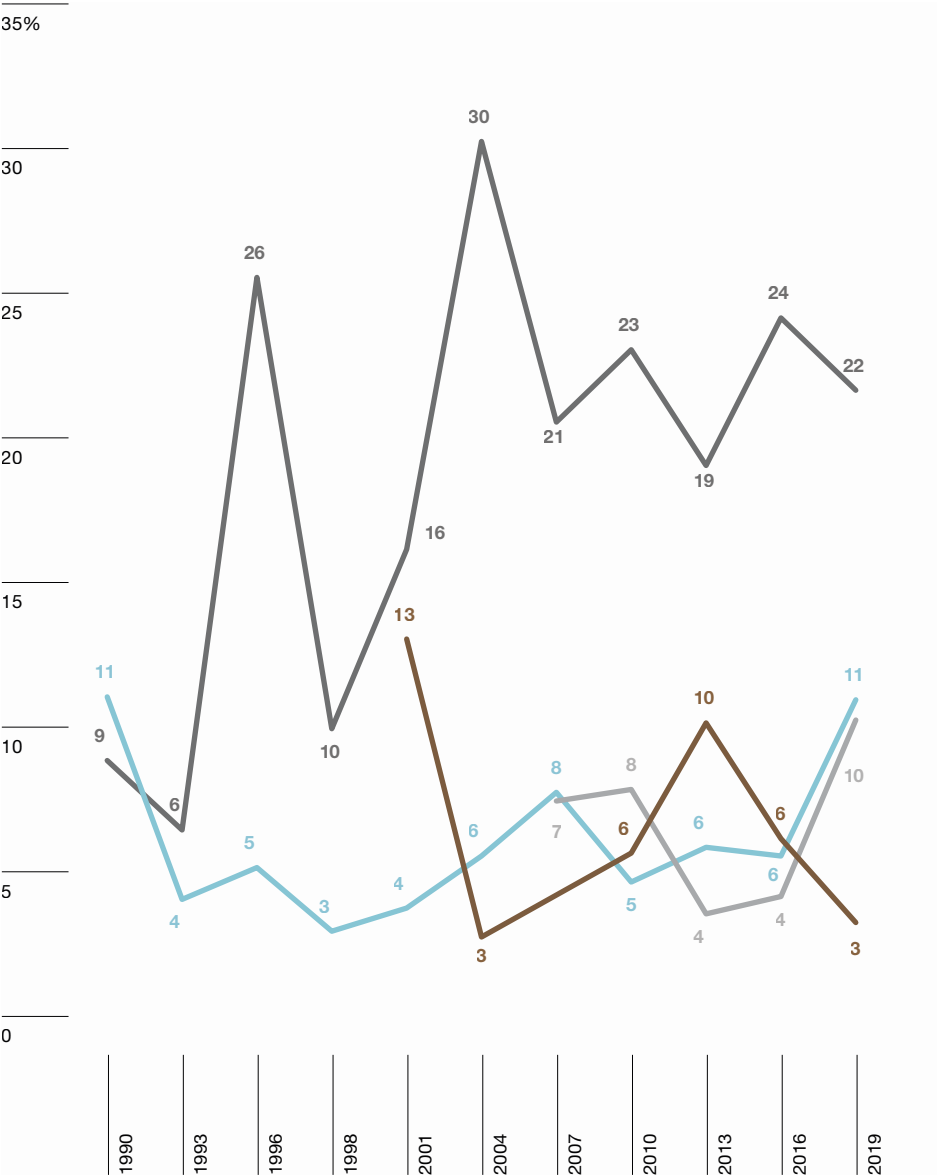References
Appendix: Methodology

Most important economic election issues

- **Unemployment**
- **Industrial relations**
- Education
- **Taxation**
- Management of the economy

Most important non-economic election issues

- **Health**
- **Environment**
- Global Warming
- **Refugees and asylum seekers**

Preferred party policy on management of the economy

- ALP
- Coalition
- No difference

50%

40

30

20

10

0

ALP: 27 (2010), 23 (2013), 17 (2016), 21 (2019)
Coalition: 37 (2010), 44 (2013), 44 (2016), 47 (2019)
No difference: 22 (2010), 18 (2013), 22 (2016), 17 (2019)

2010 2013 2016 2019
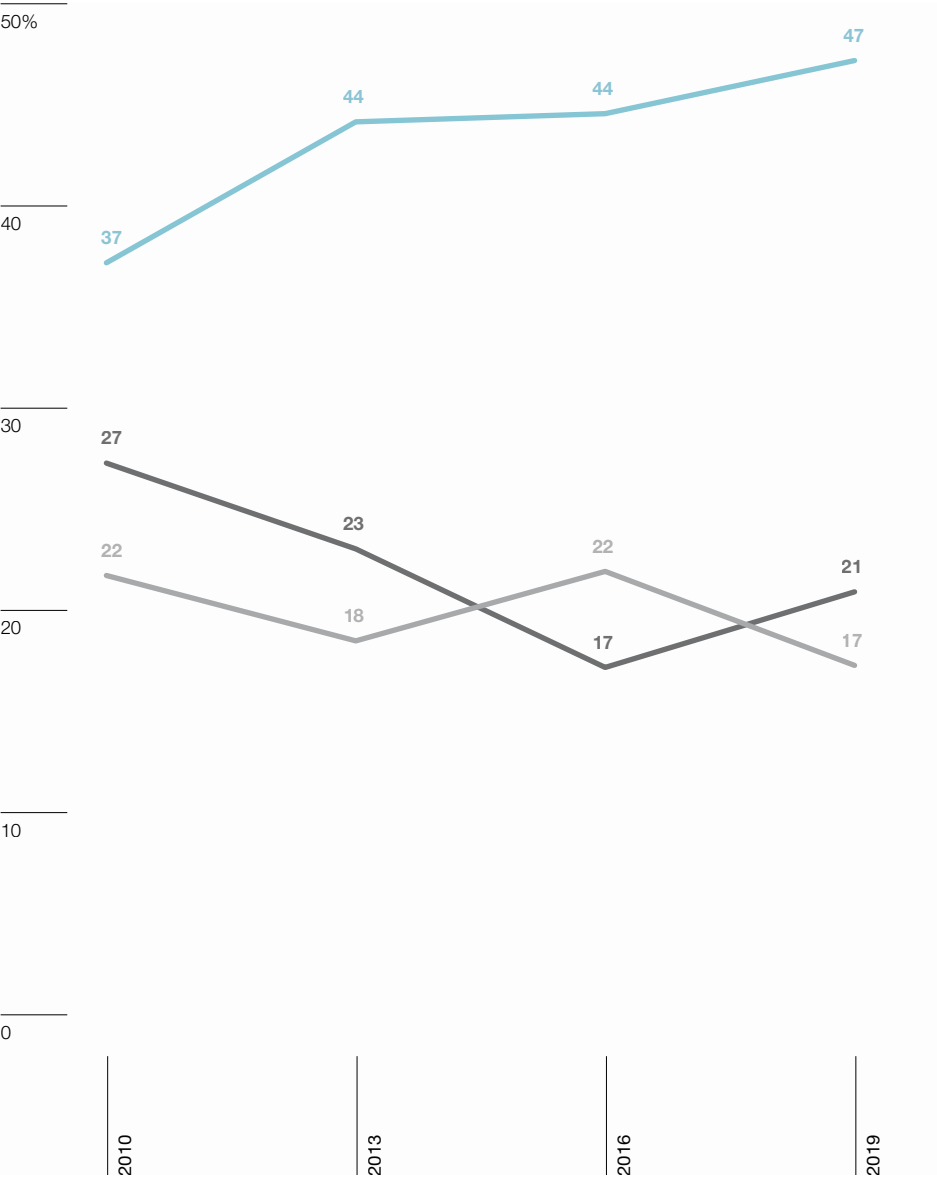
Preferred party policy on education

- ALP
- Coalition
- No difference

70%

60

50

40

30

20

10

0

ALP: 34 (1990), 44 (1993), 29 (1996), 40 (1998), 48 (2001), 44 (2004), 58 (2007), 41 (2010), 43 (2013), 42 (2016), 40 (2019)
Coalition: 23 (1990), 27 (1993), 31 (1996), 24 (1998), 27 (2001), 35 (2004), 21 (2007), 24 (2010), 25 (2013), 24 (2016), 25 (2019)
No difference: 23 (1990), 17 (1993), 24 (1996), 22 (1998), 17 (2001), 12 (2004), 15 (2007), 22 (2010), 19 (2013), 20 (2016), 19 (2019)

1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
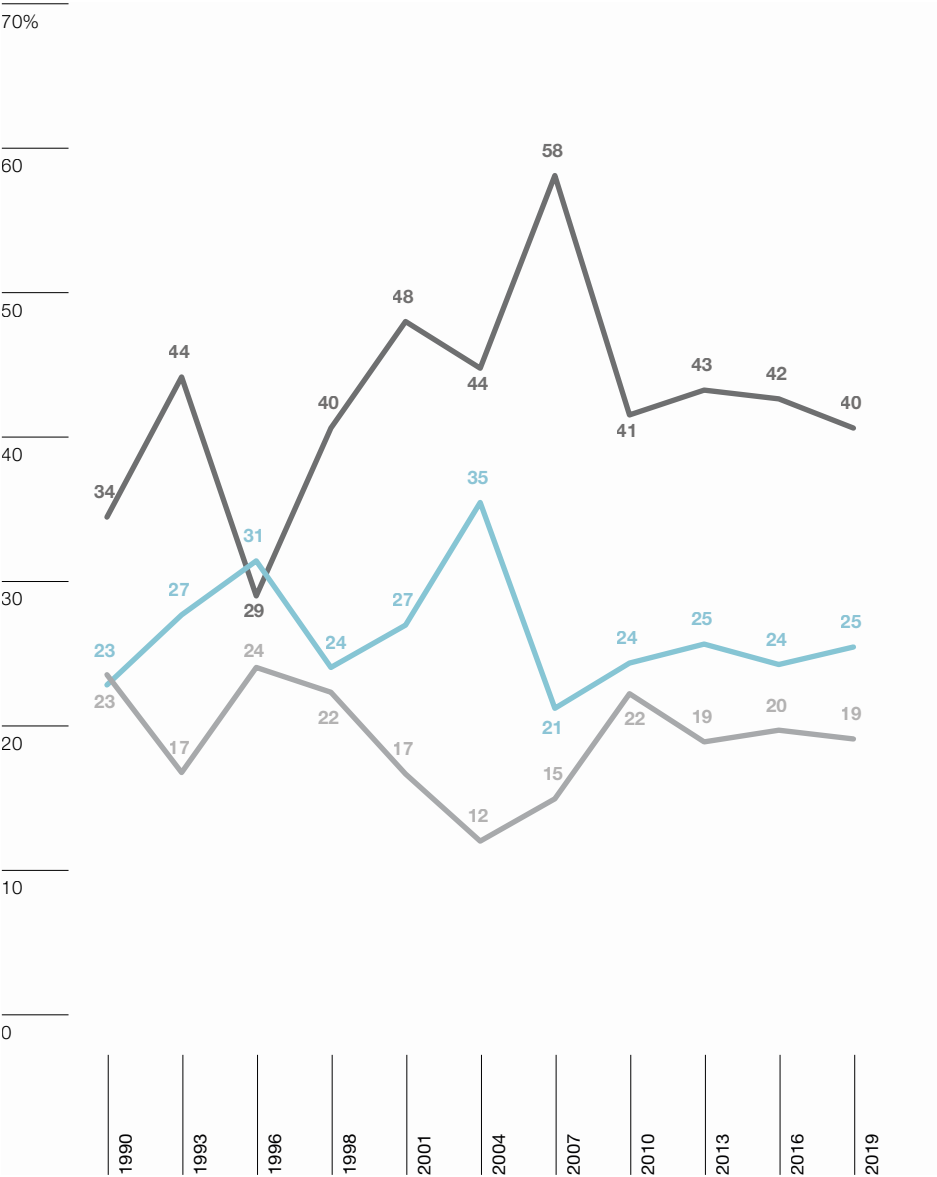
Preferred party policy on taxation

ALP
Coalition
No difference

	1990	1996	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
ALP	27	21	36	33	27	30	27	25	31	28
Coalition	39	42	45	39	41	32	33	34	33	41
No difference	17	21	11	18	18	27	24	22	19	14
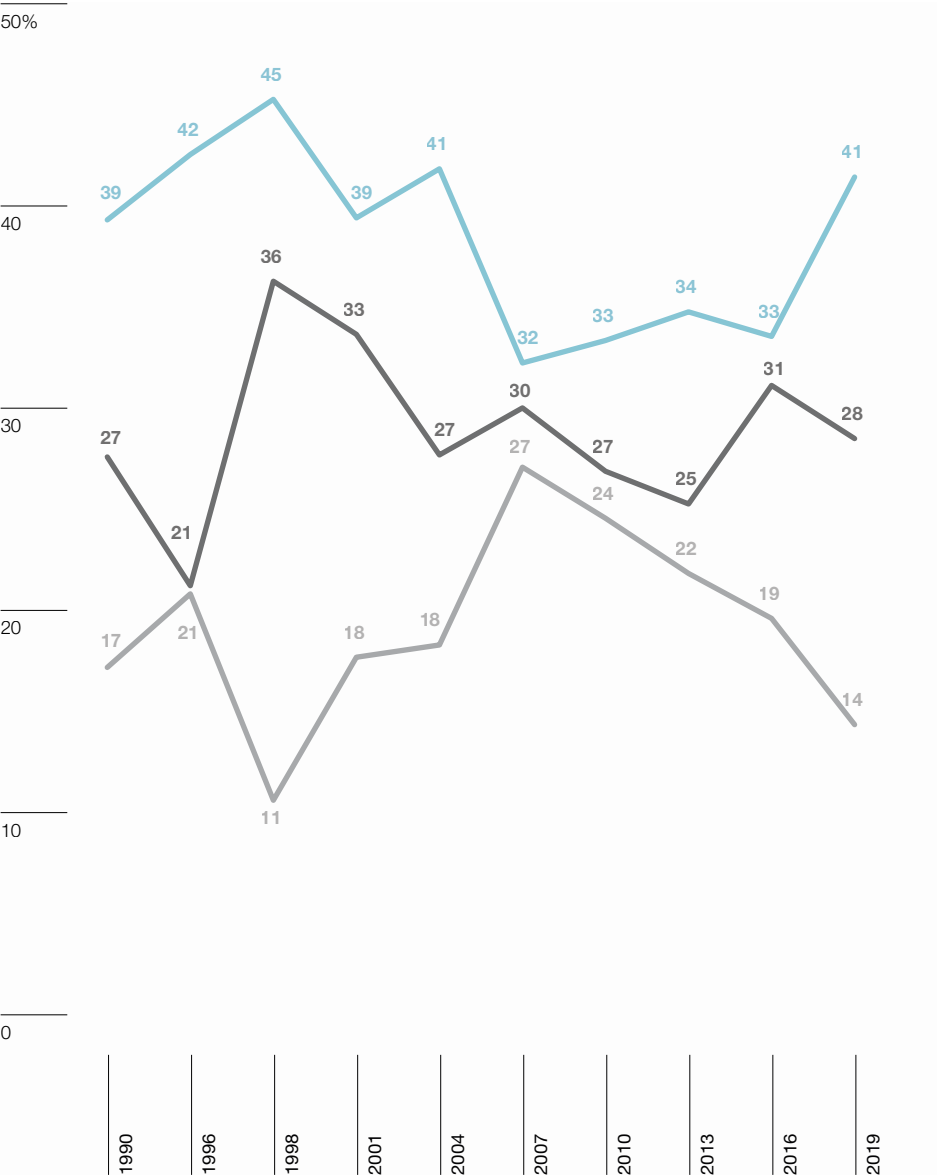
Preferred party policy on health

ALP
Coalition
No difference

	1990	1993	1996	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
ALP	46	53	39	41	41	44	48	37	37	45	43
Coalition	29	32	38	27	28	37	25	26	27	26	24
No difference	13	8	14	17	20	11	18	23	22	17	18
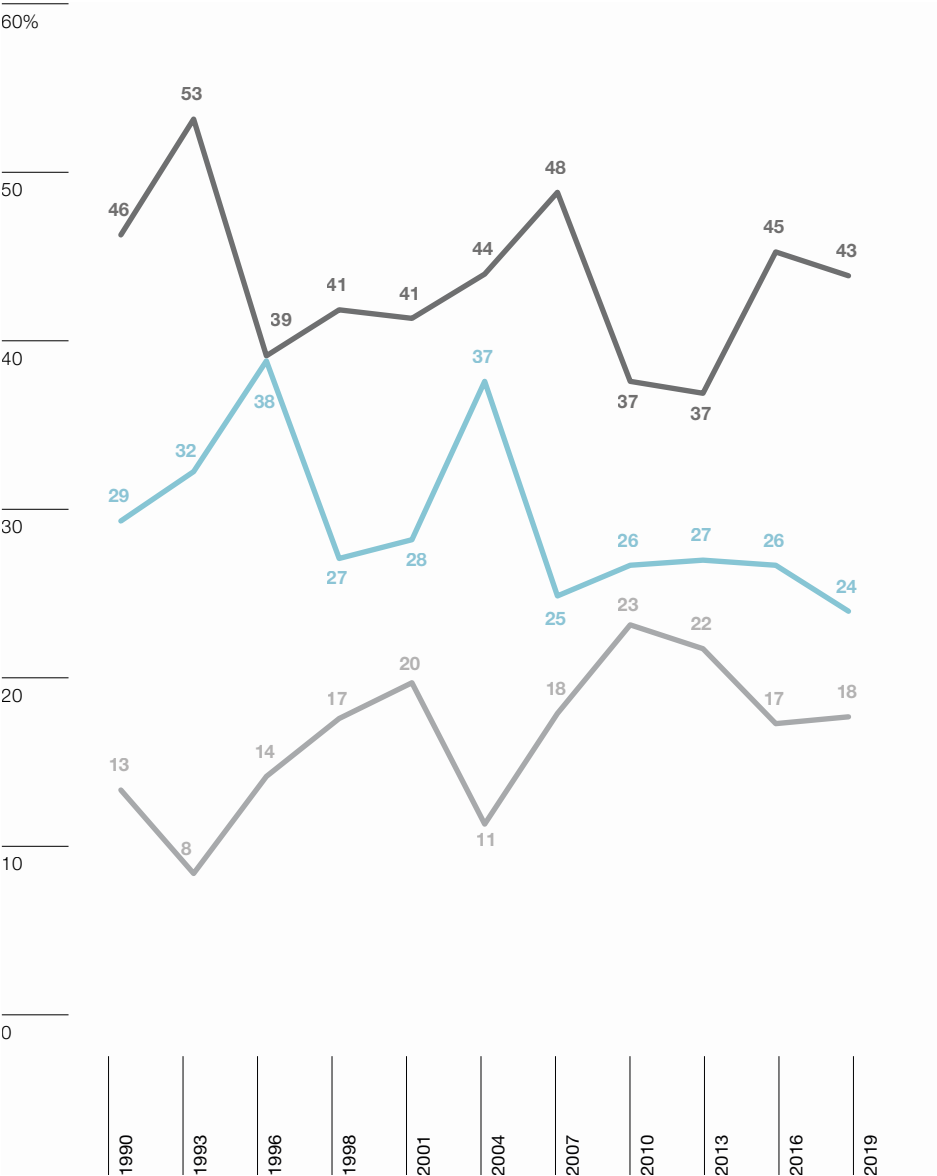
Preferred party policy on the environment

- **ALP**
- **Coalition**
- **No difference**

56
54
40
35
30 / 30
35
28
27
36
35
26
31
17
15
17
17
21
23
28
19
18
20
23
18
32
25
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36
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32
22
21

1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
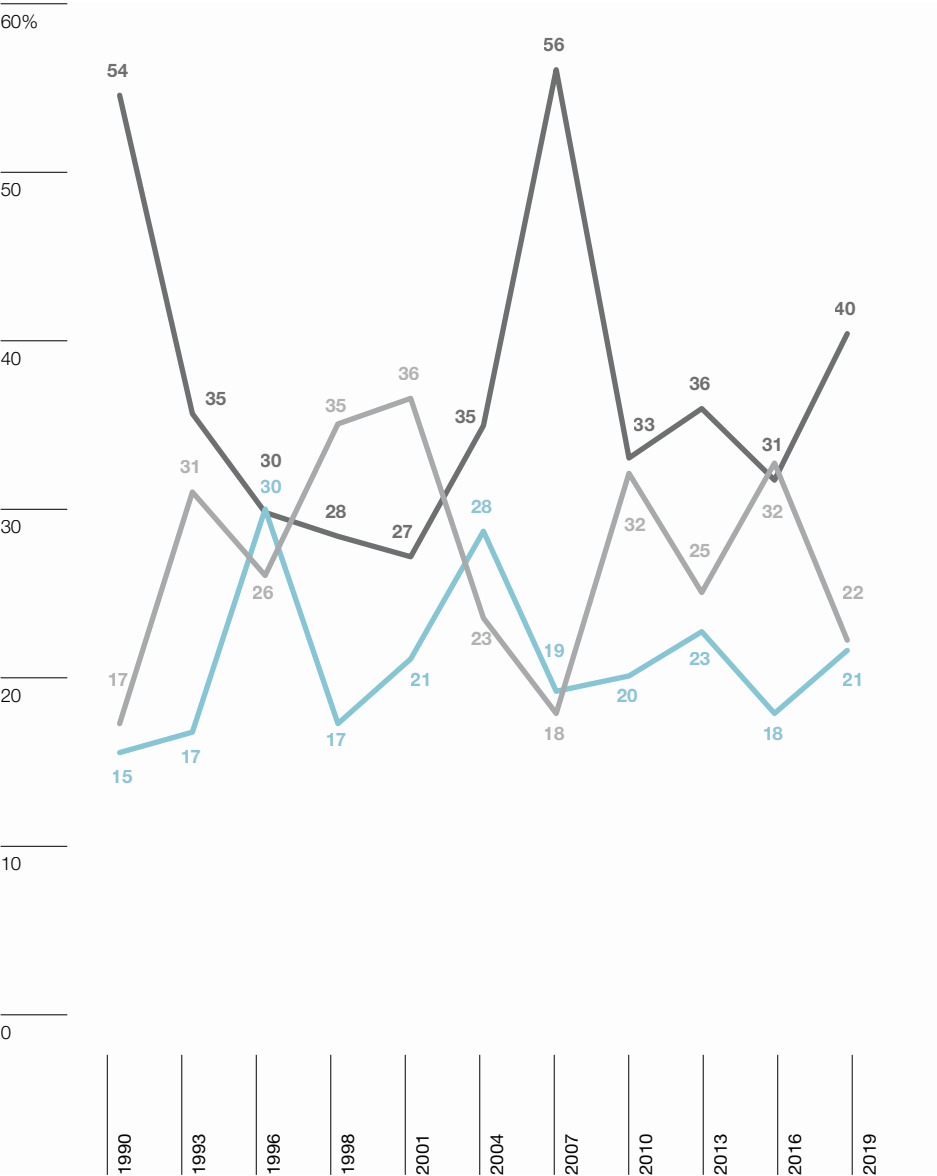
Preferred party policy on global warming

- **ALP**
- **Coalition**
- **No difference**

55
33
35
28
40
17
22
23
16
20
29
24
34
22

2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
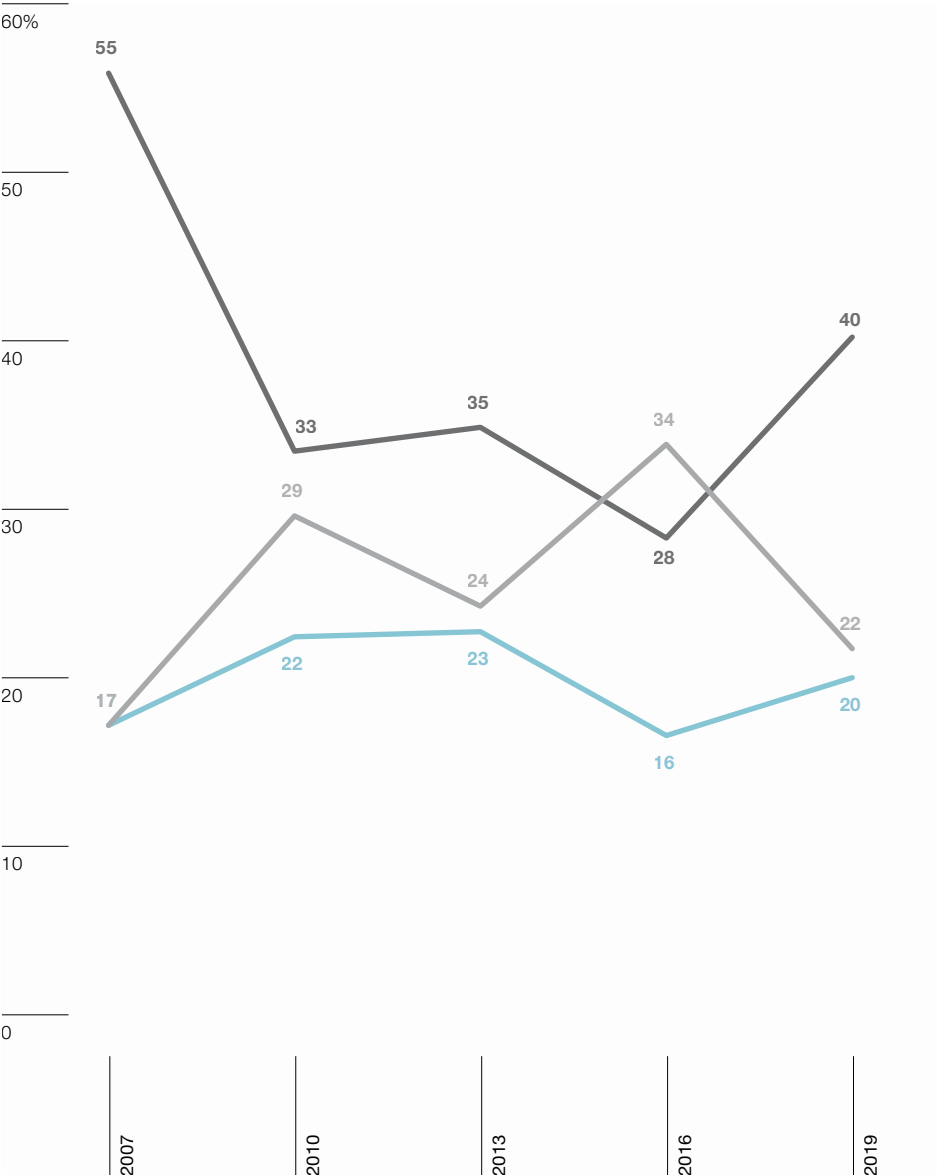
Preferred party policy on immigration

- **ALP**
- **Coalition**
- **No difference**

Year	Coalition	No difference	ALP
1996	46	16	20
1998	23	30	26
2001	47	23	20
2004	39	21	22
2007	28	25	30
2013	37	26	21
2016	35	26	23
2019	35	21	24
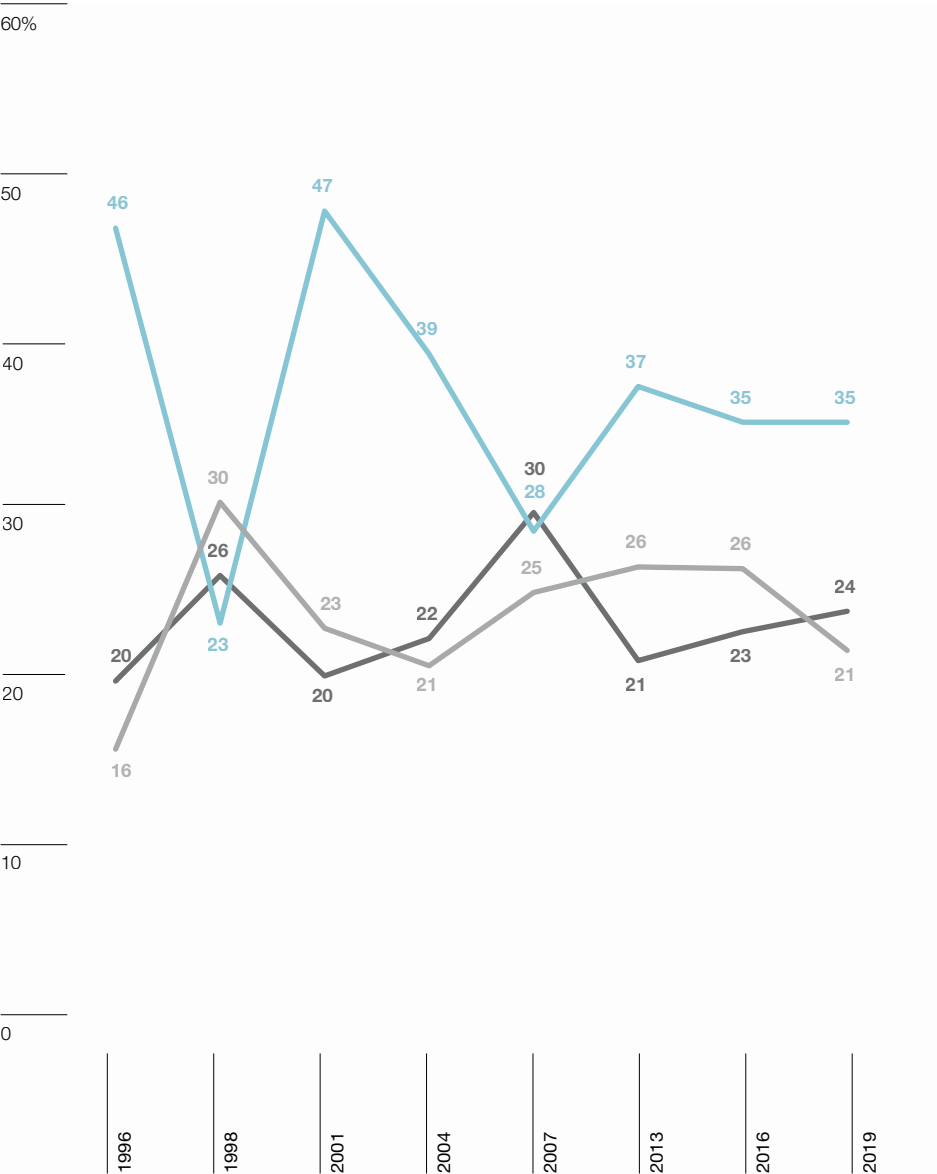
Preferred party policy on refugees and asylum seekers

- **ALP**
- **Coalition**
- **No difference**

Year	Coalition	No difference	ALP
2001	46	27	15
2004	36	22	22
2010	38	27	21
2013	41	27	19
2016	34	31	19
2019	35	22	25
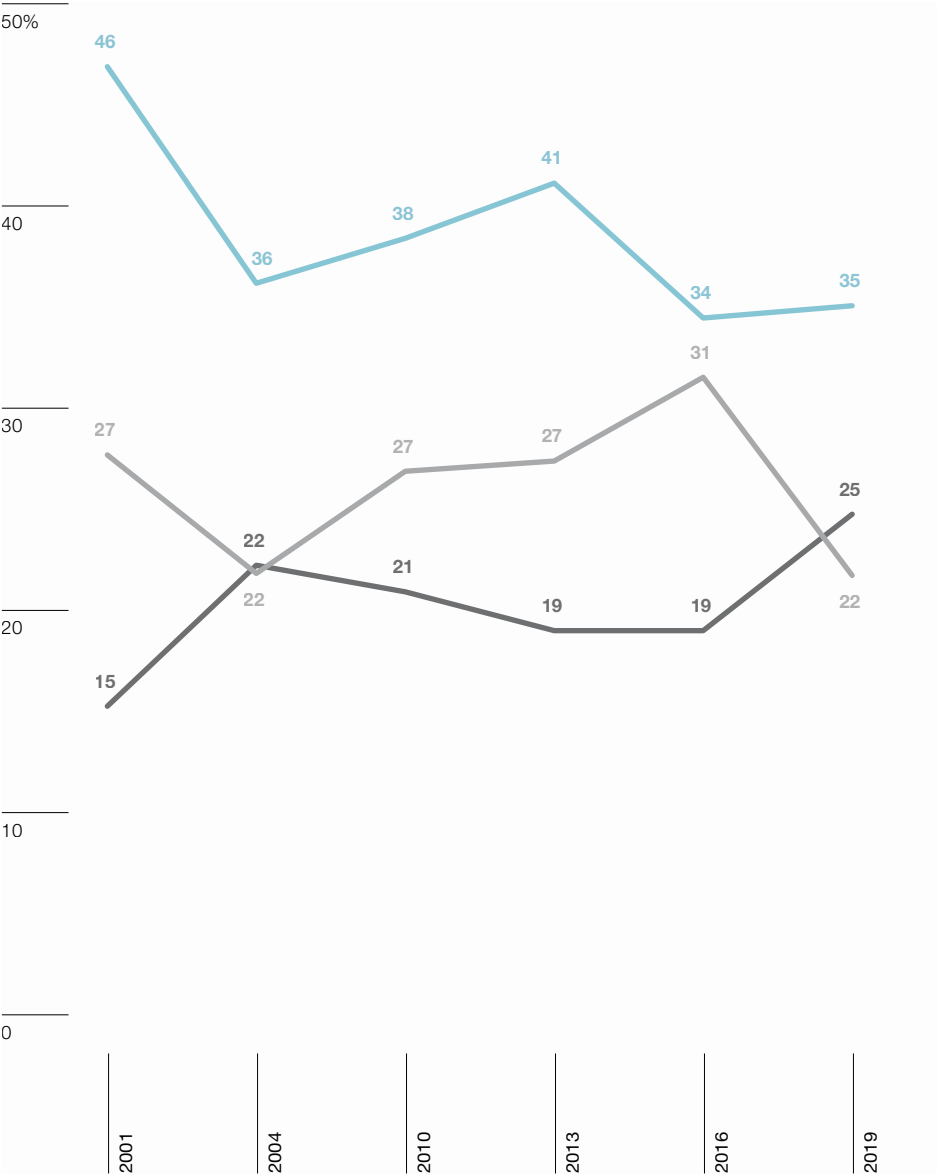
Importance of management of the economy in vote decision

- **Extremely important**
- **Quite important**
- **Not very important**

80%

	2010	2013	2016	2019
Extremely important	70	68	57	63
Quite important	27	27	38	34
Not very important	3	6	6	4
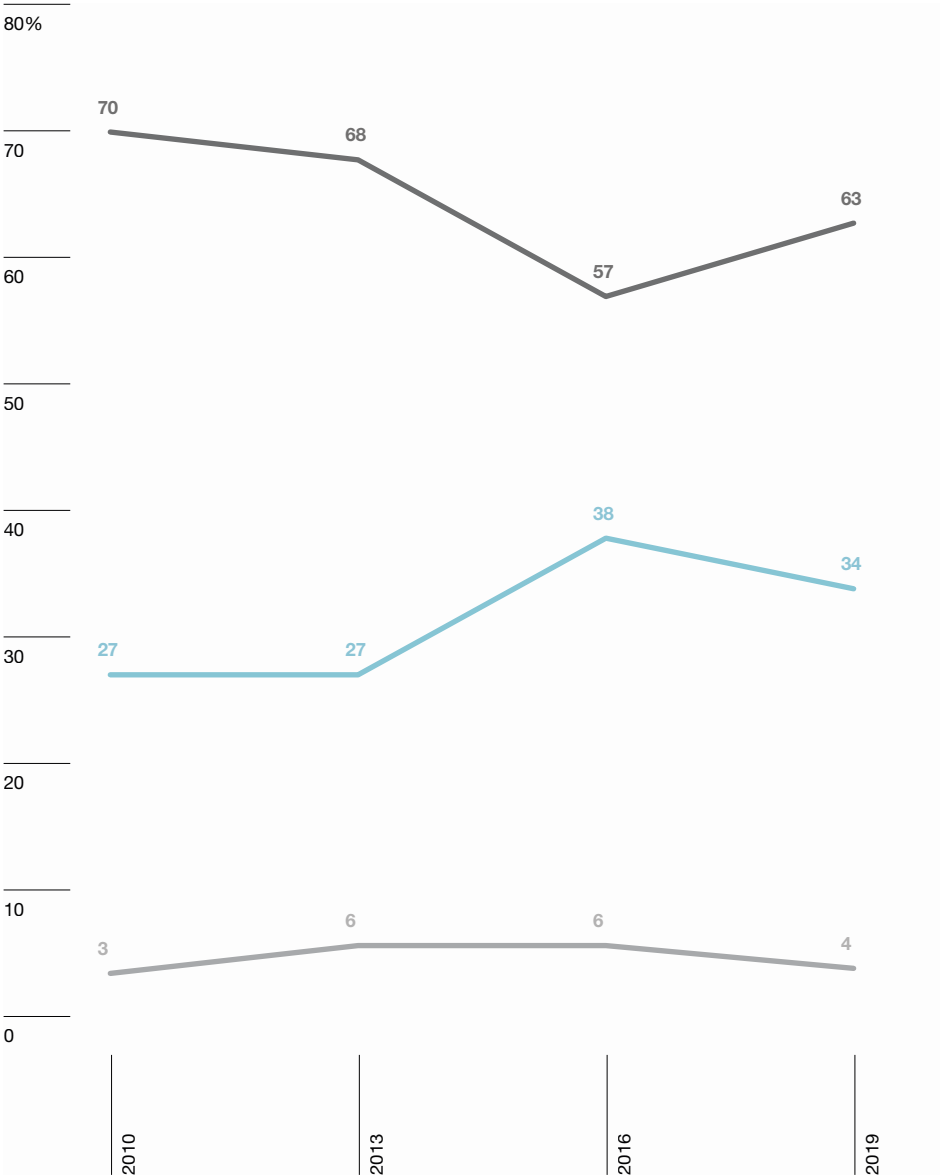
Importance of education in vote decision

- **Extremely important**
- **Quite important**
- **Not very important**

80%

	1990	1993	1996	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
Extremely important	50	50	50	66	65	69	68	61	63	60	62
Quite important	33	30	33	27	29	26	26	33	30	33	33
Not very important	17	21	17	7	6	5	6	6	7	7	5
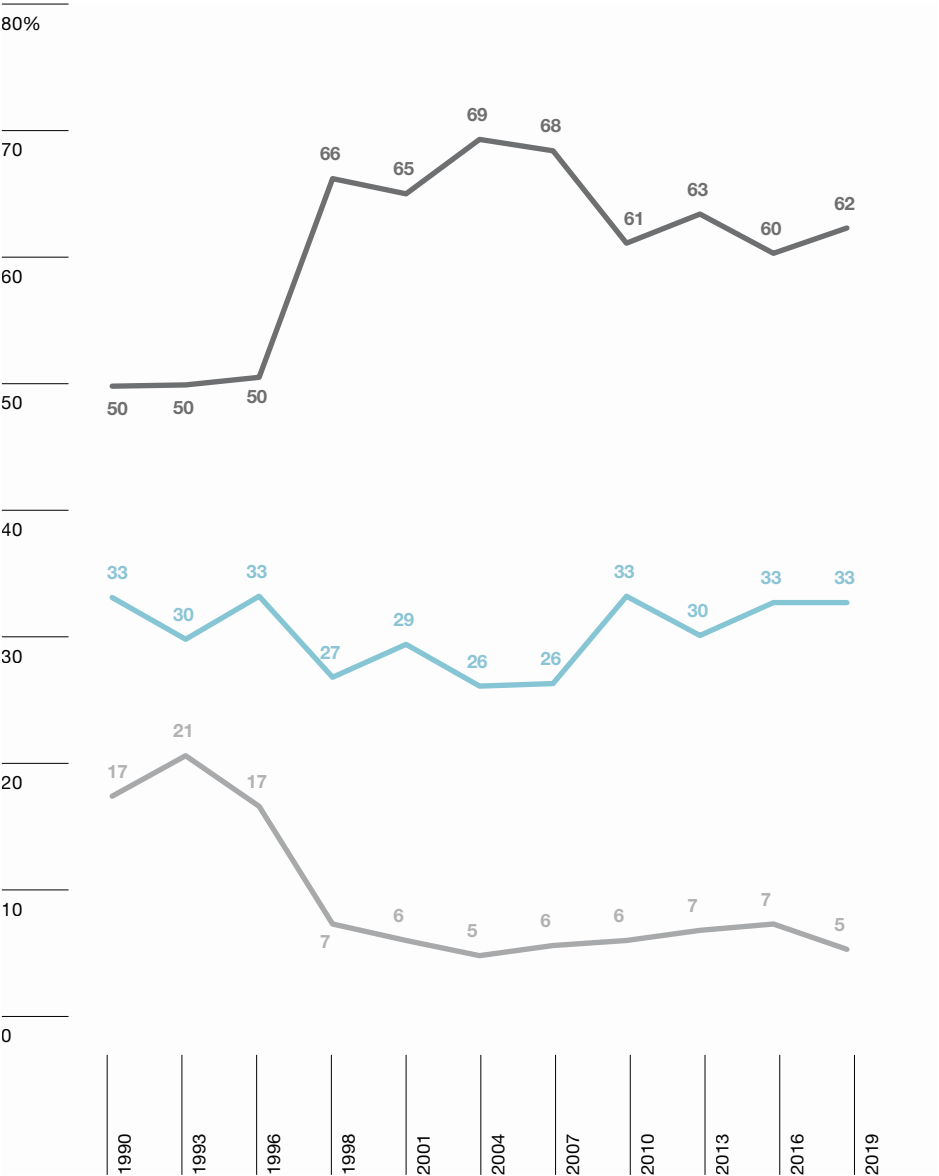
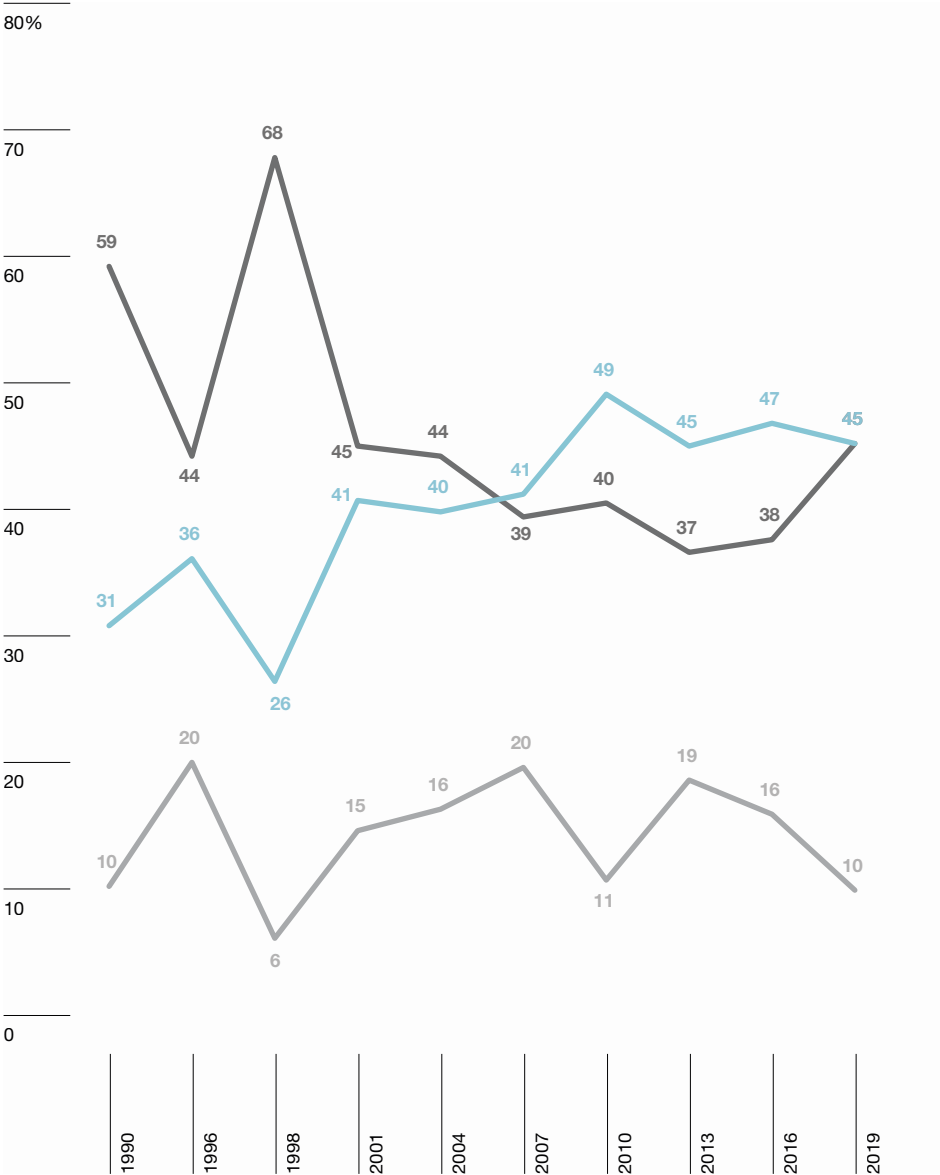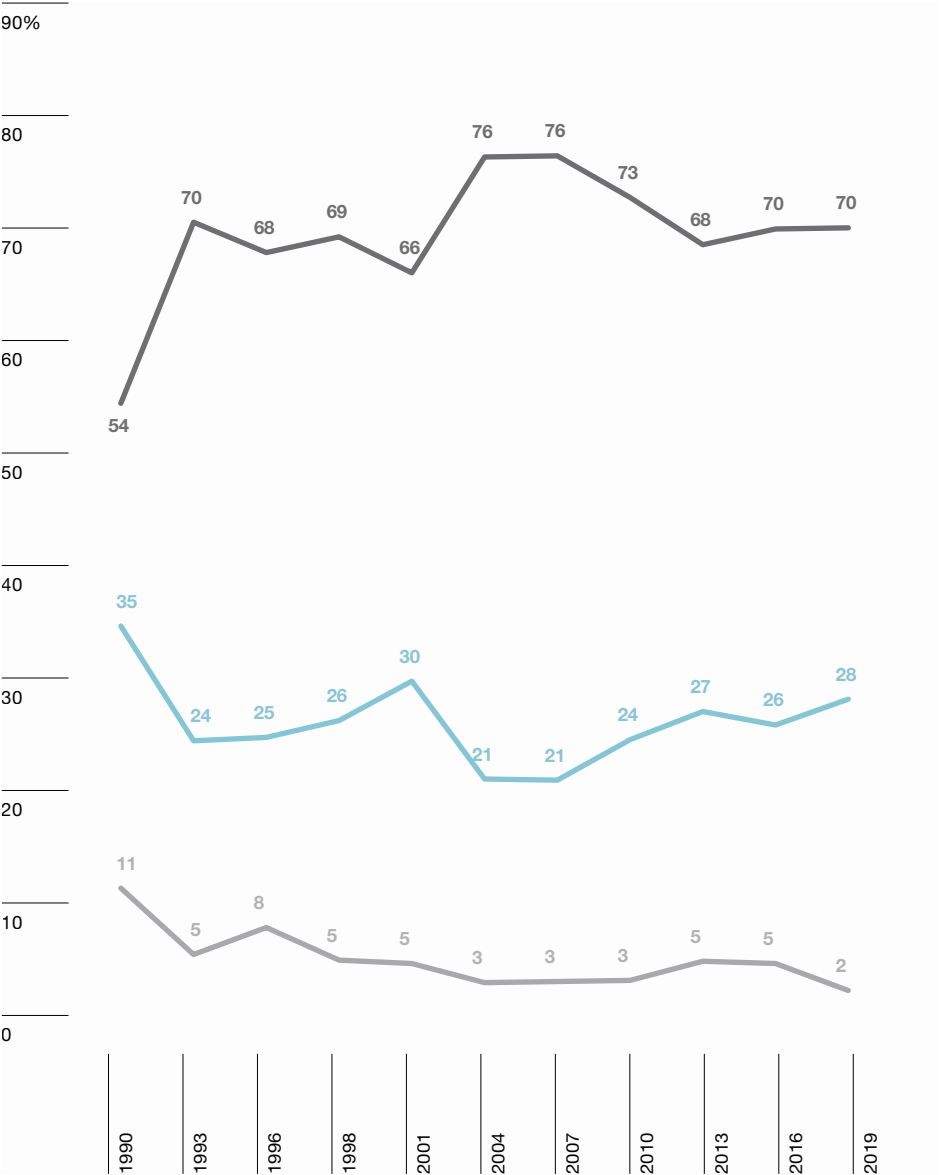## Importance of taxation in vote decision

━━━ Extremely important
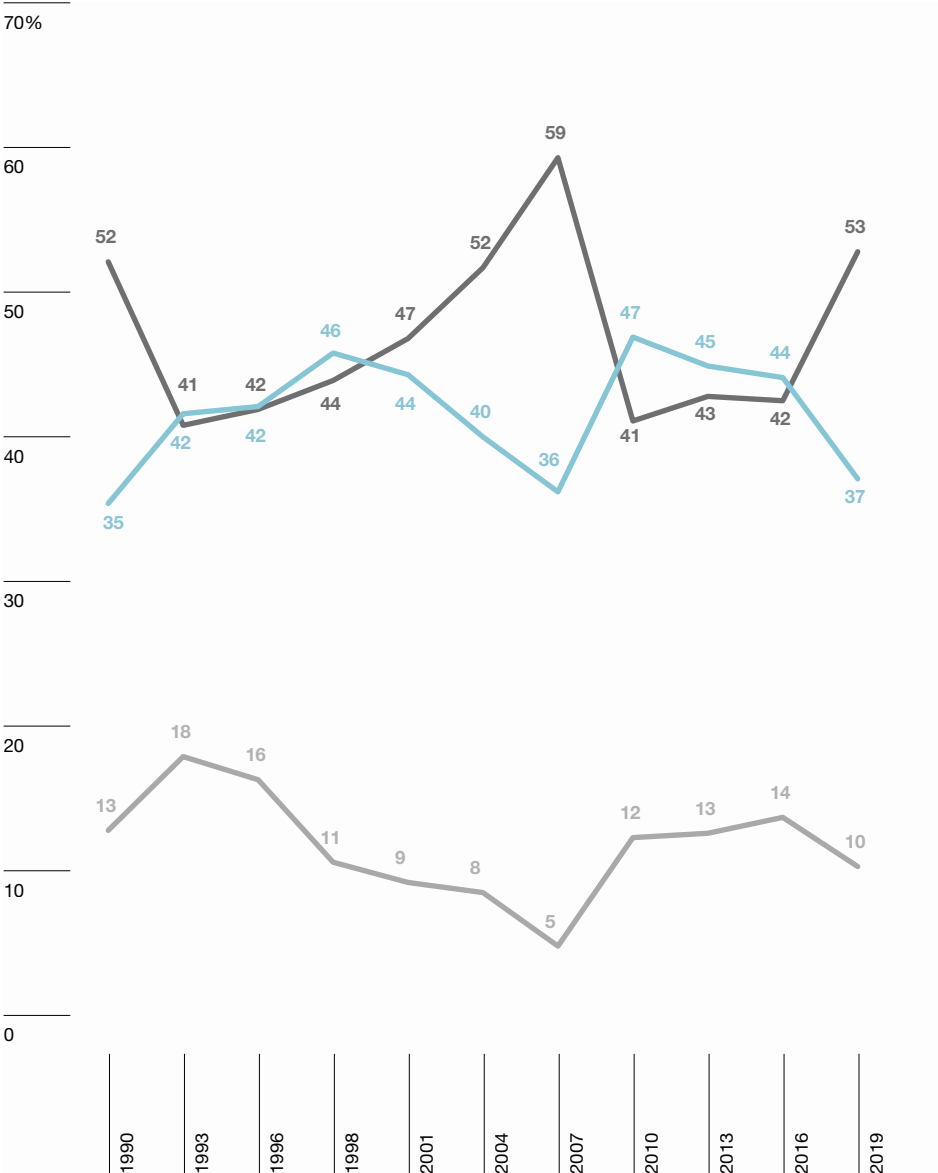━━━ Quite important
━━━ Not very important

Importance of health in vote decision

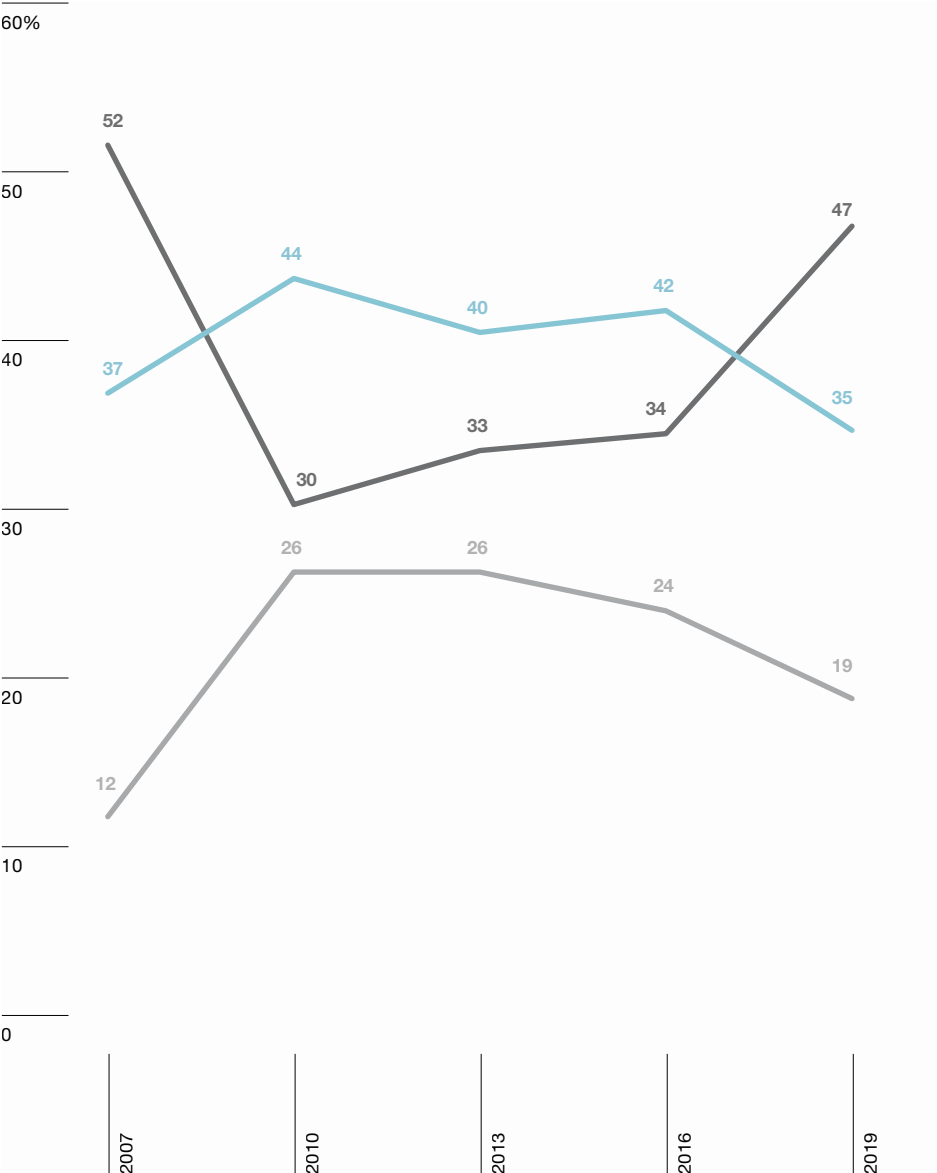━━━ Extremely important
━━━ Quite important
━━━ Not very important

Importance of the environment in vote decision

- **Extremely important**
- **Quite important**
- **Not very important**

70%

60

50

40

30

20

10

0

52 · 41 · 42 · 44 · 47 · 52 · 59 · 41 · 43 · 42 · 53
35 · 42 · 42 · 46 · 44 · 40 · 36 · 47 · 45 · 44 · 37
13 · 18 · 16 · 11 · 9 · 8 · 5 · 12 · 13 · 14 · 10

1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Importance of global warming in vote decision

- **Extremely important**
- **Quite important**
- **Not very important**

60%

50

40

30

20

10

0

52 · 30 · 33 · 34 · 47
37 · 44 · 40 · 42 · 35
12 · 26 · 26 · 24 · 19

2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Importance of immigration in vote decision

Legend:
- **Extremely important**
- **Quite important**
- **Not very important**

Data points (Extremely important):
- 1996: 31
- 1998: 30
- 2001: 50
- 2004: 32
- 2007: 32
- 2013: 43
- 2016: 46
- 2019: 35

Data points (Quite important):
- 1996: 36
- 1998: 41
- 2001: 39
- 2004: 46
- 2007: 44
- 2013: 39
- 2016: 36
- 2019: 44

Data points (Not very important):
- 1996: 33
- 1998: 29
- 2001: 12
- 2004: 23
- 2007: 24
- 2013: 19
- 2016: 18
- 2019: 21

Y-axis: 60%, 50, 40, 30, 20, 10, 0
X-axis: 1996, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2013, 2016, 2019
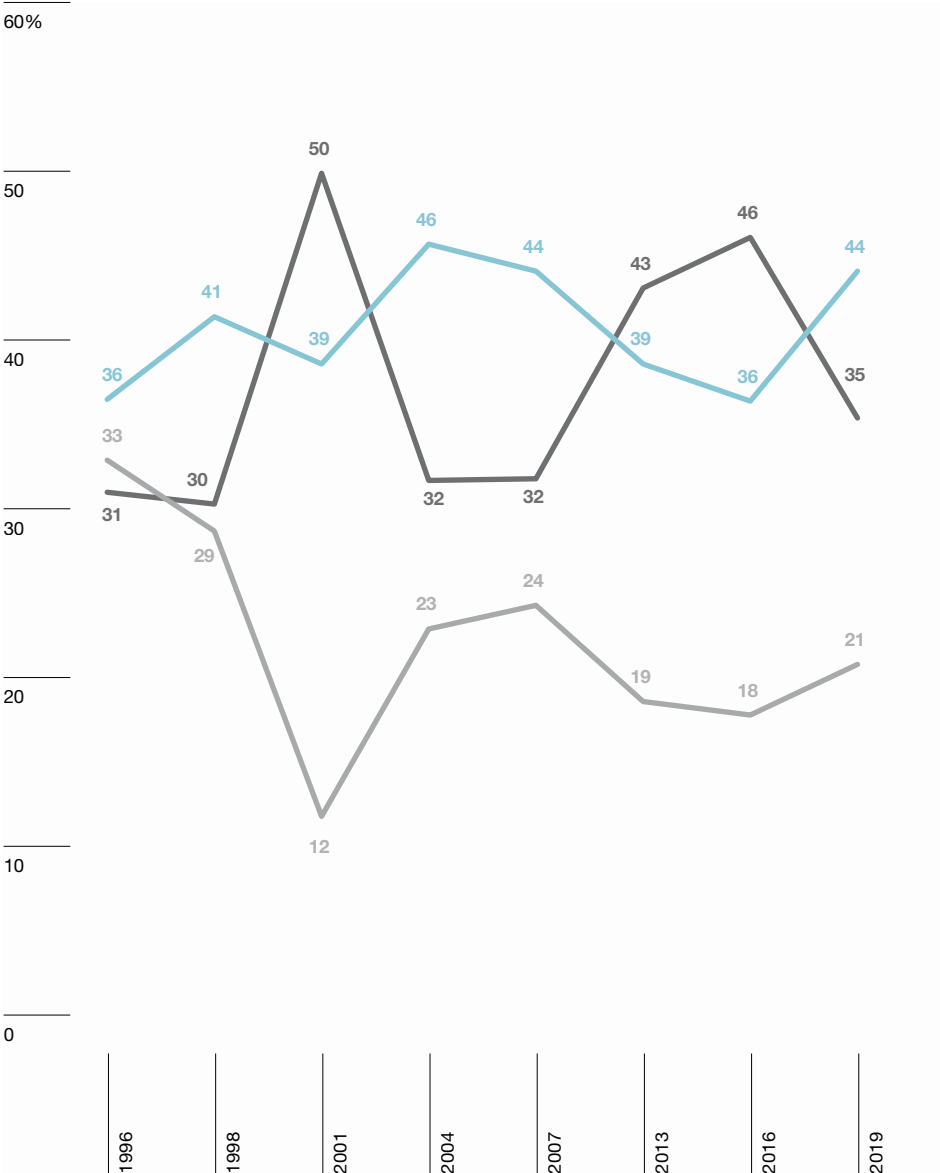
Importance of refugees and asylum seekers in vote decision

Legend:
- **Extremely important**
- **Quite important**
- **Not very important**

Data points (Extremely important):
- 2001: 51
- 2004: 30
- 2010: 37
- 2013: 46
- 2016: 45
- 2019: 33

Data points (Quite important):
- 2001: 33
- 2004: 40
- 2010: 37
- 2013: 35
- 2016: 34
- 2019: 42

Data points (Not very important):
- 2001: 16
- 2004: 30
- 2010: 26
- 2013: 20
- 2016: 20
- 2019: 25

Y-axis: 60%, 50, 40, 30, 20, 10, 0
X-axis: 2001, 2004, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019
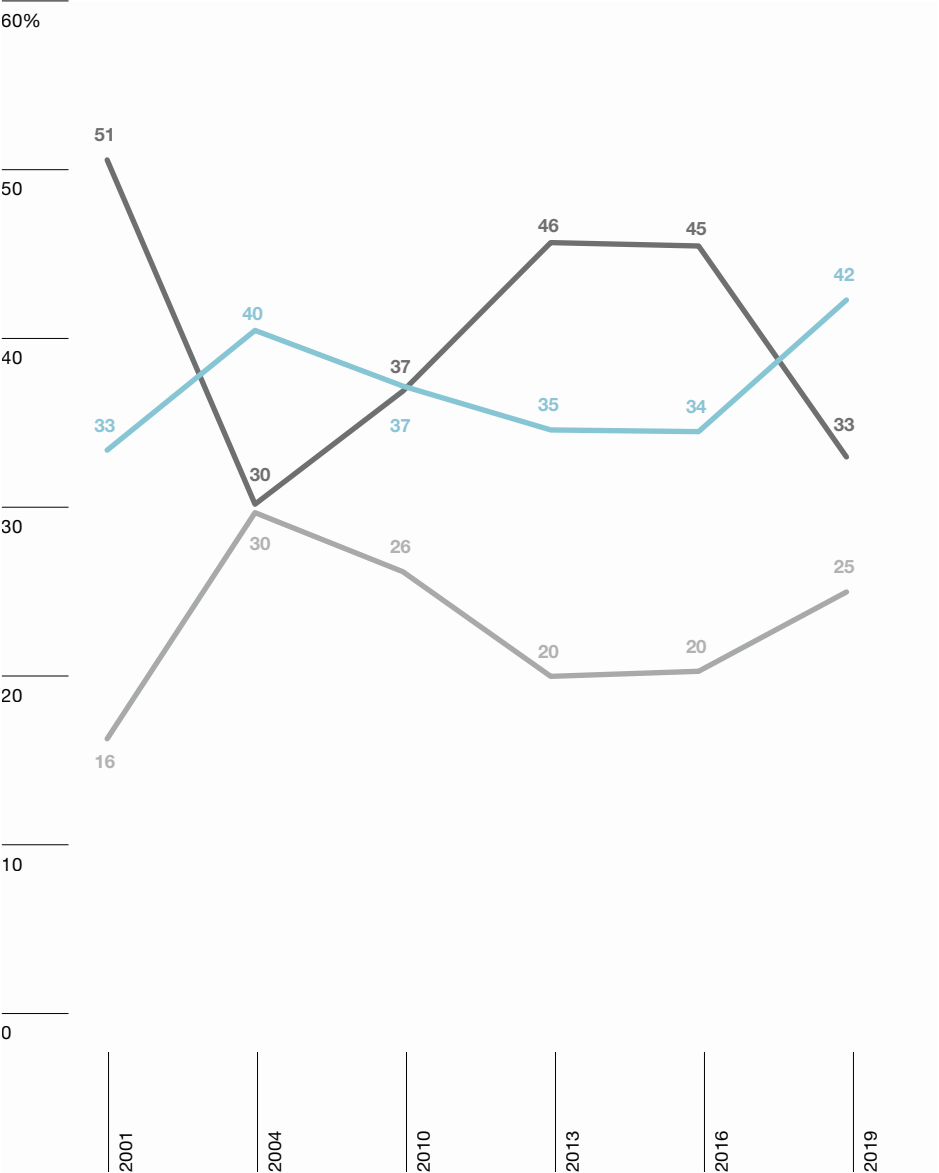
Notes

**Most important economic
election issues**
'Taxation' was not included in 1993.

**Most important non-economic
election issues**
In 1996–2019 estimates for health
are for 'Health and Medicare'.
'Refugees and asylum seekers'
was not included in 2007.

Financial situation of household over past year

- **Become better**
- **Become worse**
- **About the same**

60%
54
50
52
50
49
48
45
46
44
45
43
42
41
41
38
38
38
40
36
35 35 35
33
32
30
30
28 28
28
27
23
21 21
20
20
19
19
18 18
15
13
10
0

1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Financial situation of country over past year

- **Become better**
- **Become worse**
- **About the same**

80%
74
70
62
60
50
47
46 47
46
45
43 43
41
40
36
36
36 36
35
34 35
38
31
30
30 29
28
22 22
26
20
18
16 17
15
16
18
10
8
10
0

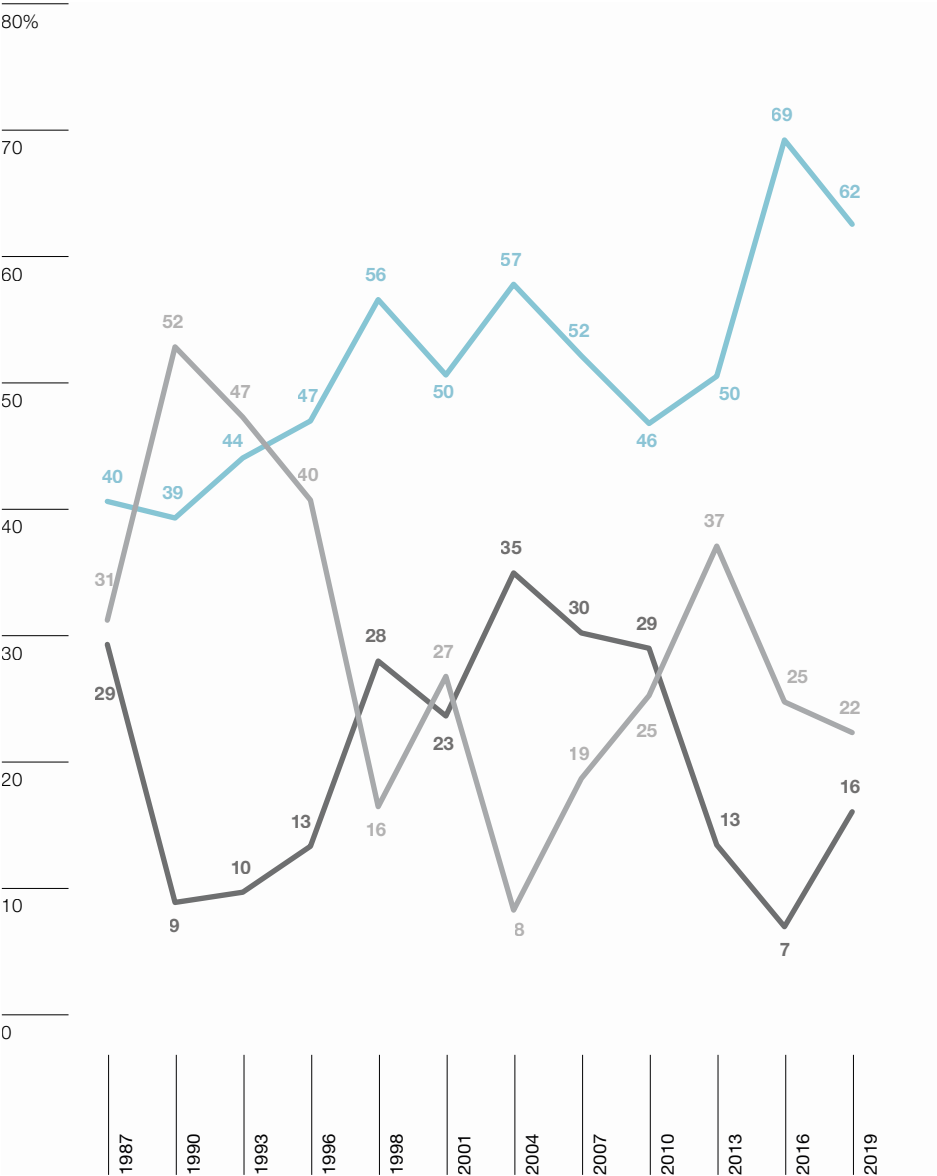1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Government effect on household finances over past year

- **Good effect**
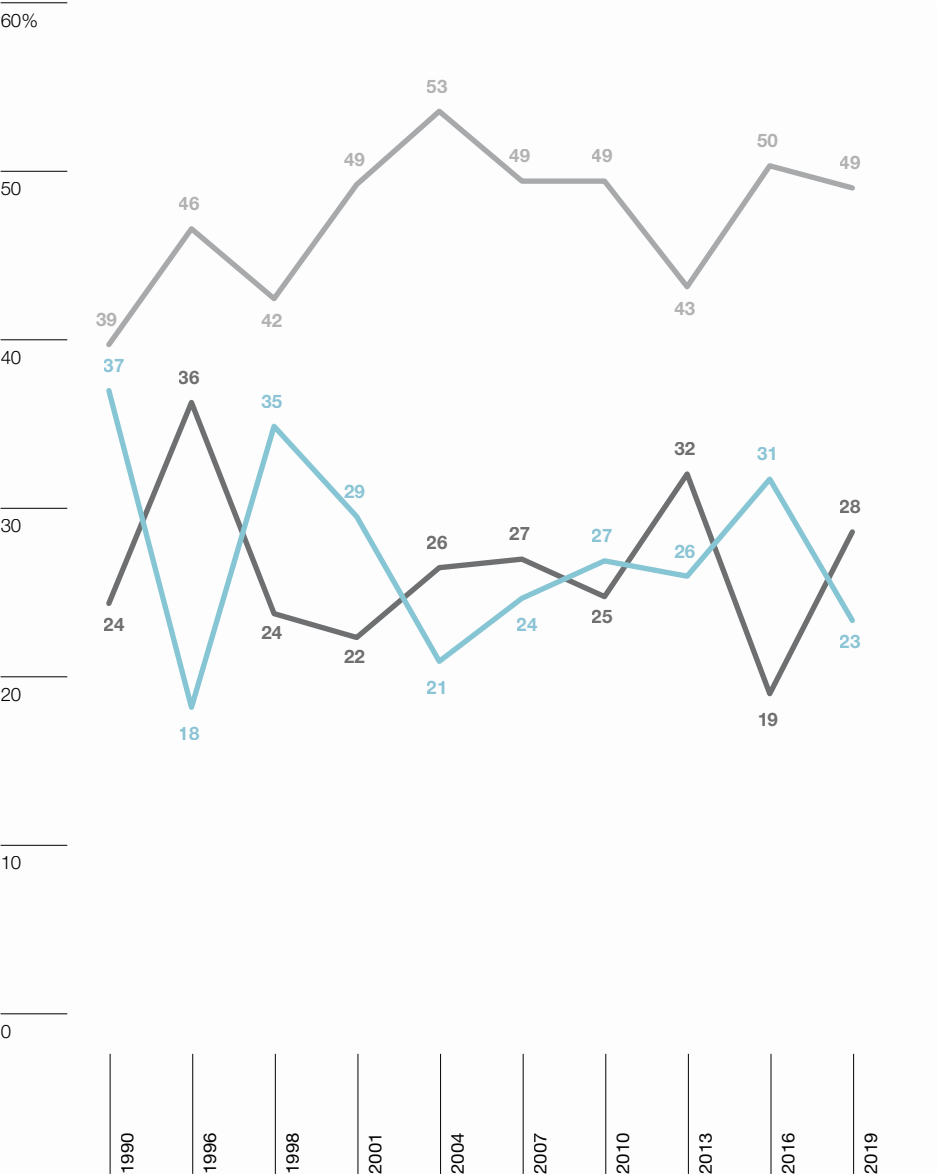- **Not much difference**
- **Bad effect**
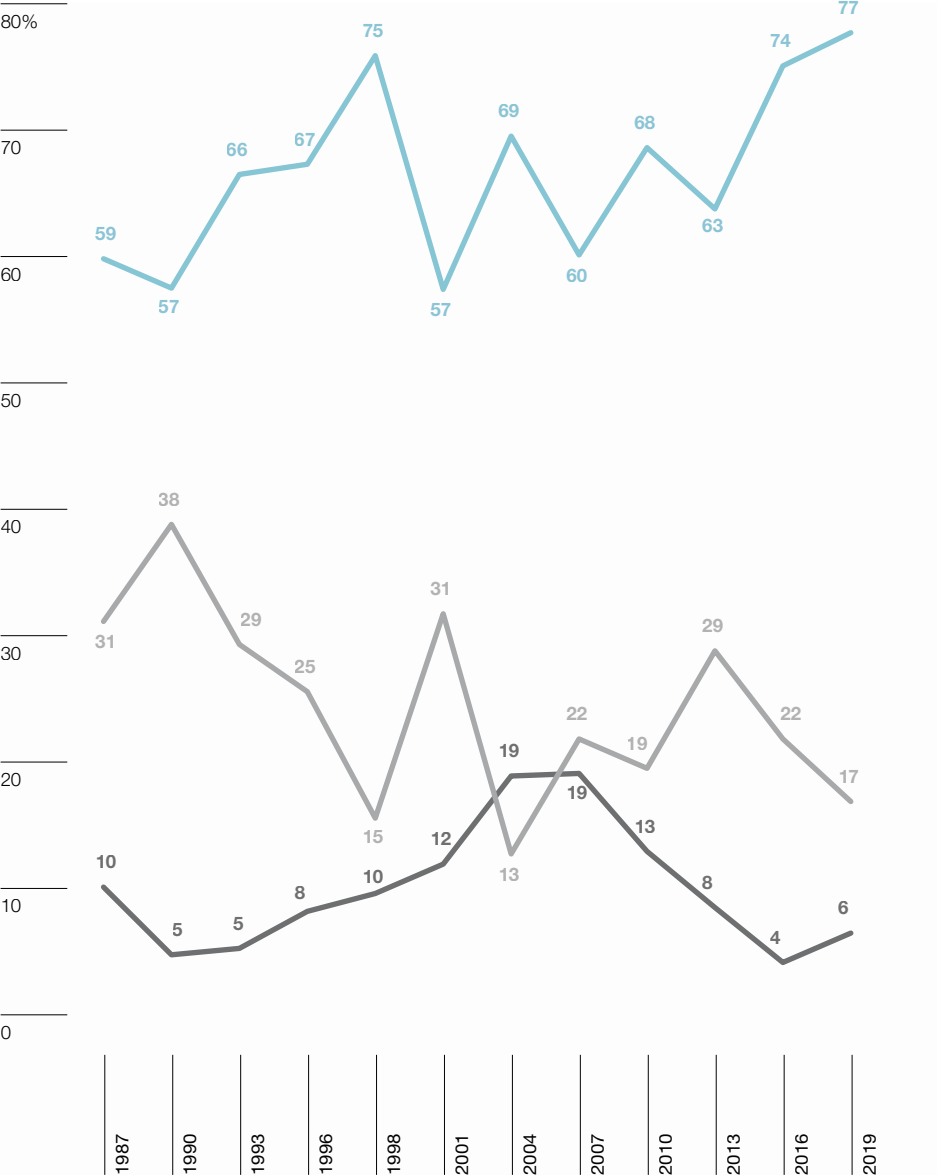
Government effect on country's finances over past year

- **Good effect**
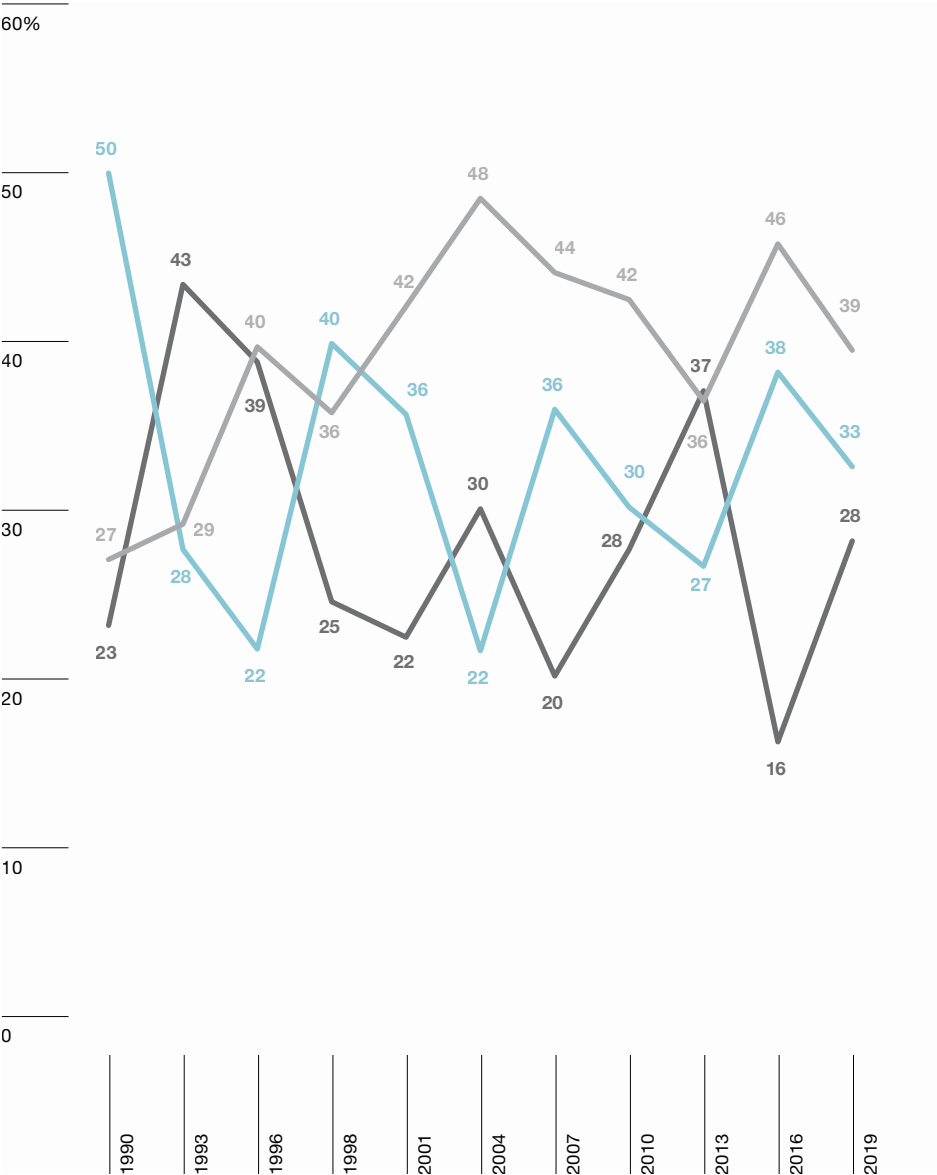- **Not much difference**
- **Bad effect**

Financial situation of household in a year's time

- —— Will be better
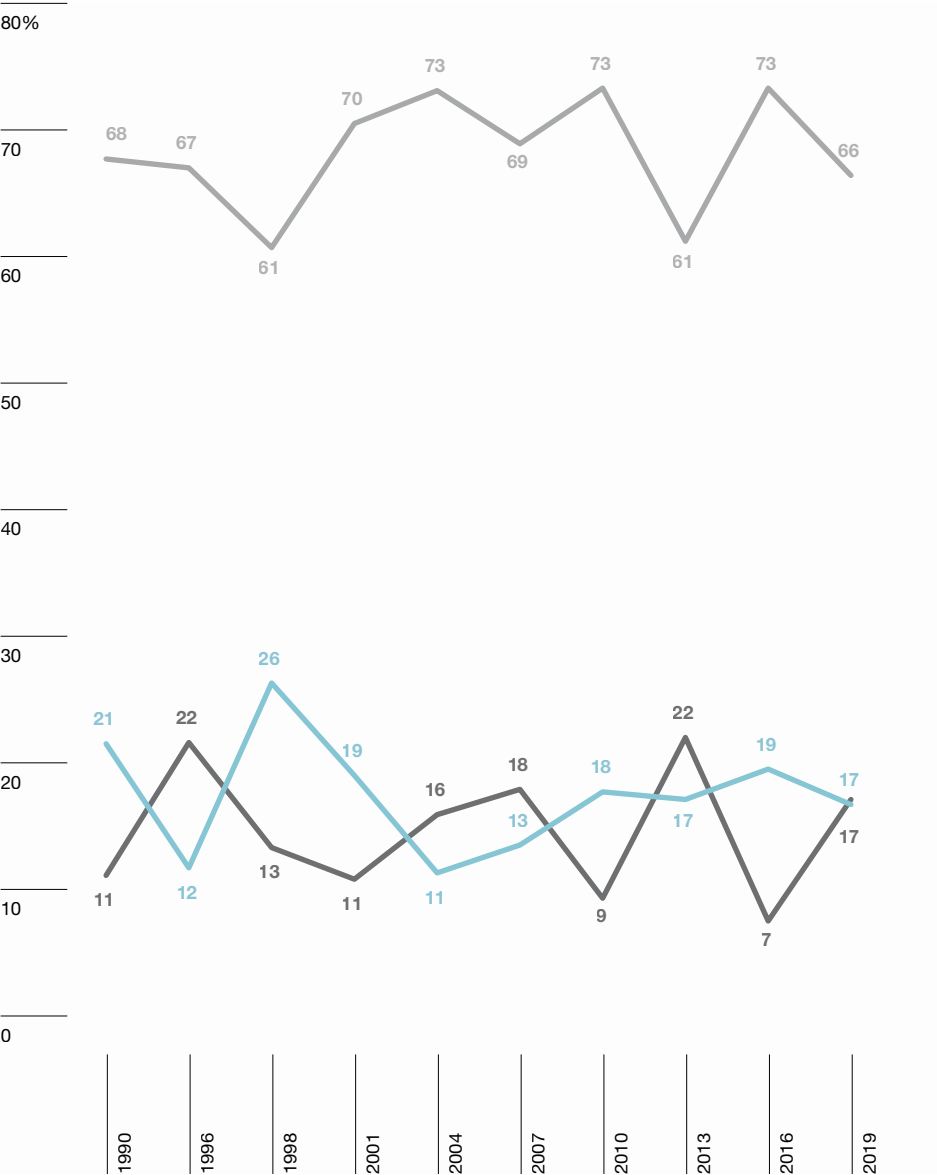- —— Will be worse
- —— About the same

Financial situation of country in a year's time
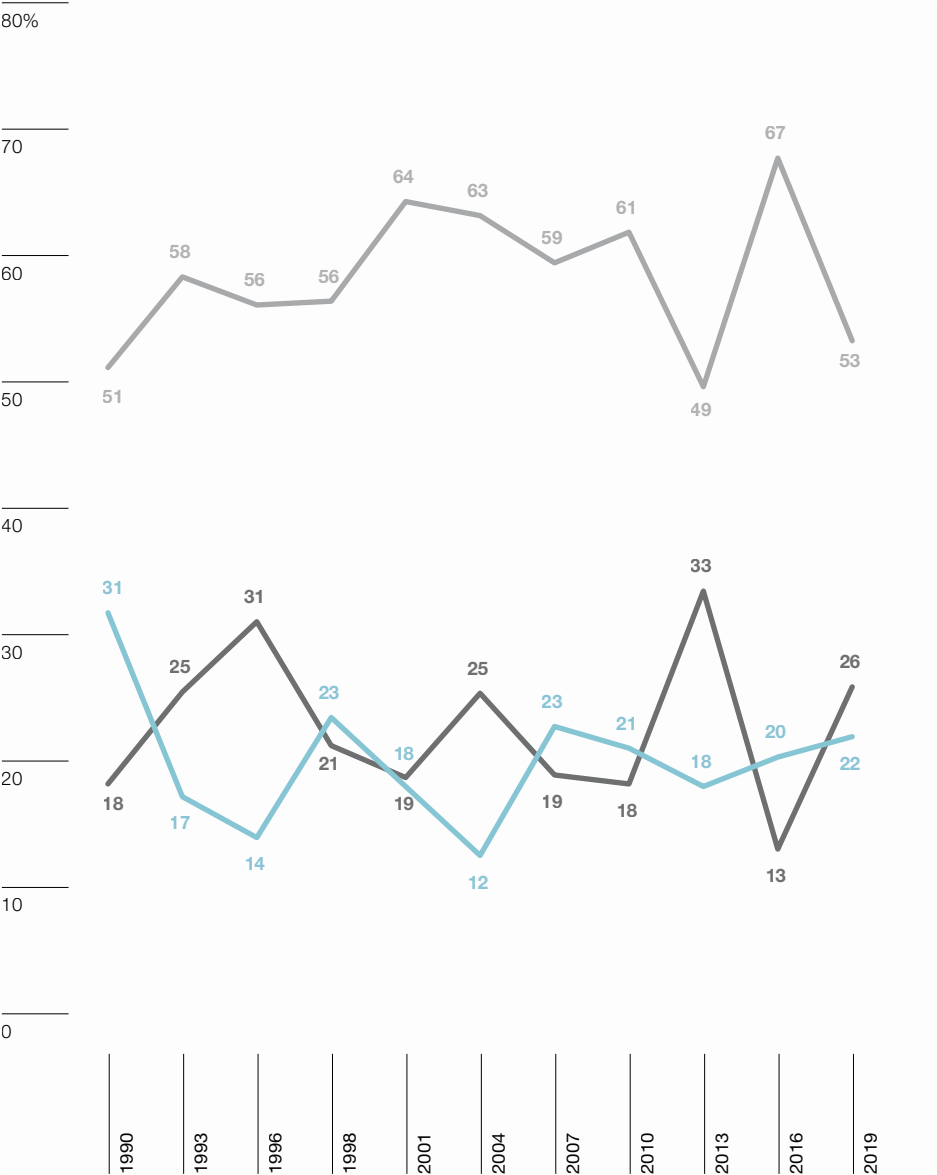
- —— Will be better
- —— Will be worse
- —— About the same

Government effect on household finances in a year's time

— Good effect
— Bad effect
— No difference

Year	Good effect	Bad effect	No difference
1990	11	21	68
1996	22	12	67
1998	13	26	61
2001	11	19	70
2004	16	11	73
2007	18	13	69
2010	9	18	73
2013	22	17	61
2016	7	19	73
2019	17	17	66

Government effect on country's economy in a year's time

— Good effect
— Bad effect
— No difference

Year	Good effect	Bad effect	No difference
1990	18	31	51
1993	25	17	58
1996	31	14	56
1998	21	23	56
2001	19	18	64
2004	25	12	63
2007	19	23	59
2010	18	21	61
2013	33	18	49
2016	13	20	67
2019	26	22	53

Government spending on health

- **More than now**
- **The same as now**
- **Less than now**

	2013	2016	2019
More than now	78	68	79
The same as now	19	28	19
Less than now	3	5	2
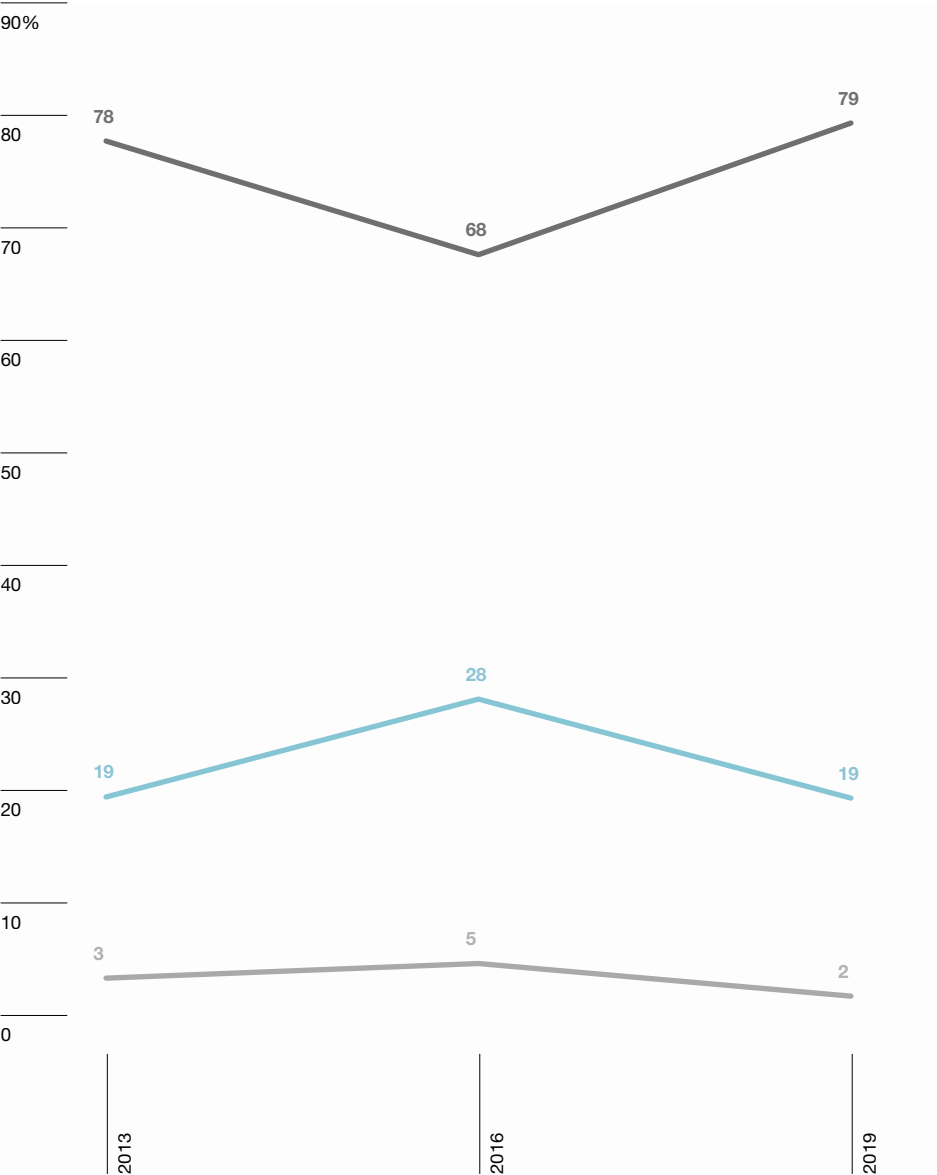
Government spending on education

- **More than now**
- **The same as now**
- **Less than now**

	2013	2016	2019
More than now	69	62	73
The same as now	27	34	25
Less than now	4	4	2
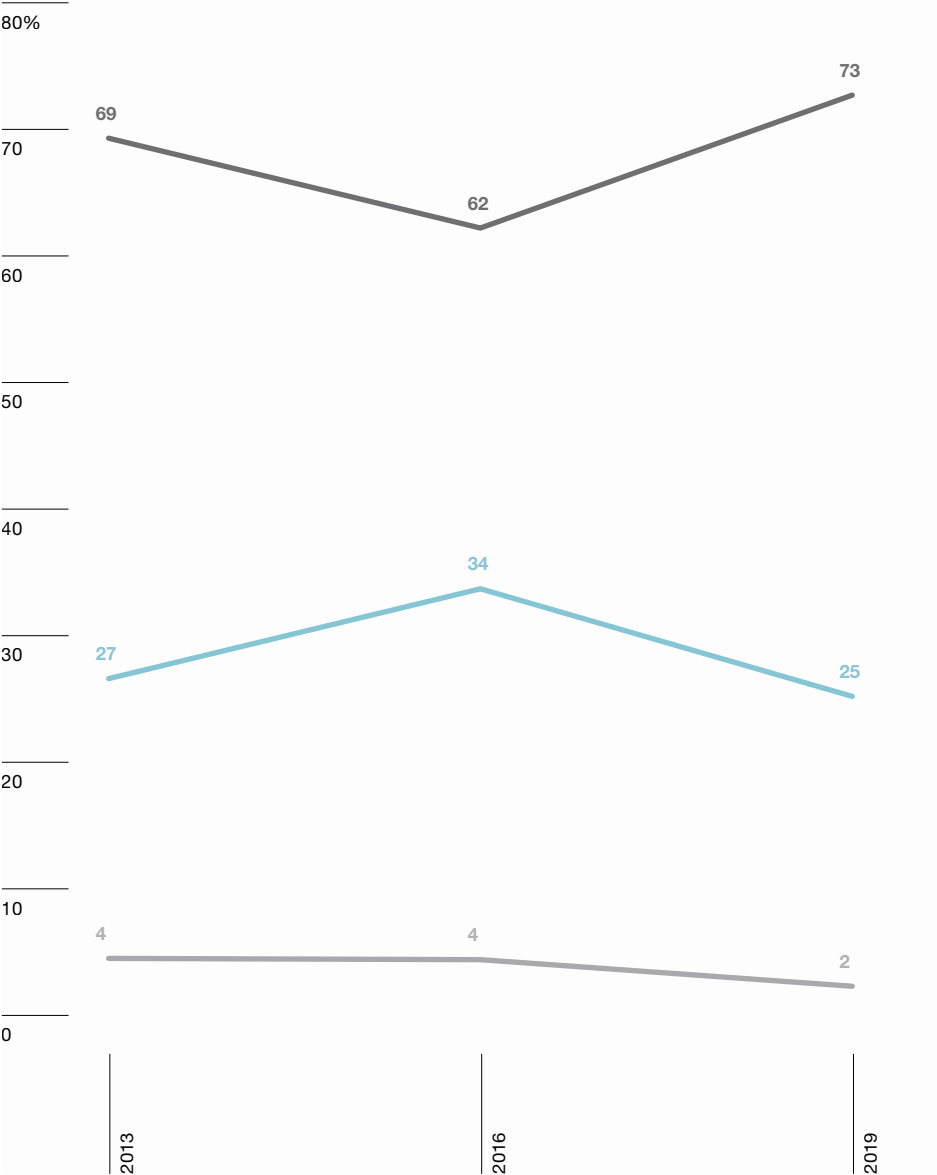
Government spending on unemployment benefits

- **More than now**
- The same as now
- Less than now

	2013	2016	2019
The same as now	48	47	42
Less than now	33	36	25
More than now	20	18	33
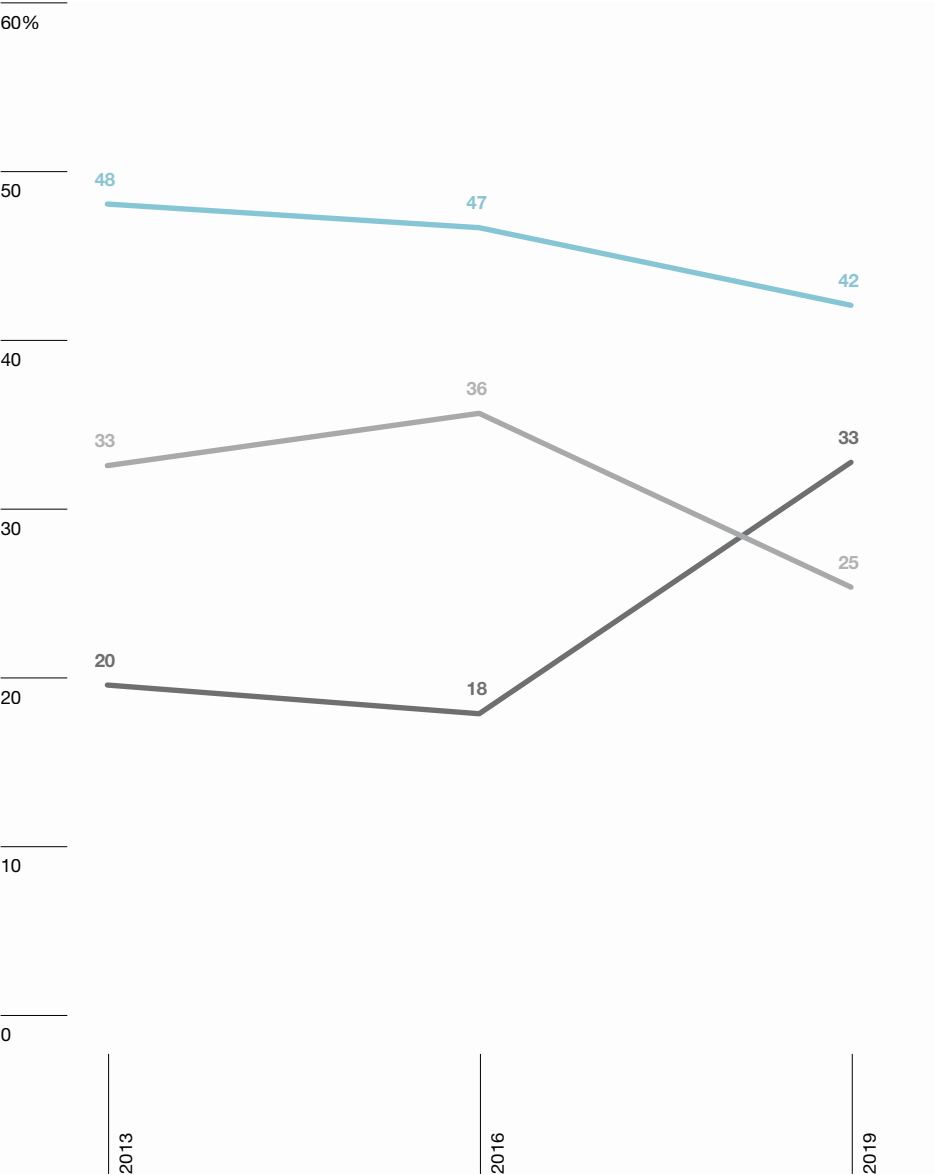
Government spending on defence

- **More than now**
- The same as now
- Less than now

	2013	2016	2019
The same as now	49	49	48
More than now	27	24	29
Less than now	24	27	22
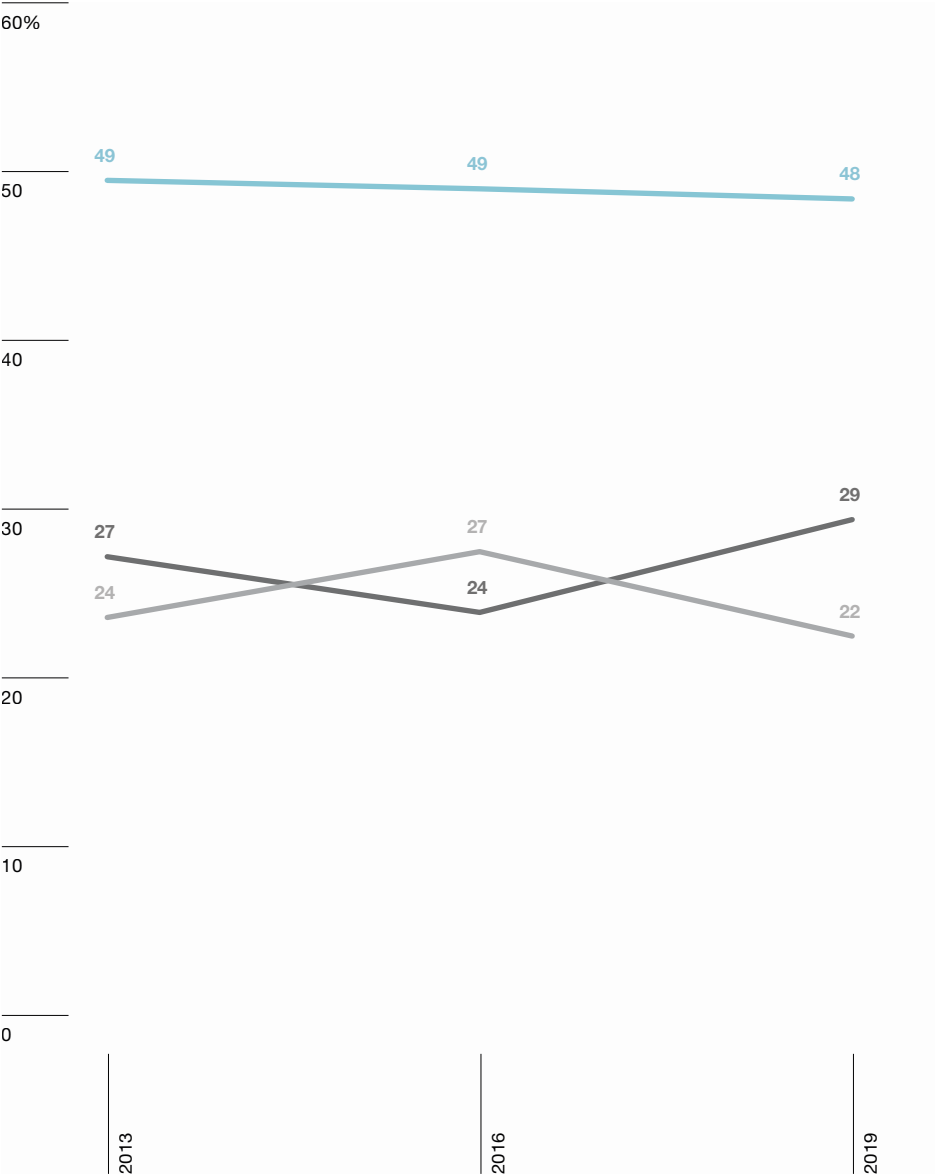
Government spending on old-age pensions

- **More than now**
- **The same as now**
- **Less than now**

80%

70 — 65 .... 53 68
60
50
40 — 40
31 28
30
20
7
10 — 4 4
0

2013   2016   2019
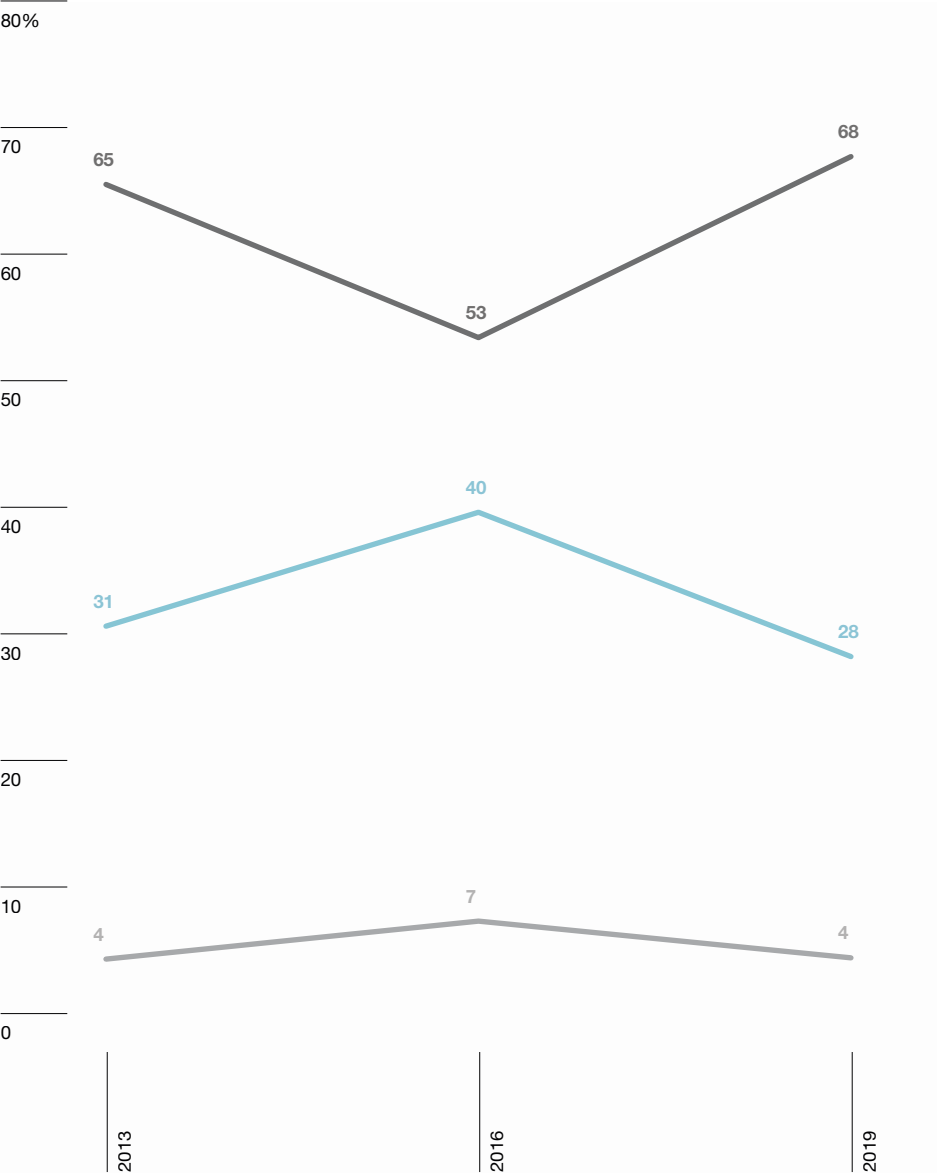
Government spending on business and industry

- **More than now**
- **The same as now**
- **Less than now**

60%

52
51
50 — 48
40
34
30 — 27   28
22   21
20 — 17
10
0

2013   2016   2019
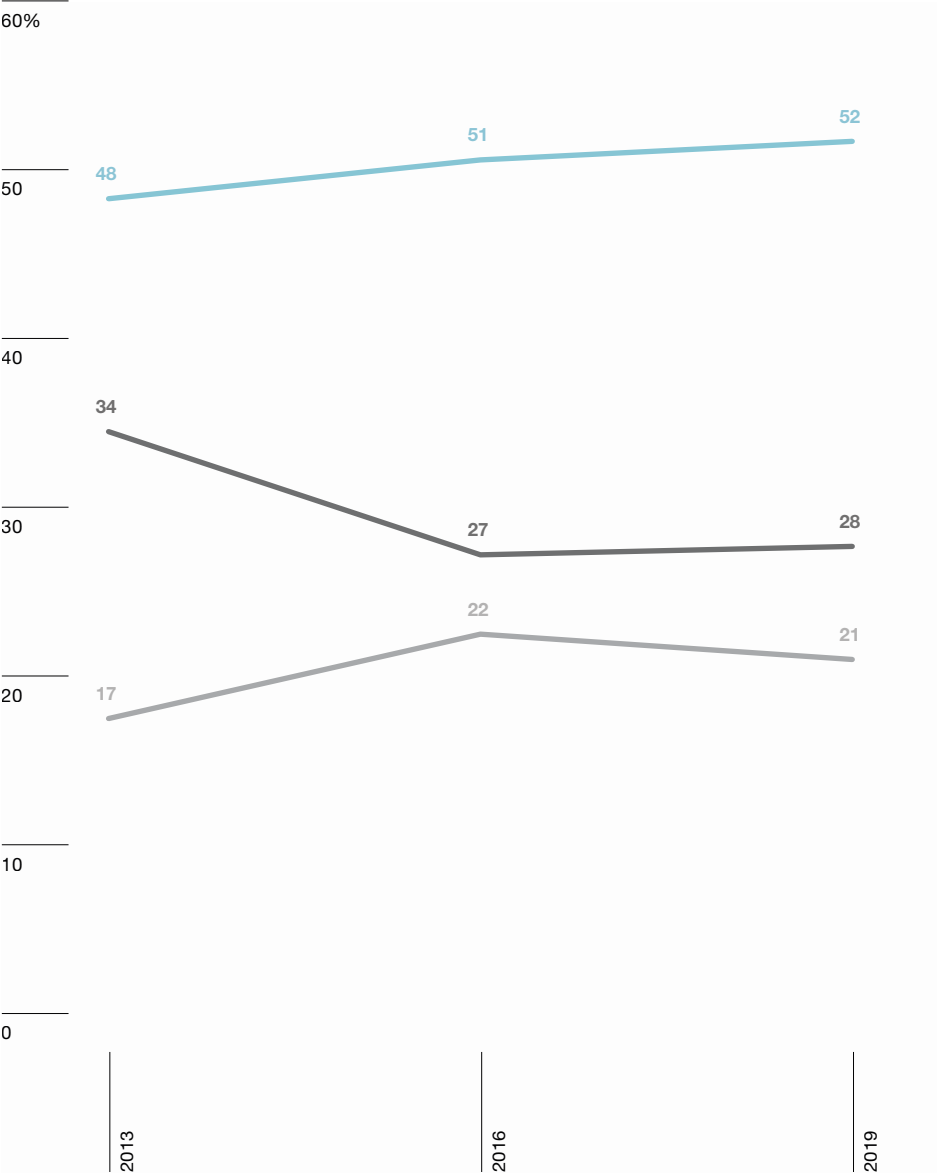
Government spending on police and law enforcement

— More than now
— The same as now
— Less than now
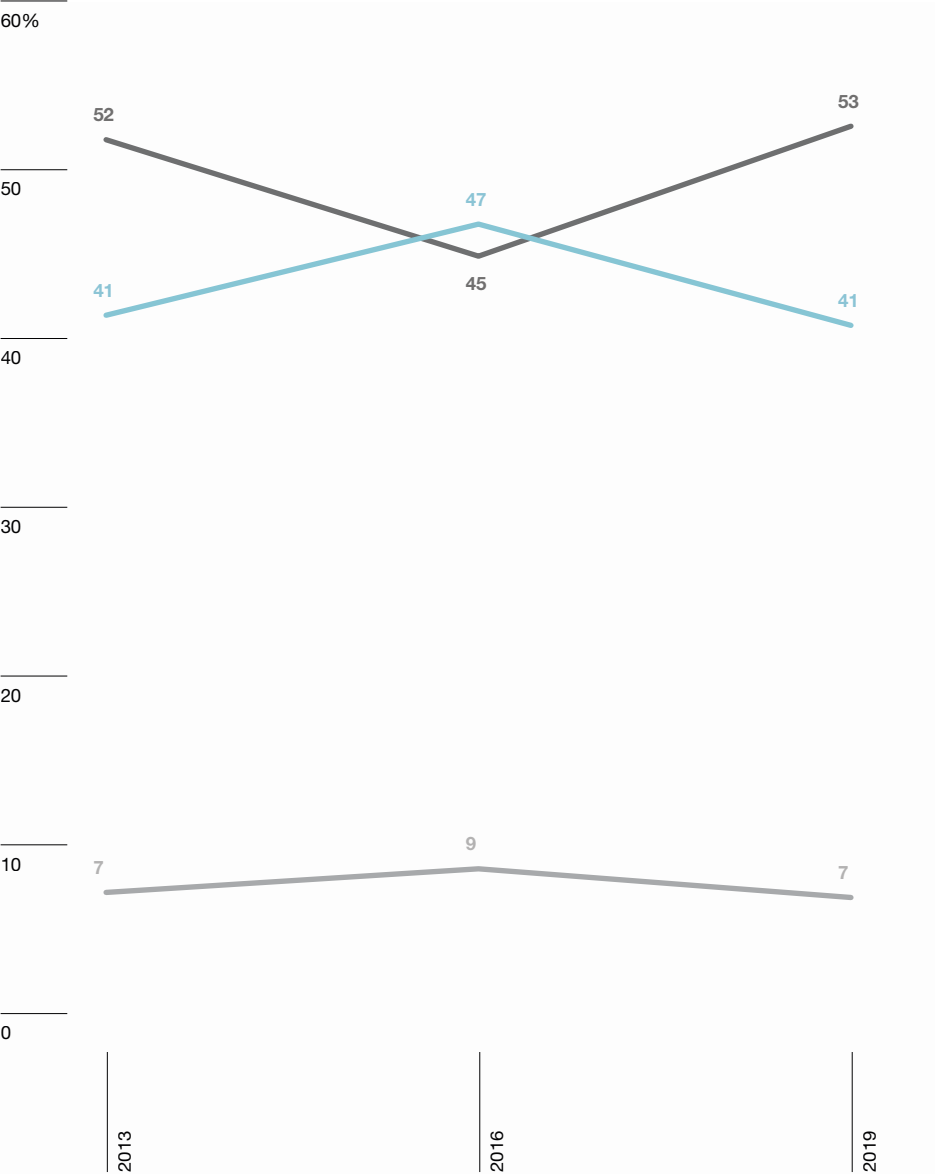
60%

52   53
50
47
41   45   41

40

30

20

9
10   7   7

0

2013   2016   2019

If lost job how easy to find another in 12 months

— Easy
— Difficult

80%

70
68
65   56
60

50
44
40
36   32
30

20

10

0

2013   2016   2019

If spouse / partner lost job how easy to find another in 12 months

Easy
Difficult
Do not have a partner

60%

50   48   48

                        41

40   35

30   28
23   26   24
          26

20

10

0

2013   2016   2019
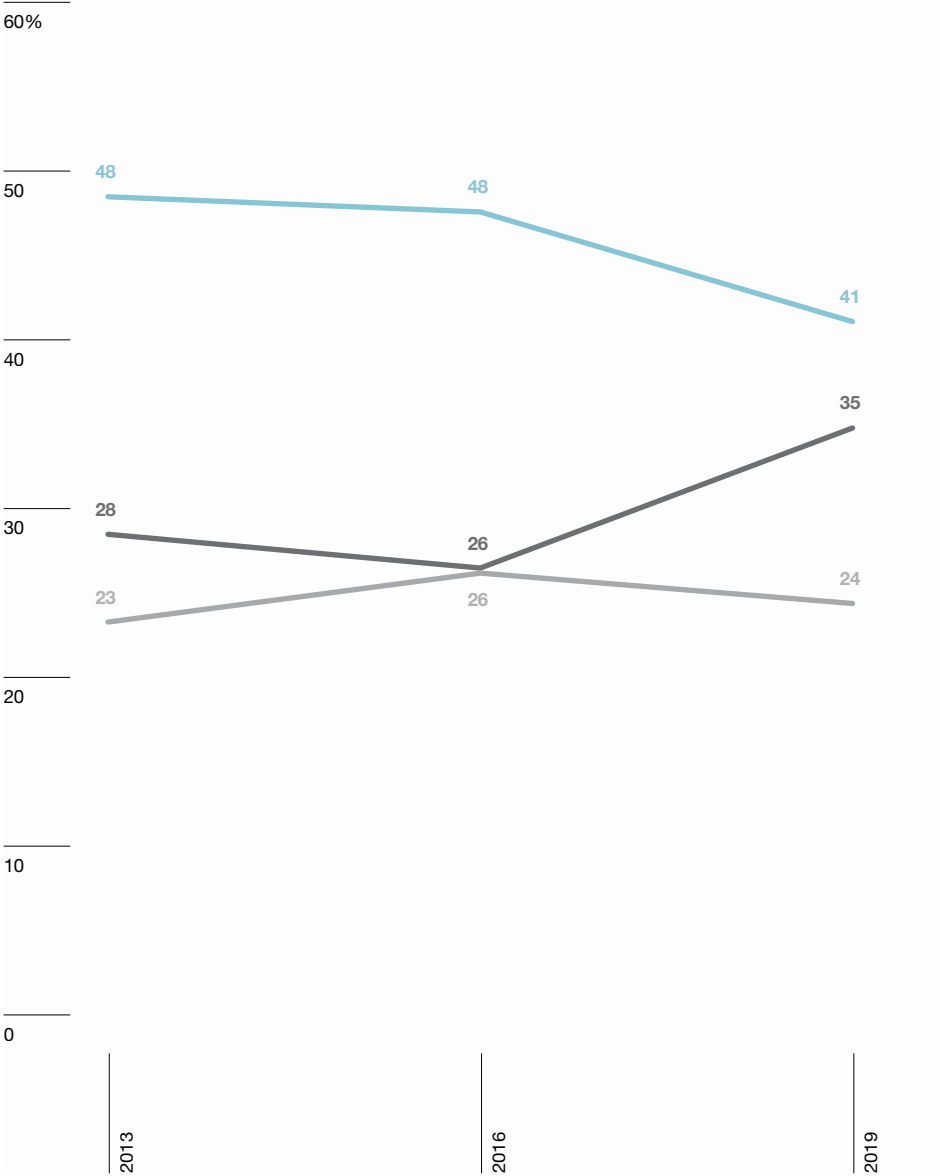
Notes

Financial situation of household over past year
For become better, estimates combine 'a lot better' and 'a little better'. For become worse, estimates combine 'a little worse' and 'a lot worse'.

Financial situation of country over past year
For become better, estimates combine 'a lot better' and 'a little better'. For become worse, estimates combine 'a little worse' and 'a lot worse'.

Financial situation of household in a year's time
For will be better, estimates combine 'a lot better' and 'a little better'. For will be worse, estimates combine 'a little worse' and 'a lot worse'.

Financial situation of country in a year's time
For will be better, estimates combine 'a lot better' and 'a little better'. For will be worse, estimates combine 'a little worse' and 'a lot worse'.

Government spending
Estimates show whether respondents think there should be more or less public expenditure in various policy areas. For more than now, estimates combine 'much more than now' and 'somewhat more than now'. For less than now, estimates combine 'somewhat less than now' and 'much less than now'.

If lost job how easy to find another in 12 months
In 2019 'Do not have a job' was included in the list of responses although was dropped from the analyses for comparability with 2013 and 2016.

If spouse / partner lost job how easy to find another in 12 months
In 2019 'Do not have a job' was included in the list of responses although was dropped from the analyses for comparability with 2013 and 2016.

Interest in politics

- **A good deal**
- **Some**
- **Not much**
- **None**

50%

47 47 46 46 46
44 45 46 45 45 44 44 42 43
37

39
38 37
35 36 34 34
32 32 33 34 32 31
34
27
26 23
22

18
20 18 20
18 19 18 17
16 14

12
6 6 5 5 5
5 3 3 4 3 3 3 3 3

40

30

20

10

0

1967 1969 1979 1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
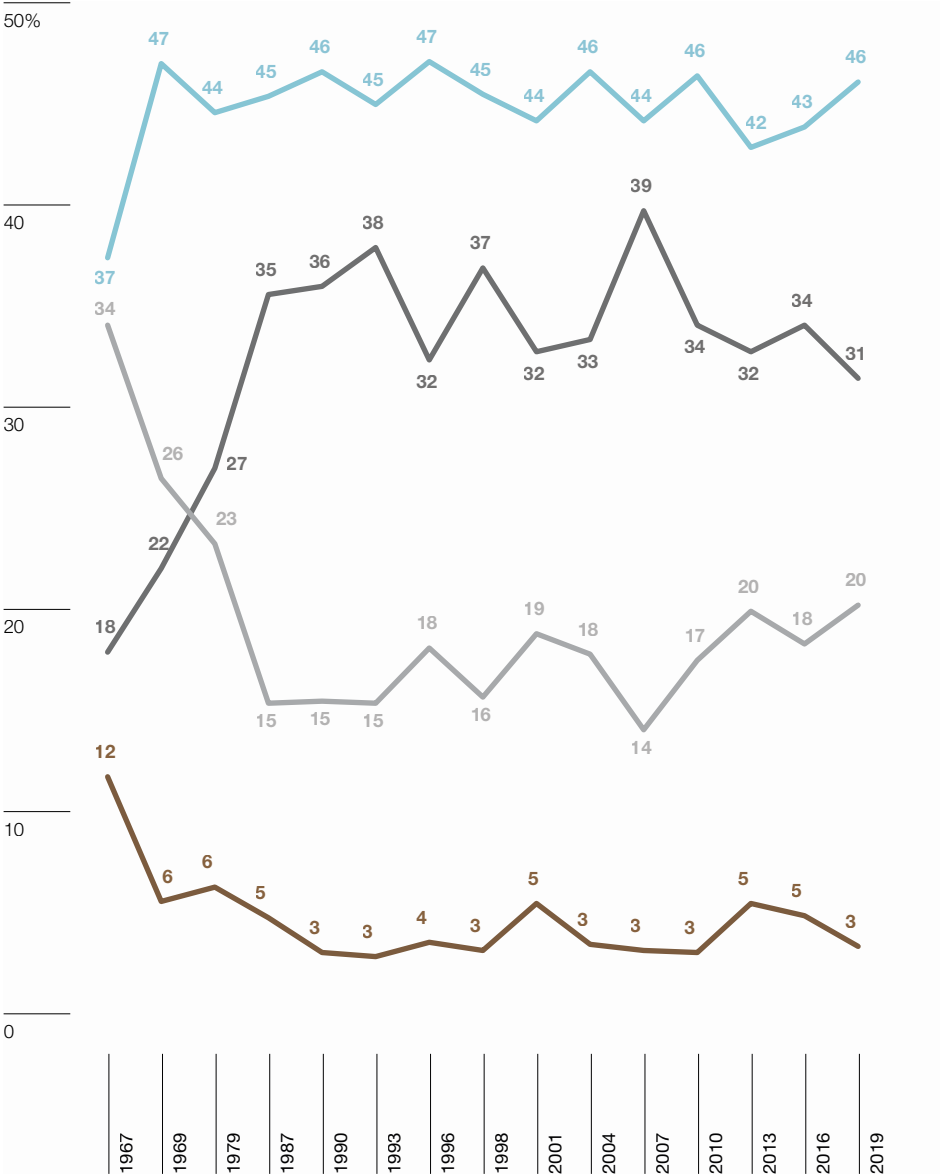
Compulsory voting and likelihood of voting if voluntary
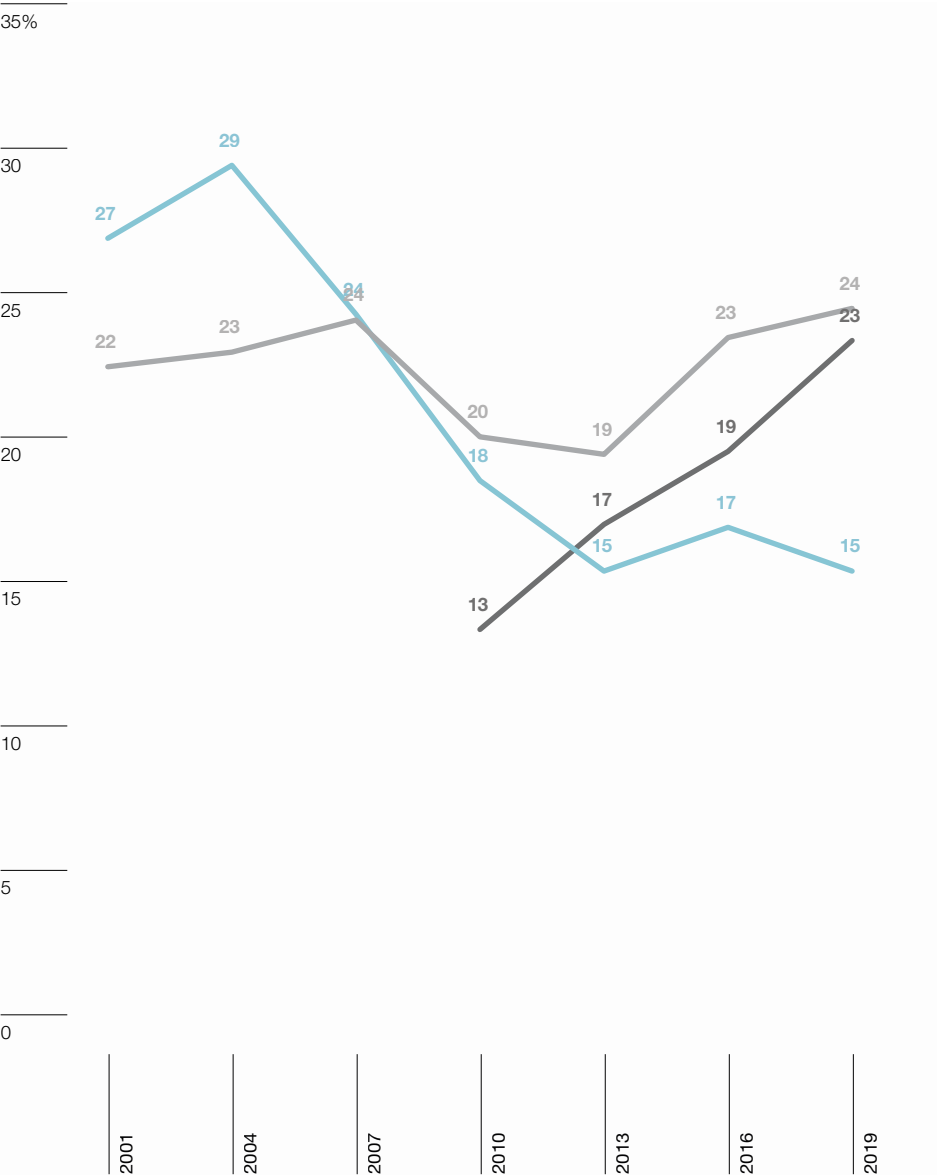
- **Supports compulsory voting**
- **Would have voted if voluntary**

100%

86 85 89
80 86 83
79 80 80

76 77 77
69 68 71 72 74
64 70 69 70 70 72

80

60

40

20

0

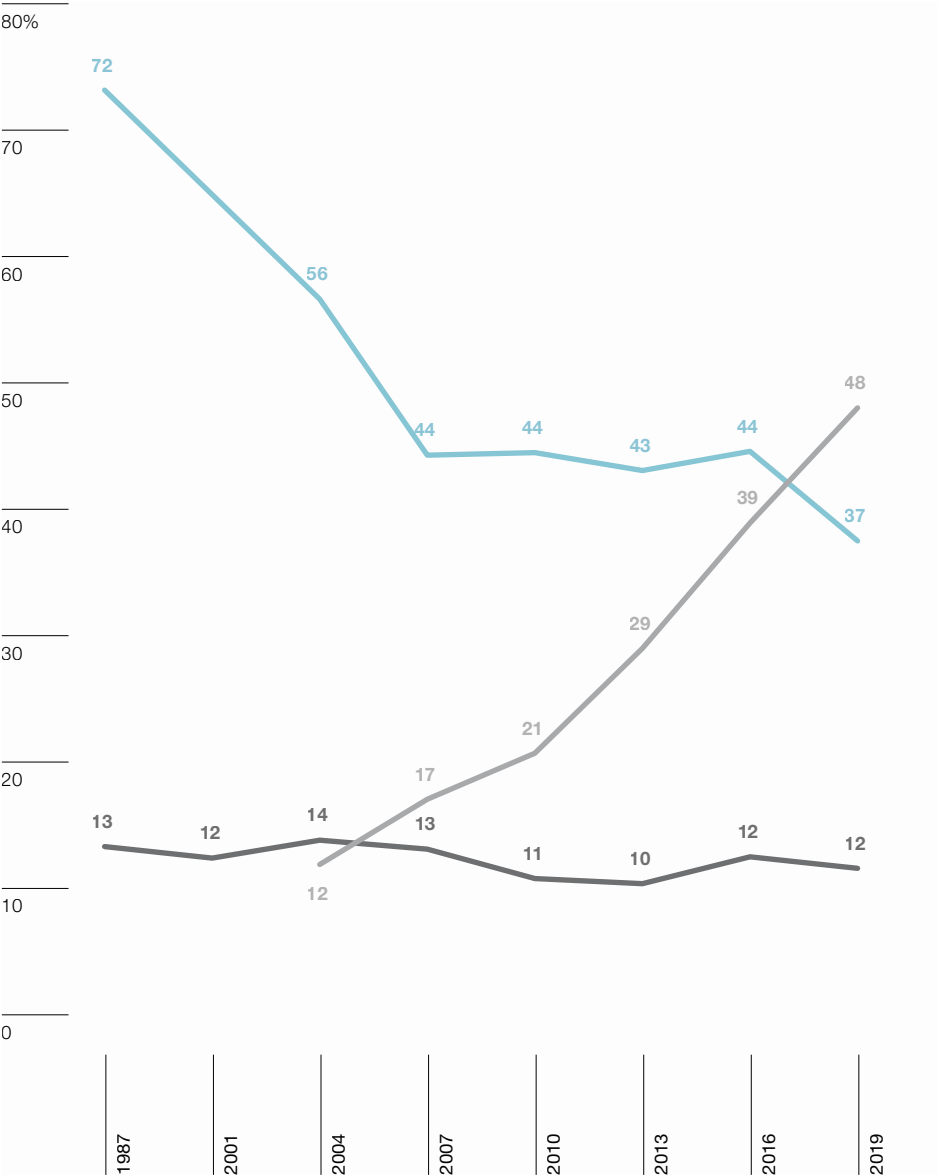1967 1969 1979 1987 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
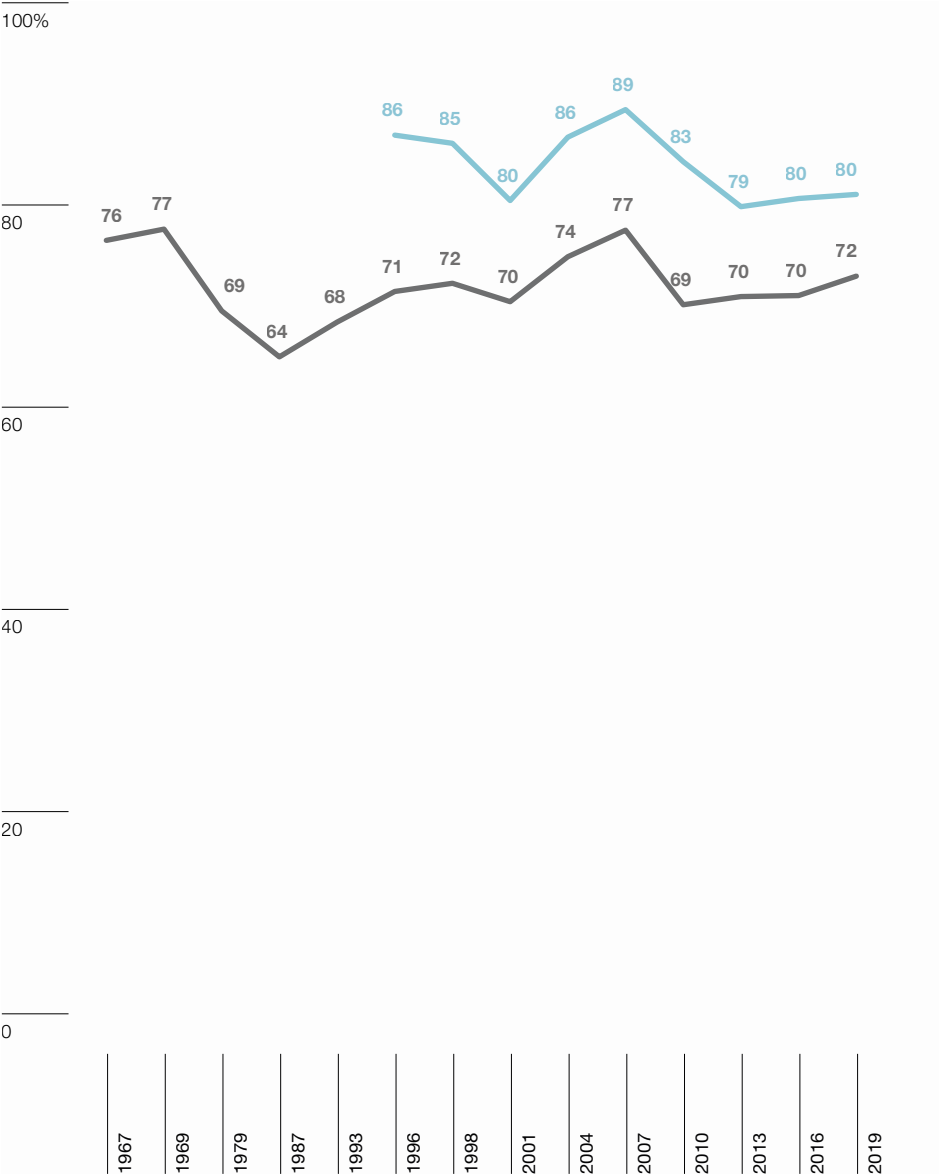
Political participation in the past five years

— Contacted official via email
— Contacted official in person or in writing
— Worked together with others

Contacted official in person or in writing:
2001: 27
2004: 29
2007: 24
2010: 18
2013: 15
2016: 17
2019: 15

Worked together with others:
2001: 22
2004: 23
2007: 24
2010: 20
2013: 19
2016: 23
2019: 24

Contacted official via email:
2010: 13
2013: 17
2016: 19
2019: 23

Political participation in the past five years

— Taken part in a protest
— Signed a written petition
— Signed an online petition

Signed a written petition:
1987: 72
2004: 56
2007: 44
2010: 44
2013: 43
2016: 44
2019: 37

Signed an online petition:
2007: 12
2010: 17
2013: 21
2016: 29
2019: 39
2019: 48

Taken part in a protest:
1987: 13
2001: 12
2004: 14
2007: 13
2010: 11
2013: 10
2016: 12
2019: 12

Feelings about political parties

——— Liberal
——— Labor
——— National

Estimates are means
The scale runs from 0 (strongly dislike party)
to 10 (strongly like party) with a designated
midpoint of 5 (neither like nor dislike).
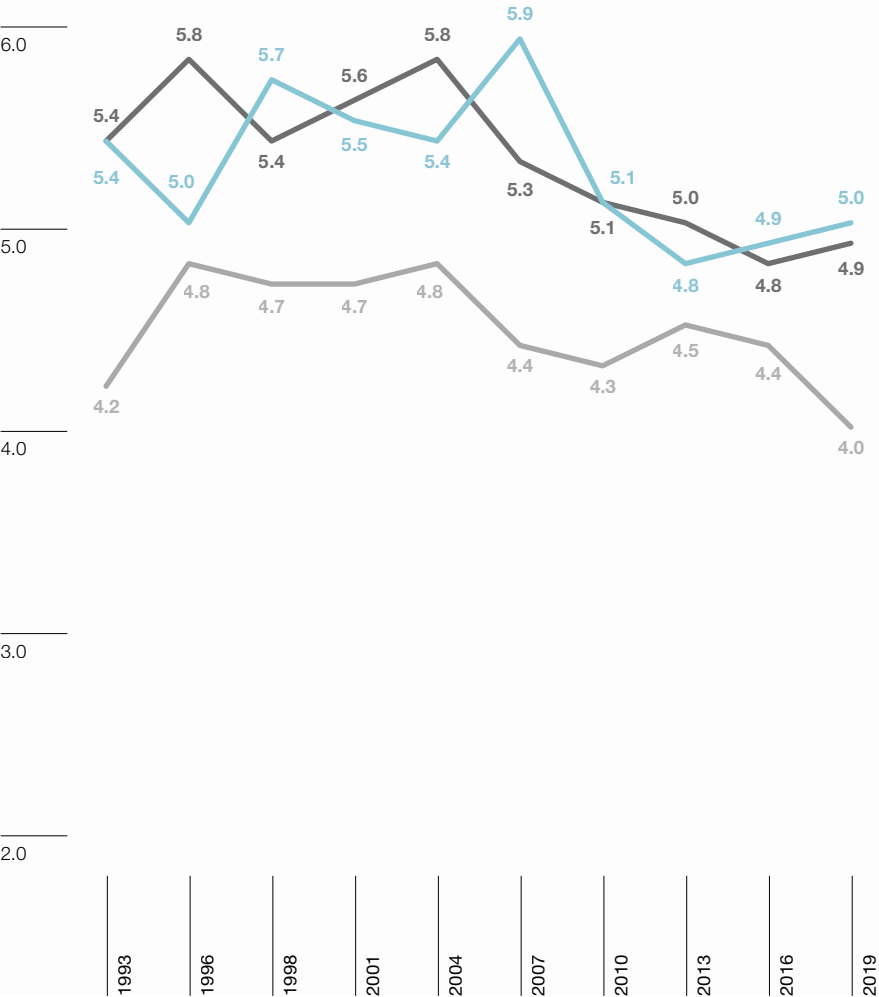
Feelings about political parties (continued)
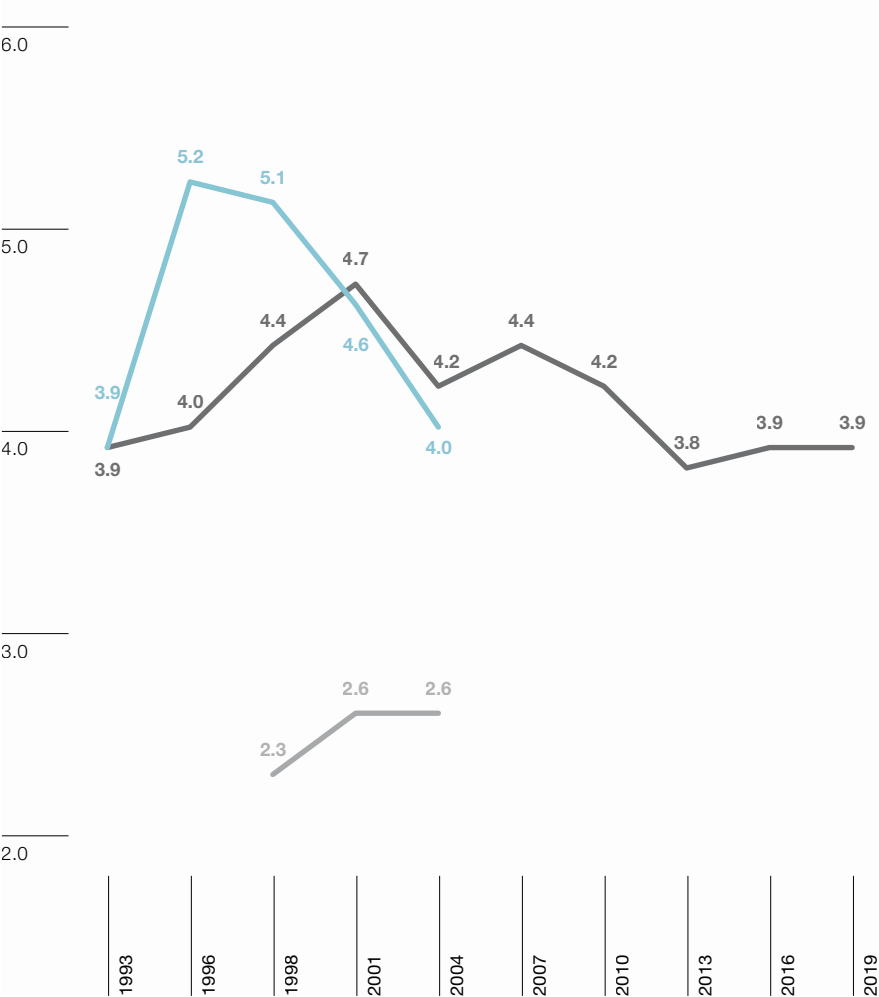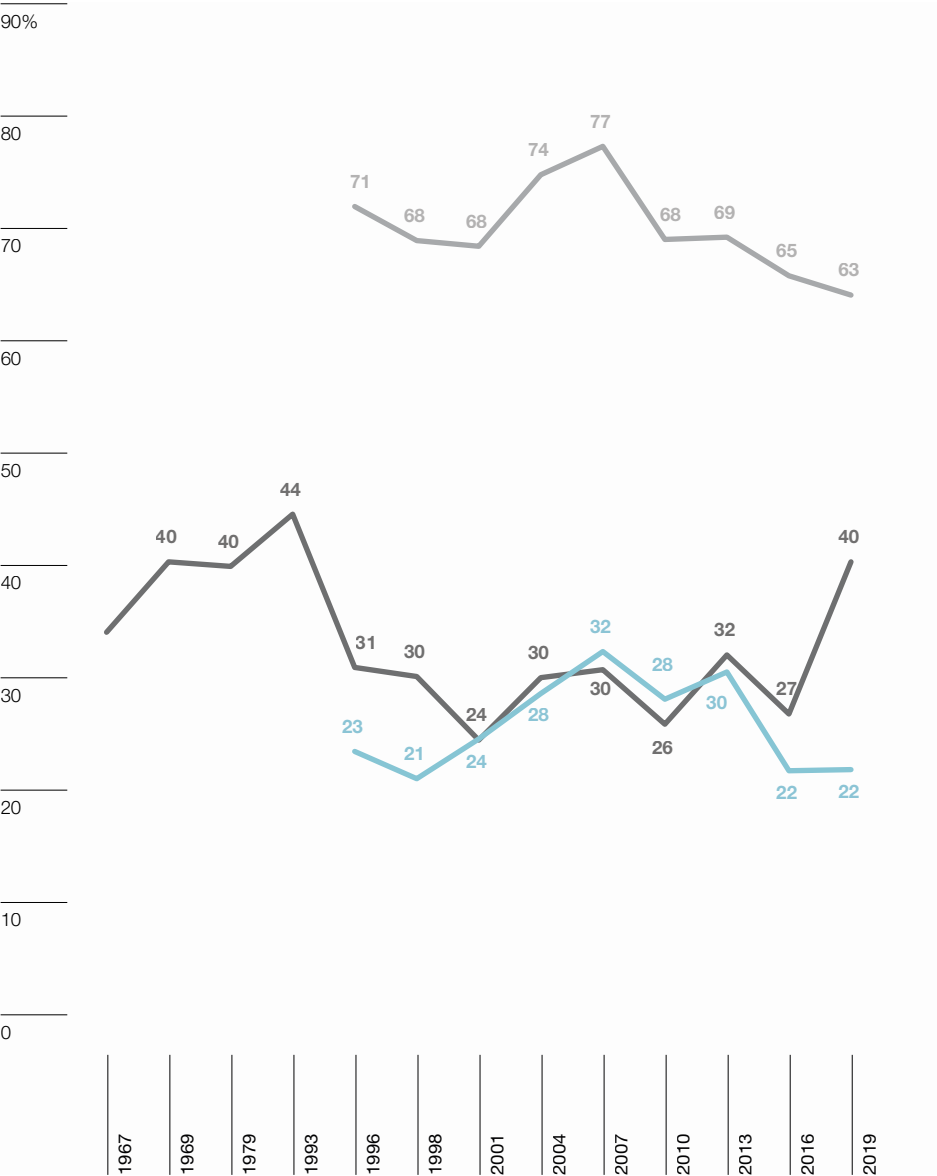
——— Greens
——— Democrat
——— One Nation

Estimates are means
The scale runs from 0 (strongly dislike party)
to 10 (strongly like party) with a designated
midpoint of 5 (neither like nor dislike).

Perceptions of the role of political parties

━━━ **Good deal of difference between parties**
━━━ **Parties care what people think**
━━━ Parties necessary to make political system work

Year	Good deal of difference	Parties care	Parties necessary
1967	35		
1969	40		
1979	40		
1993	44		
1996	31	23	71
1998	30	21	68
2001	24	24	68
2004	30	28	74
2007	30	32	77
2010	26	28	68
2013	32	30	69
2016	27	22	65
2019	40	22	63

Notes

Compulsory voting and likelihood of voting if voluntary
For supports compulsory voting, estimates are: (1967-1979) 'compulsory better'; (1987-2019) 'favour compulsory voting' and 'strongly favour compulsory voting'. For would have voted if voluntary, estimates combine 'definitely would have voted' and 'probably would have voted'.

Political participation in the past five years
For contacted official via email the response category is: (2010-2019) 'contacted a politician or government official by email'. For contacted official in person or in writing the response categories are: (2001-2007) 'contacted a politician or government official either in person, or in writing, or some other way'; (2010-2019) 'contacted a politician or government official either in person, or in writing'. For worked together with others the response category is: (2001-2019) 'worked together with people who shared the same concern'.

Political participation in the past five years (continued)
For taken part in a protest, the response categories are: (1987) 'attending lawful demonstrations'; (2001-2019) 'taken part in a protest, march or demonstration'. For signed an online petition, the response categories are: (2004-2007) 'signed an electronic petition'; (2010-2019) 'signed an online or e-petition'. Unlike 2001-2019, the 1987 estimate does not refer to the past five years only.

Perceptions of the role of political parties
For parties care what people think and parties necessary to make political system work, estimates combine '1' and '2' on the five point scale.
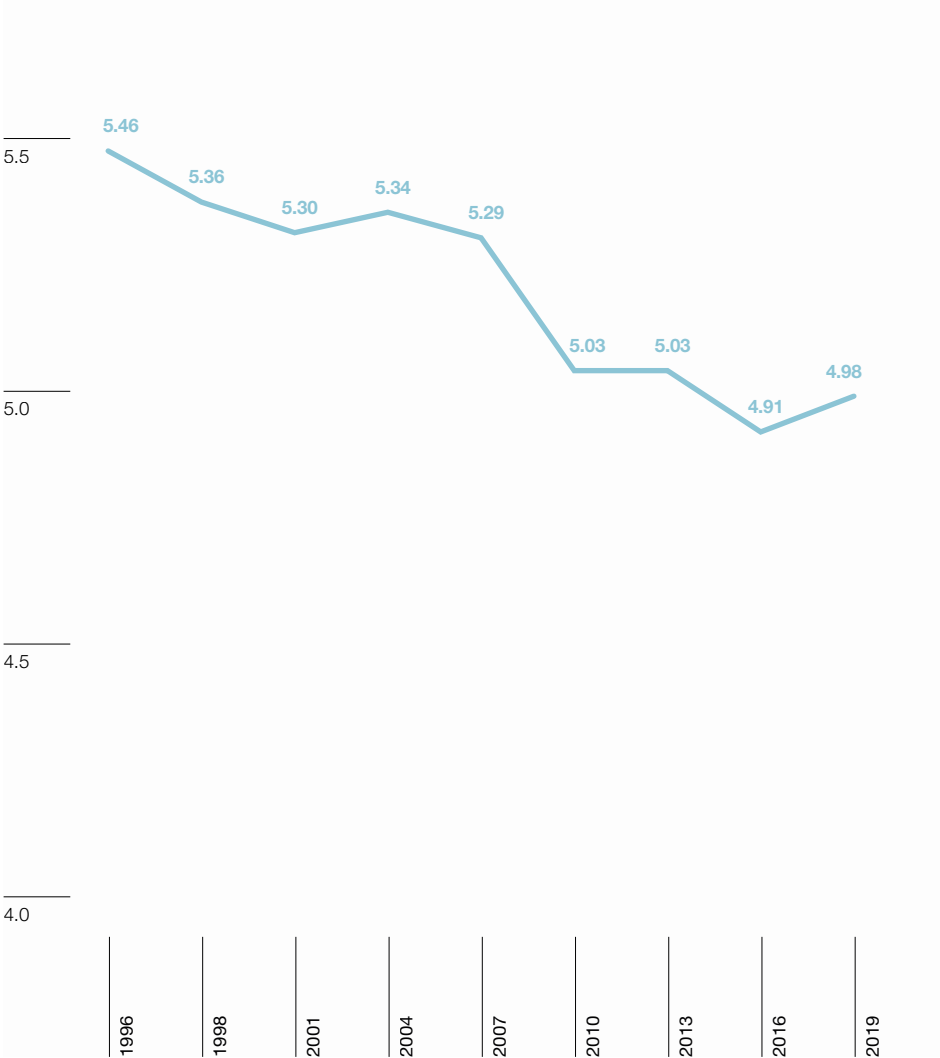
Voters' left-right position

— **Left-right position**

Estimates are means
The political left-right scale runs from
0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated
midpoint of 5 (neither left nor right).

5.5

5.46
5.36
5.30
5.34
5.29

5.0

5.03   5.03

4.98

4.91

4.5

4.0

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Where voters place the parties on the left-right scale

— **Labor**   — **Democrat**
— **Liberal**   — **One Nation**
— **Greens**   — **National**

Estimates are means
The political left-right scale runs from
0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated
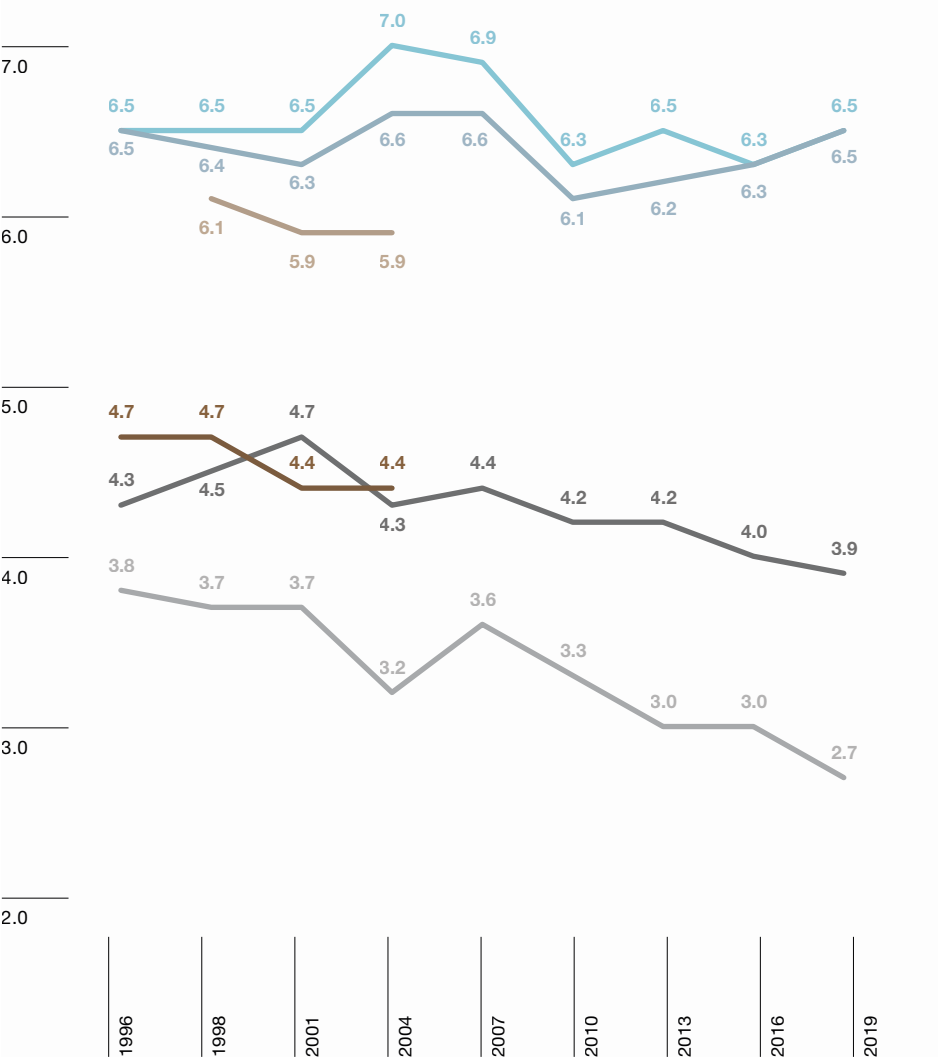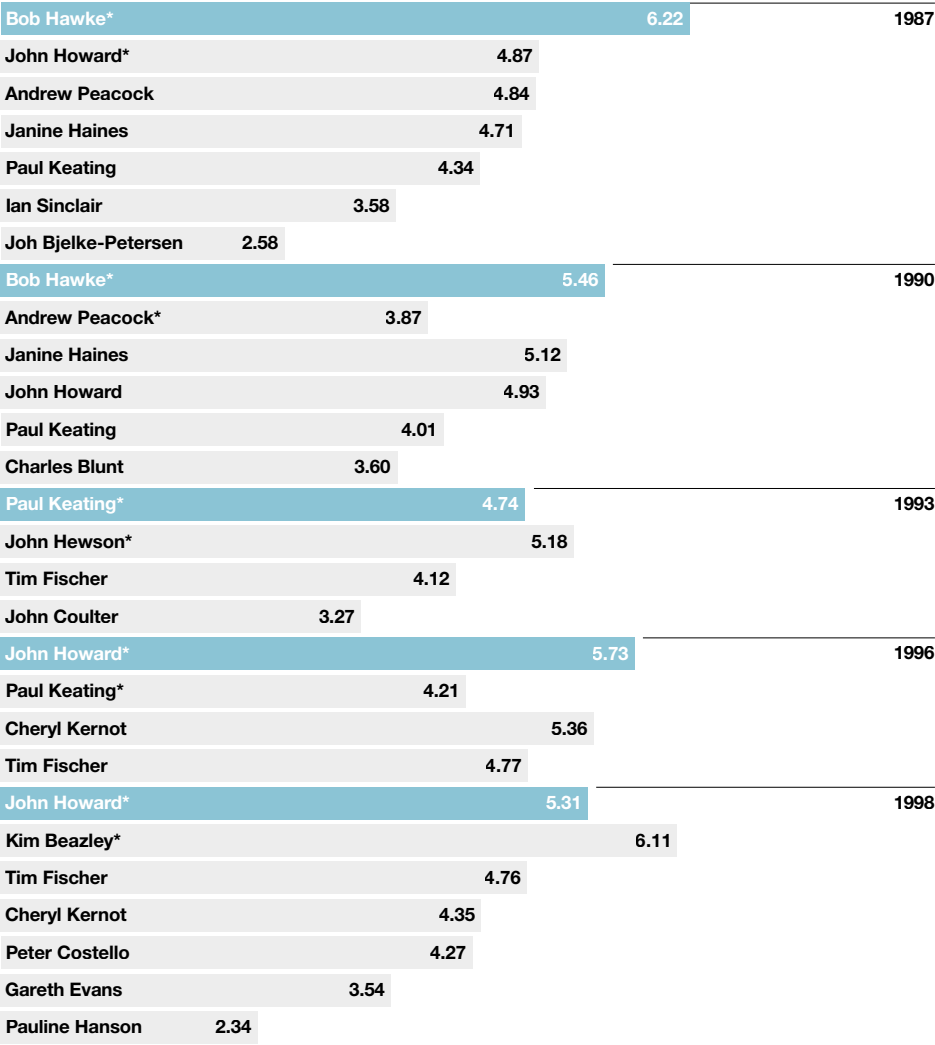midpoint of 5 (neither left nor right).

7.0

7.0
6.9
6.5 6.5 6.5   6.5   6.5
6.5 6.4   6.6 6.6 6.3   6.3 6.5
     6.3   6.2 6.3
6.1   6.1

6.0

6.1
5.9 5.9

5.0

4.7 4.7 4.7
4.3   4.4 4.4 4.4
     4.5 4.4   4.2 4.2
          4.3   4.0
                             3.9

4.0

3.8
3.7 3.7   3.6
          3.2   3.3
                    3.0 3.0
                             2.7

3.0

2.0

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

How politicians were rated

1987
Politician	Rating
Bob Hawke*	6.22
John Howard*	4.87
Andrew Peacock	4.84
Janine Haines	4.71
Paul Keating	4.34
Ian Sinclair	3.58
Joh Bjelke-Petersen	2.58

1990
Politician	Rating
Bob Hawke*	5.46
Andrew Peacock*	3.87
Janine Haines	5.12
John Howard	4.93
Paul Keating	4.01
Charles Blunt	3.60

1993
Politician	Rating
Paul Keating*	4.74
John Hewson*	5.18
Tim Fischer	4.12
John Coulter	3.27

1996
Politician	Rating
John Howard*	5.73
Paul Keating*	4.21
Cheryl Kernot	5.36
Tim Fischer	4.77

1998
Politician	Rating
John Howard*	5.31
Kim Beazley*	6.11
Tim Fischer	4.76
Cheryl Kernot	4.35
Peter Costello	4.27
Gareth Evans	3.54
Pauline Hanson	2.34

2001
Politician	Rating
John Howard*	5.56
Kim Beazley*	5.73
Natasha Stott-Despoja	5.01
John Anderson	4.92
Bob Brown	4.37
Peter Costello	4.29
Simon Crean	4.01
Pauline Hanson	2.56

2004
Politician	Rating
John Howard*	5.71
Mark Latham*	5.04
John Anderson	5.22
Peter Costello	4.72
Bob Brown	4.01
Andrew Bartlett	3.96
Simon Crean	3.79
Pauline Hanson	3.19

2007
Politician	Rating
Kevin Rudd*	6.31
John Howard*	5.14
Julia Gillard	5.19
Mark Vaile	4.61
Bob Brown	4.48
Peter Costello	4.13

2010
Politician	Rating
Julia Gillard*	4.89
Tony Abbott*	4.26
Kevin Rudd	5.01
Warren Truss	4.12
Bob Brown	4.11
Wayne Swan	4.03

How politicians were rated (continued)

Tony Abbott*	4.29	**2013**
Kevin Rudd*	4.07	
Warren Truss	4.34	
Julia Gillard	4.04	
Christine Milne	3.81	
Malcolm Turnbull*	4.94	**2016**
Bill Shorten*	4.22	
Barnaby Joyce	4.13	
Richard Di Natale	4.12	
Tony Abbott	3.60	
Scott Morrison*	5.14	**2019**
Bill Shorten*	3.97	
Malcolm Turnbull	4.76	
Michael McCormack	4.38	
Richard Di Natale	4.02	
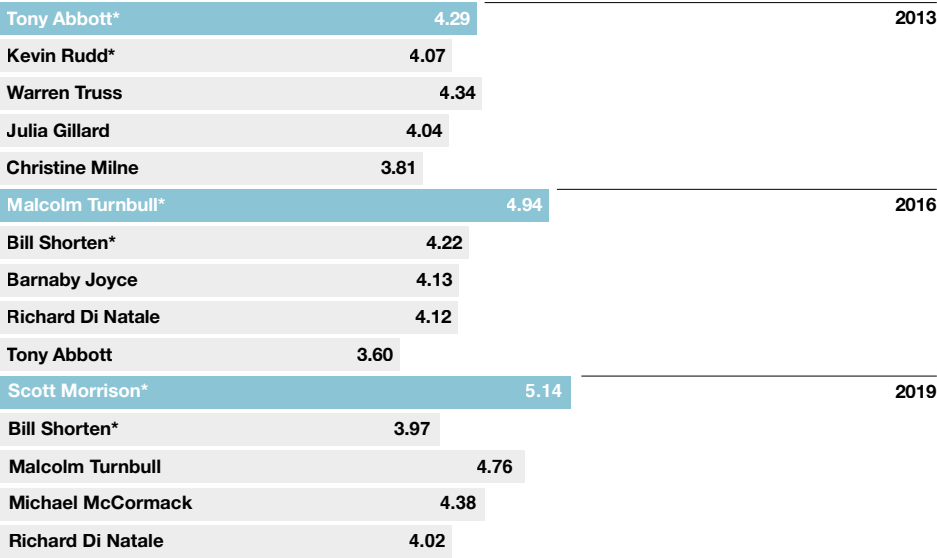
Leader characteristics

● Paul Keating   ● John Hewson

Intelligent
86
86

Knowledgeable
81
77

Sensible
63
64

Strong leadership
79
52

Compassionate
38
49

Inspiring
43
37

Moral
54
66

Decent
59
72

Reliable
44
55

Dependable
41
52
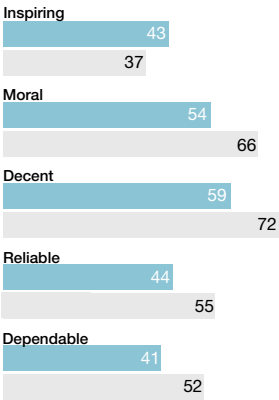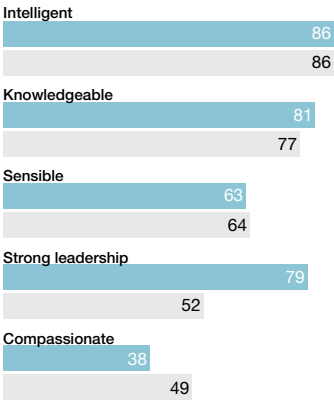
● John Howard   ● Paul Keating
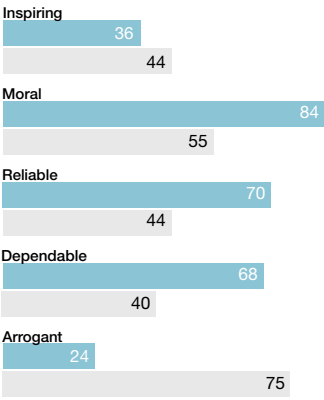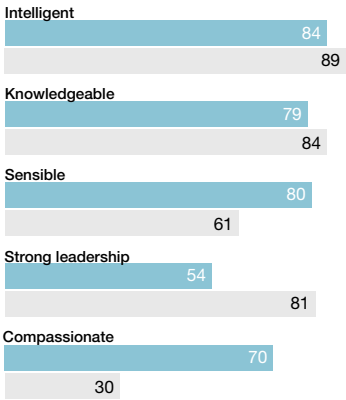
Intelligent
84
89

Knowledgeable
79
84

Sensible
80
61

Strong leadership
54
81

Compassionate
70
30

Inspiring
36
44

Moral
84
55

Reliable
70
44

Dependable
68
40

Arrogant
24
75

Estimates are percentages
Estimates combine the percentage who responded that the characteristic described the leader extremely well or quite well.
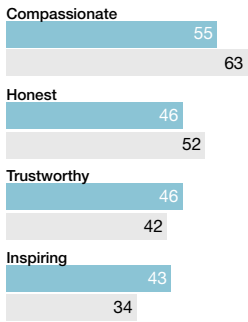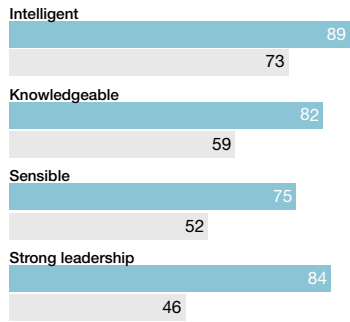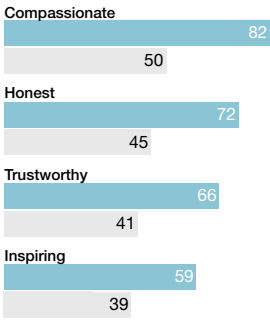
● election winners

● John Howard   ● Kim Beazley

Intelligent
81
85

Knowledgeable
74
79

Sensible
69
73

Strong leadership
50
64

Compassionate
54
75

Honest
59
66

Inspiring
26
45

Moral
75
79

Reliable
54
64

Dependable
52
60

● John Howard   ● Kim Beazley

Intelligent
82
83

Knowledgeable
78
76

Sensible
74
67

Strong leadership
72
45

Compassionate
54
76

Honest
55
63

Trustworthy
50
56

Inspiring
35
36

Leader characteristics
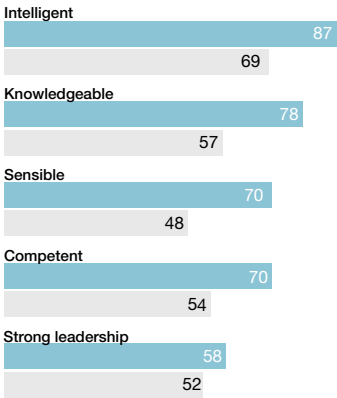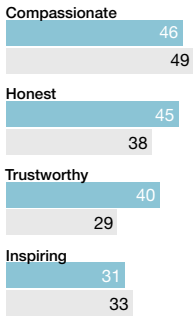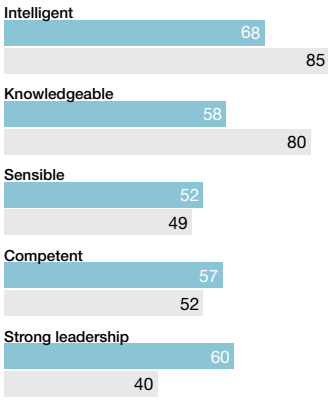
Estimates are percentages
Estimates combine the percentage who responded that the characteristic described the leader extremely well or quite well.

● election winners

2004

● **John Howard**   ○ **Mark Latham**

Intelligent
89
73

Knowledgeable
82
59

Sensible
75
52

Strong leadership
84
46

Compassionate
55
63

Honest
46
52

Trustworthy
46
42

Inspiring
43
34

2007

● **Kevin Rudd**   ○ **John Howard**

Intelligent
92
90

Knowledgeable
82
81

Sensible
82
73

Competent
77
80

Strong leadership
76
81

Compassionate
82
50

Honest
72
45

Trustworthy
66
41

Inspiring
59
39

2010
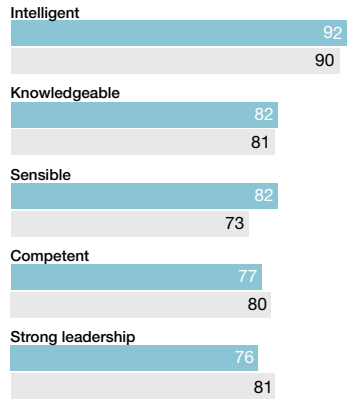
● **Julia Gillard**   ○ **Tony Abbott**
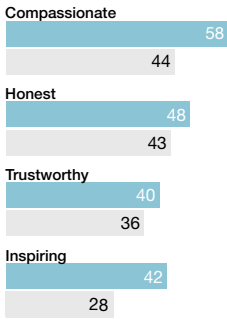
Intelligent
87
69

Knowledgeable
78
57

Sensible
70
48

Competent
70
54

Strong leadership
58
52

Compassionate
58
44

Honest
48
43

Trustworthy
40
36

Inspiring
42
28

2013

● **Tony Abbott**   ○ **Kevin Rudd**

Intelligent
68
85

Knowledgeable
58
80

Sensible
52
49

Competent
57
52

Strong leadership
60
40

Compassionate
46
49

Honest
45
38

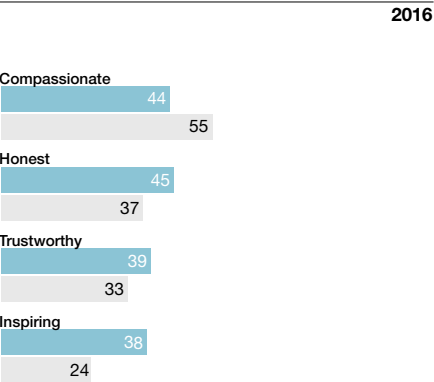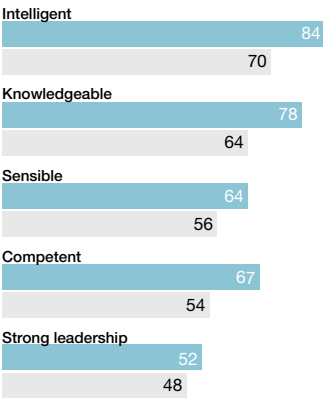Trustworthy
40
29

Inspiring
31
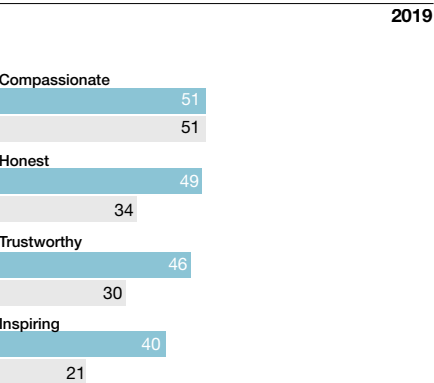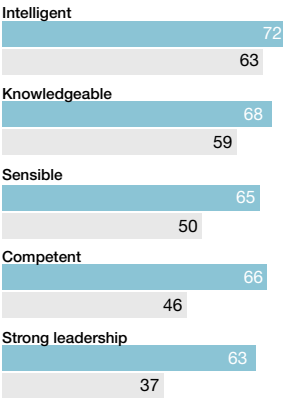33

Leader characteristics

Estimates are percentages
Estimates combine the percentage who responded that the characteristic described the leader extremely well or quite well.

● election winners

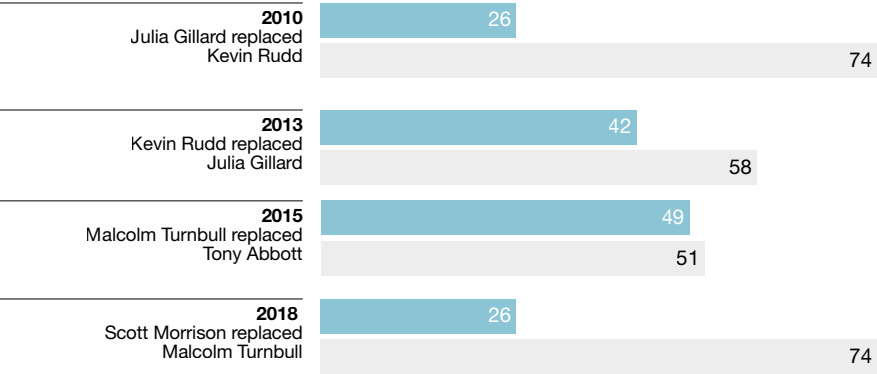2016

● Malcolm Turnbull ○ Bill Shorten

Intelligent
84
70

Knowledgeable
78
64

Sensible
64
56

Competent
67
54

Strong leadership
52
48

Compassionate
44
55

Honest
45
37

Trustworthy
39
33

Inspiring
38
24

2019

● Scott Morrison ○ Bill Shorten

Intelligent
72
63

Knowledgeable
68
59

Sensible
65
50

Competent
66
46

Strong leadership
63
37

Compassionate
51
51

Honest
49
34

Trustworthy
46
30

Inspiring
40
21

Attitudes towards the leadership changes

Estimates are percentages
Question asked whether respondents approved or disapproved of the way the party (Labor, 2010 & 2013; Liberal 2016 & 2019) handled the respective leadership changes. For approve, estimates combine 'strongly approve' and 'approve'. For disapprove, estimates combine 'disapprove' and 'strongly disapprove'.
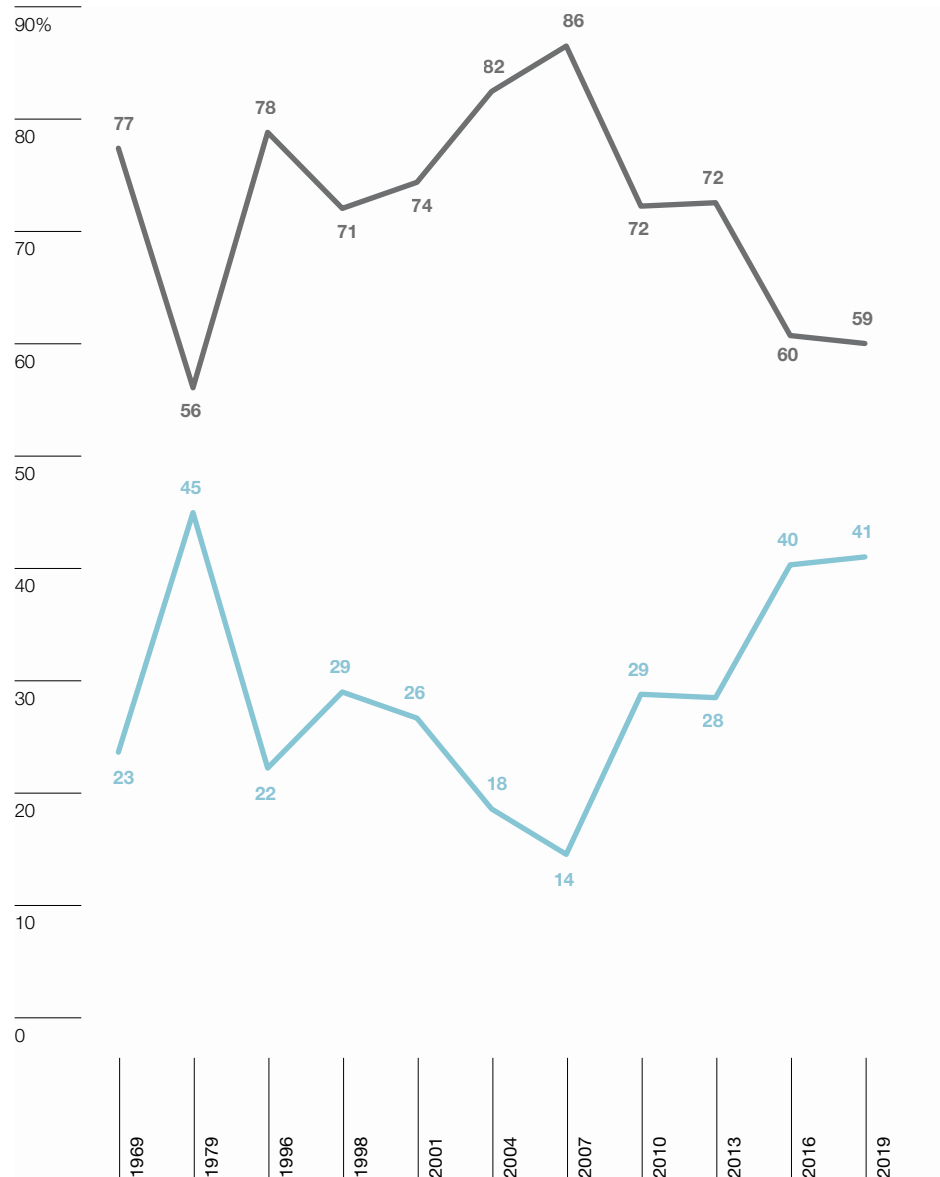
● Approve ○ Disapprove

2010
Julia Gillard replaced
Kevin Rudd
26
74

2013
Kevin Rudd replaced
Julia Gillard
42
58

2015
Malcolm Turnbull replaced
Tony Abbott
49
51

2018
Scott Morrison replaced
Malcolm Turnbull
26
74

Satisfaction with democracy

—— **Satisfied with democracy**
—— **Not satisfied with democracy**

90%
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

77
56
78
71
74
82
86
72
72
60
59

23
45
22
29
26
18
14
29
28
40
41

1969
1979
1996
1998
2001
2004
2007
2010
2013
2016
2019

Trust in government

—— **People in government look after themselves**
—— **People in government can be trusted**

80%
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

51
49
71
66
52
48
67
68
61
57
63
66
74
75

29
34
34
32
40
43
37
34
26
25

1969
1979
1993
1996
1998
2001
2004
2007
2010
2013
2016
2019
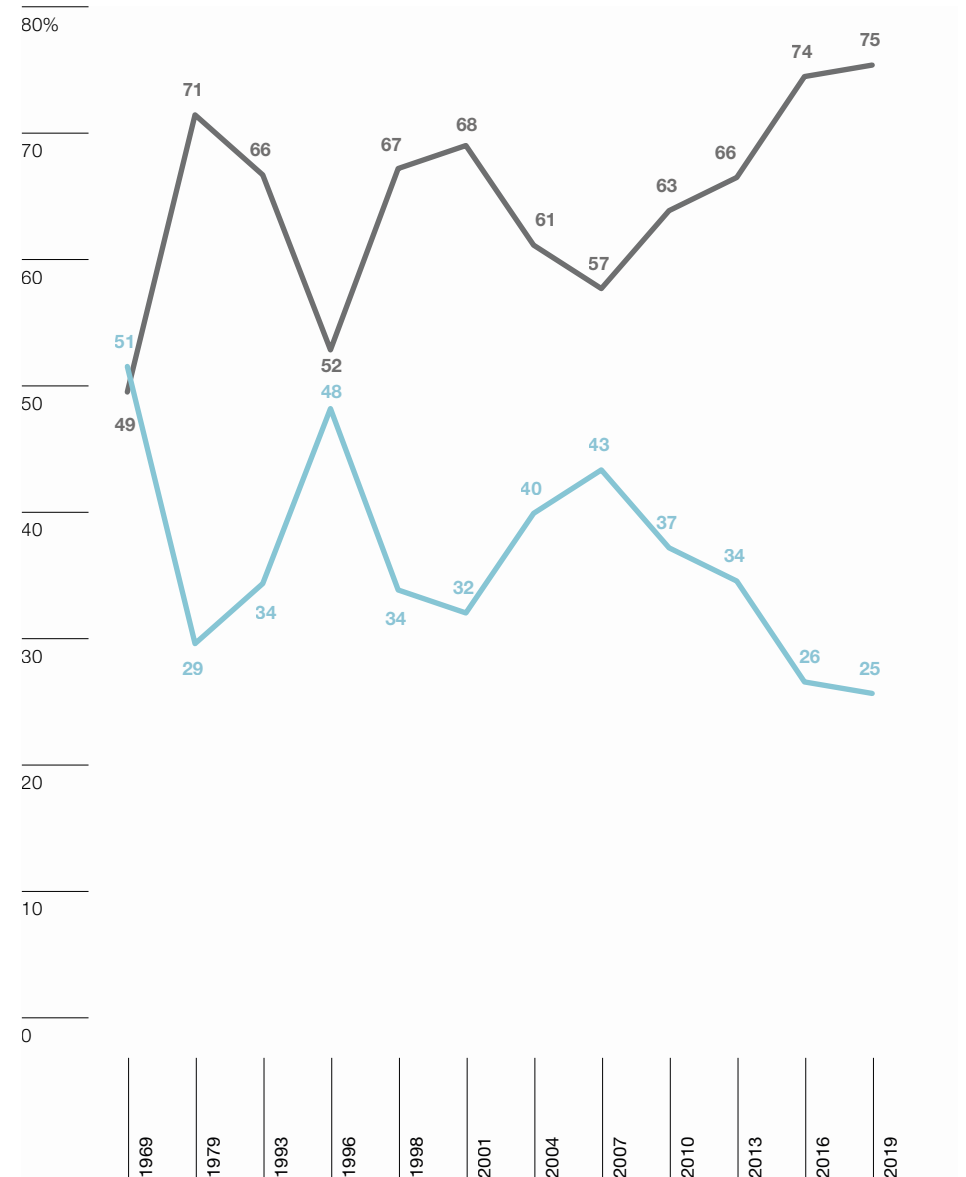
Who the government is run for

———— Few big interests
———— All the people

|	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
Few big interests	53	48	42	38	44	47	56	56
All the people	12	17	21	20	12	16	12	12
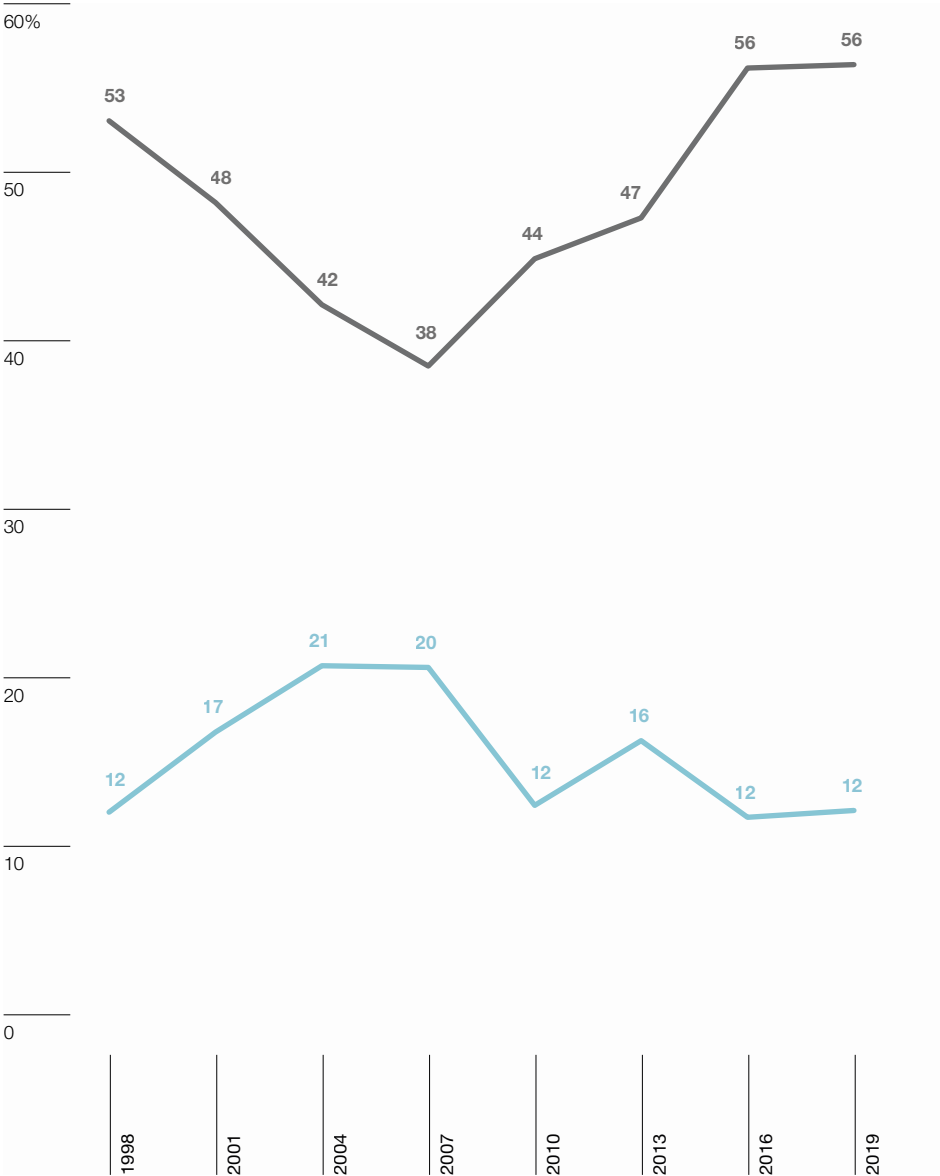
Political efficacy and the use of the vote

———— Who people vote for can make a big difference
———— Who people vote for won't make any difference

|	1996	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
Who people vote for can make a big difference	70	64	57	66	68	64	64	58	63
Who people vote for won't make any difference	13	16	21	18	10	14	17	20	19
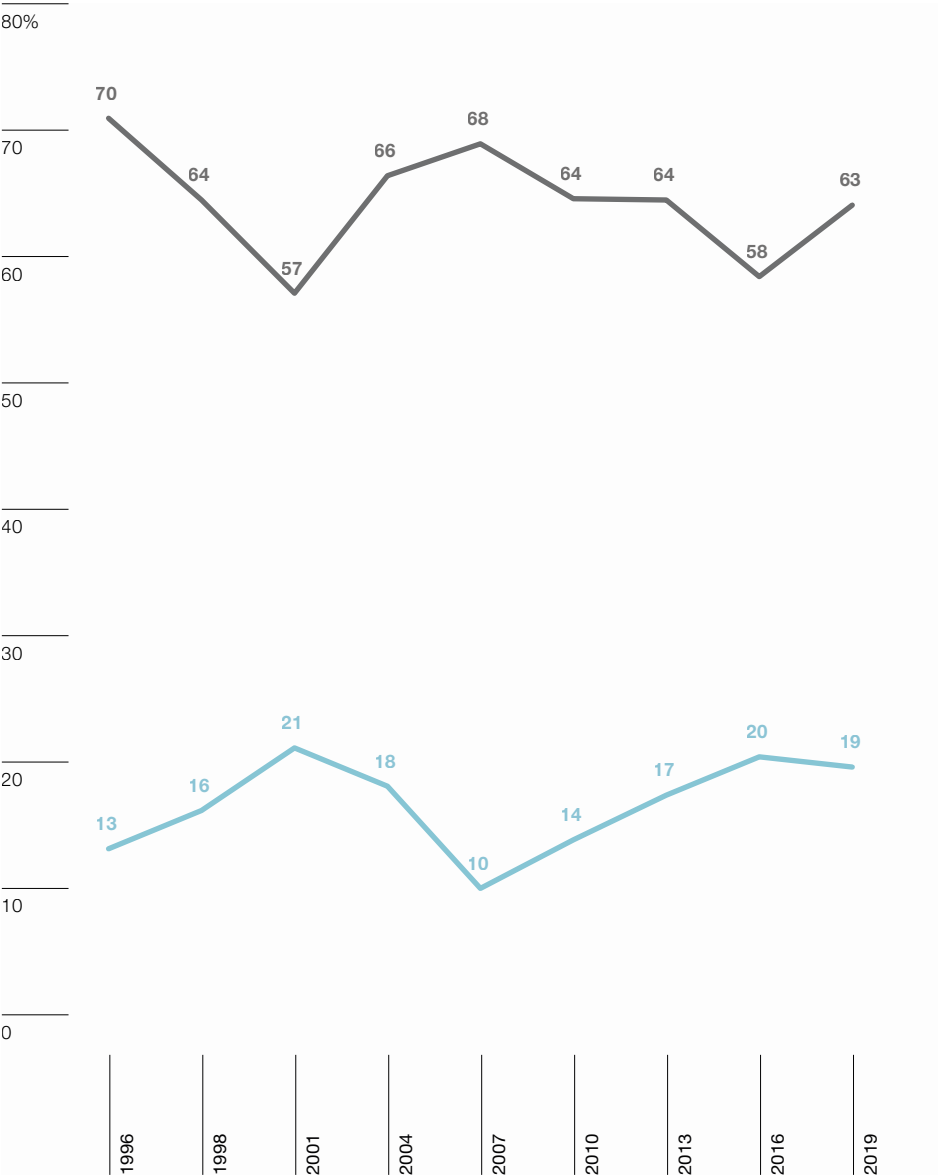
Makes a difference who is in power

It makes a big difference who is in power

It doesn't make any difference who is in power
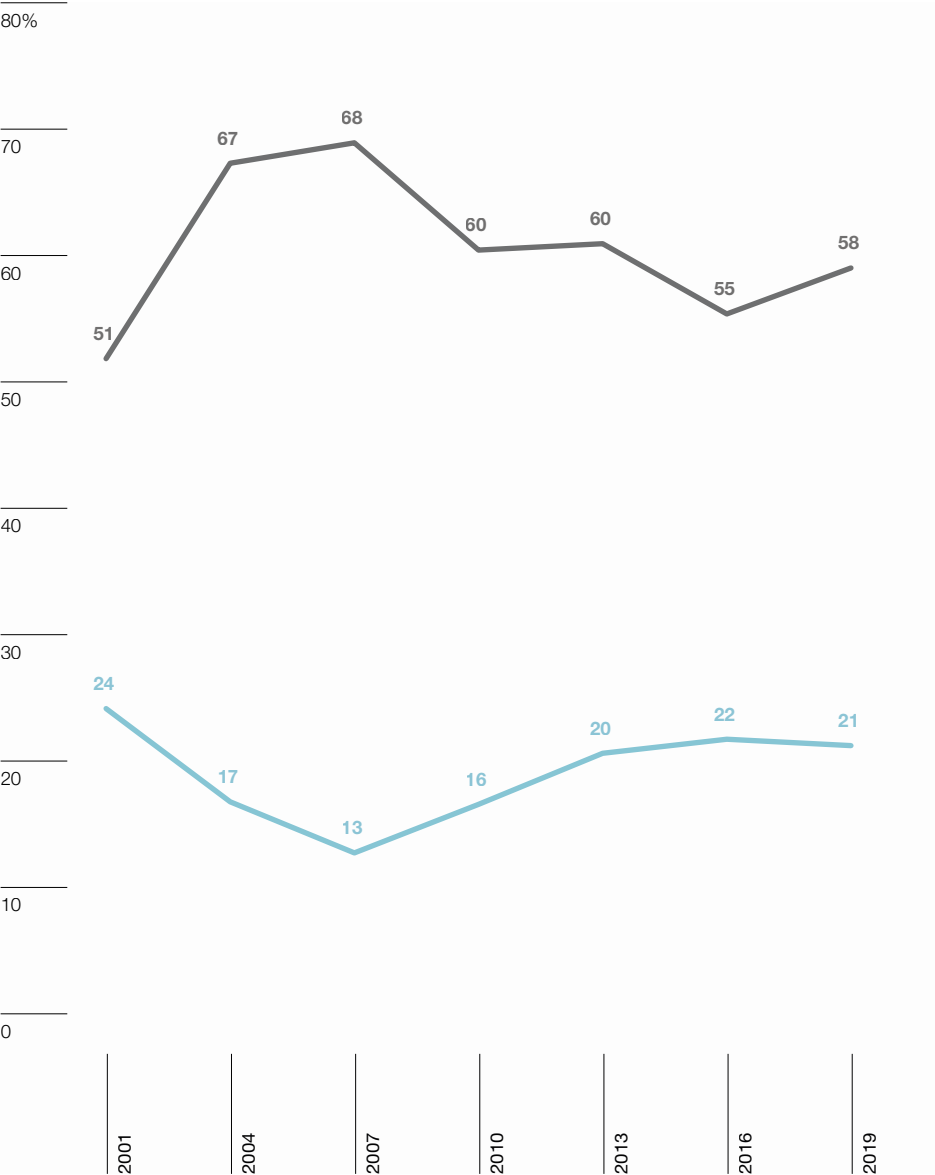
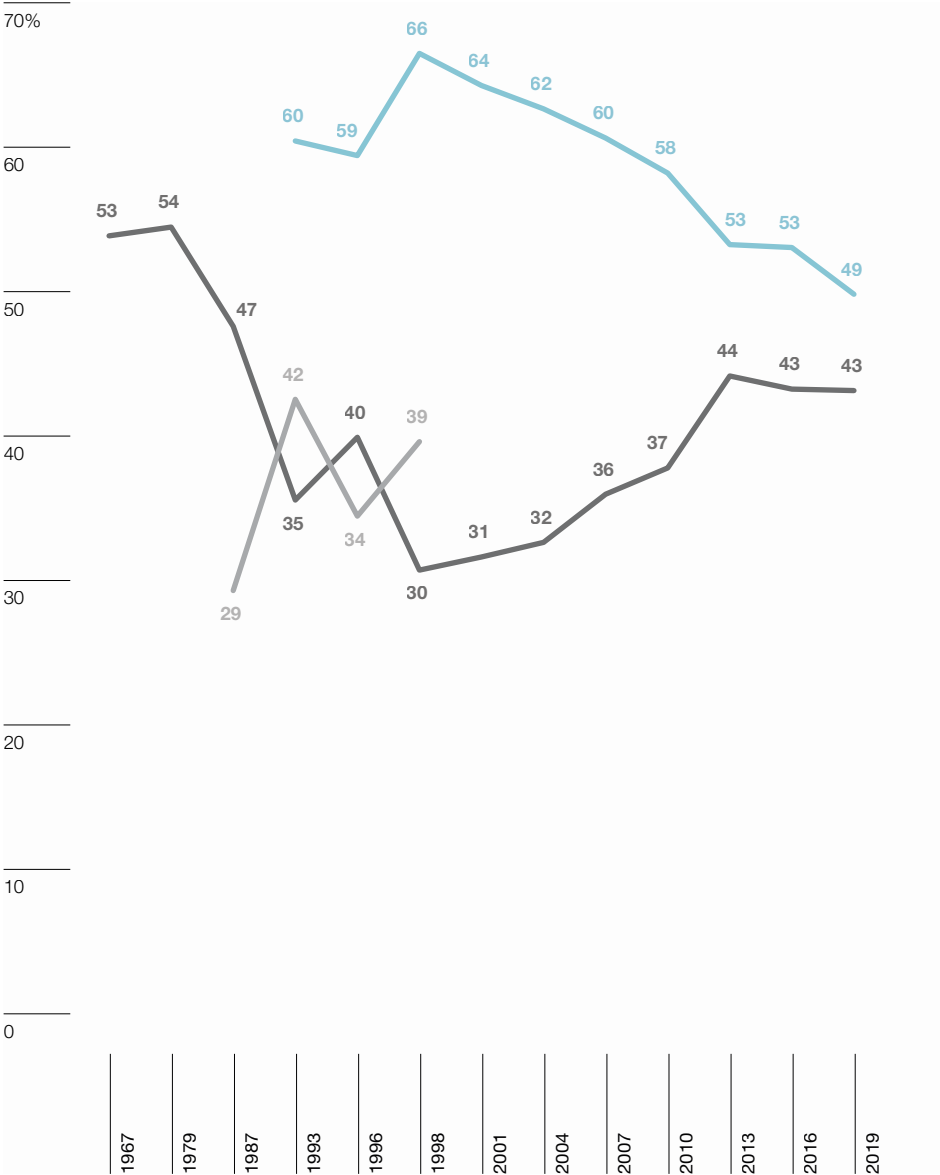## Politicians know what ordinary people think

Politicians know what ordinary people think
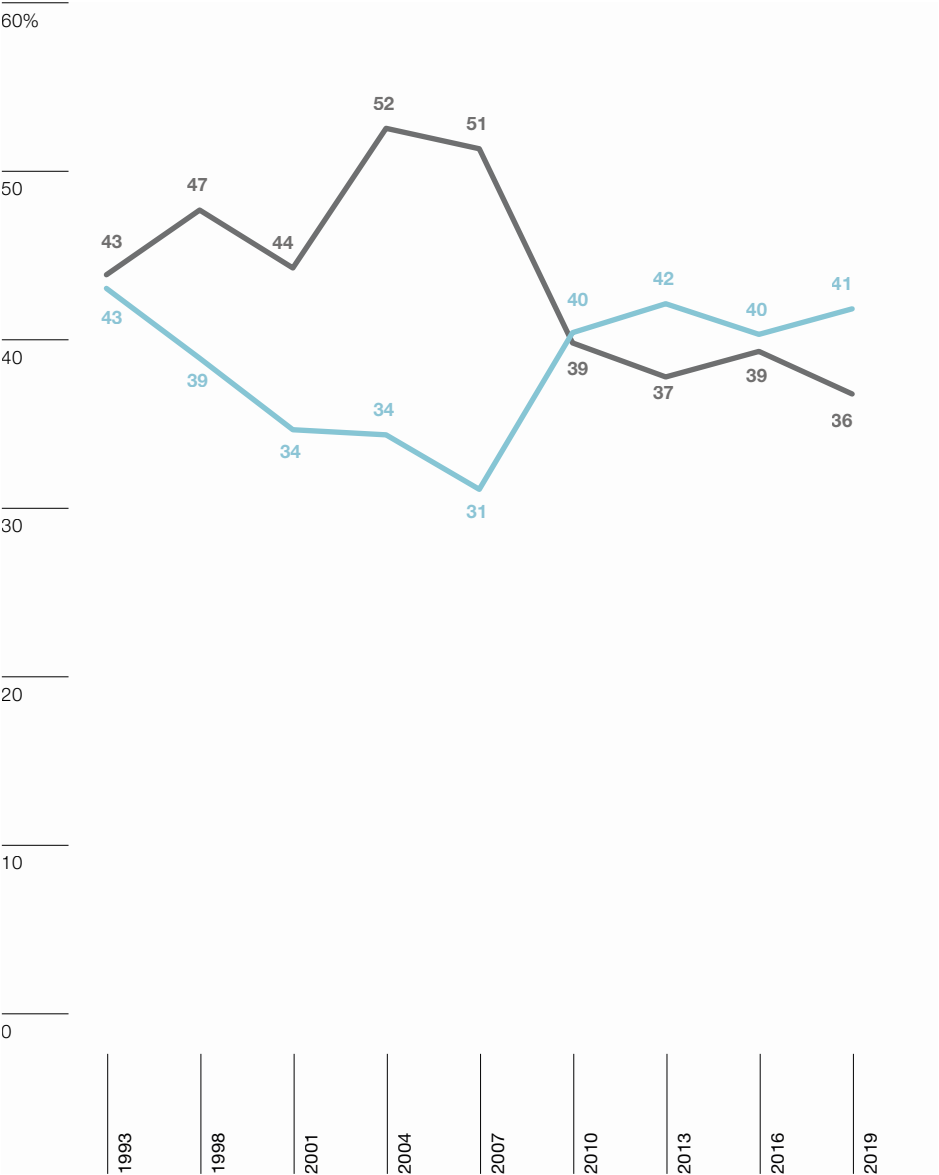
Politicians don't know what ordinary people think
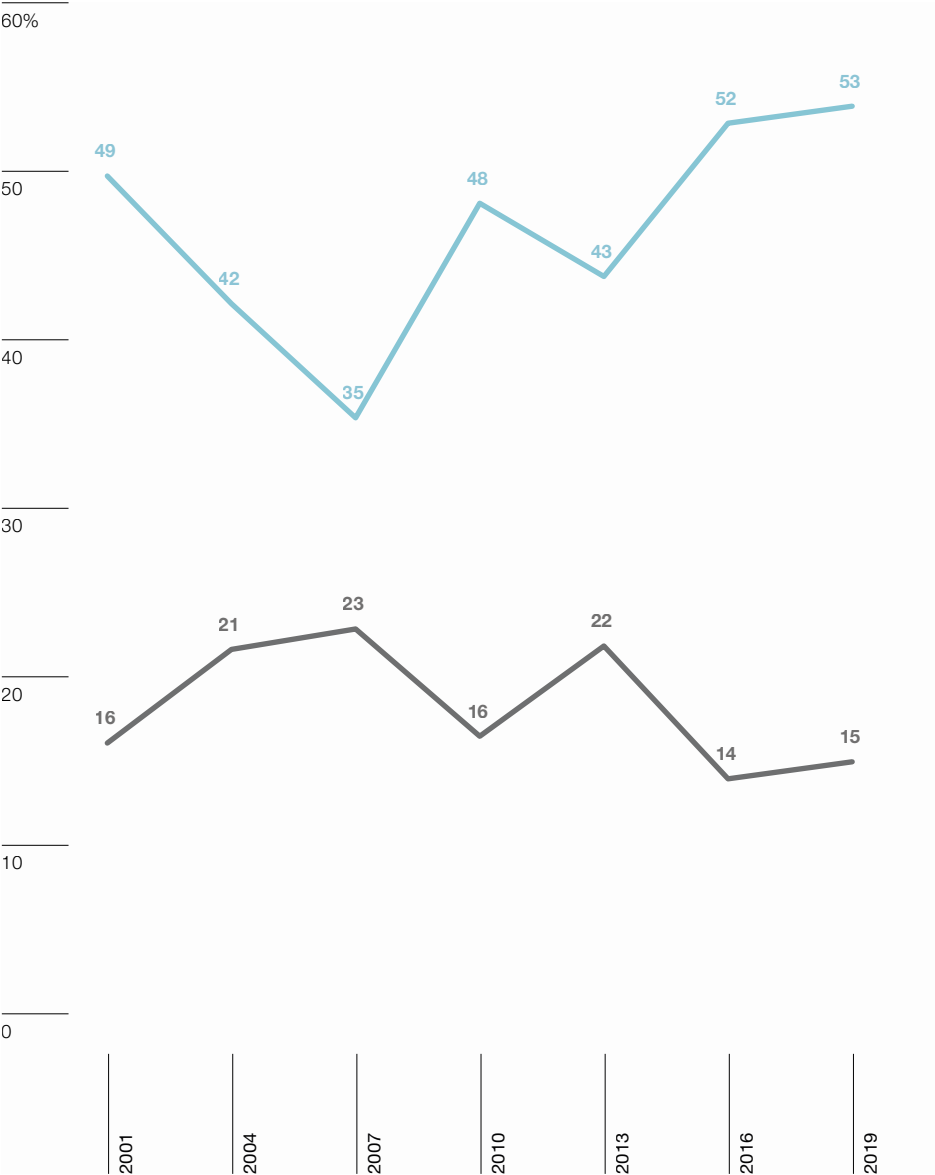
The Queen, the flag and republicanism

- **━━━ Queen important**
- **━━━ Favour republic**
- **━━━ Favour flag change**

Queen important: 53 (1967), 54 (1979), 47 (1987), 35 (1993), 40 (1996), 30 (1998), 31 (2001), 32 (2004), 36 (2007), 37 (2010), 44 (2013), 43 (2016), 43 (2019)

Favour republic: 60 (1993), 59 (1996), 66 (1998), 64 (2001), 62 (2004), 60 (2007), 58 (2010), 53 (2013), 53 (2016), 49 (2019)

Favour flag change: 29 (1987), 42 (1993), 34 (1996), 39 (1998)

Government control of parliament

- **━━━ Better when government does not control Senate**
- **━━━ Better when government controls both houses**

Better when government does not control Senate: 43 (1993), 47 (1998), 44 (2001), 52 (2004), 51 (2007), 40 (2010), 37 (2013), 39 (2016), 36 (2019)

Better when government controls both houses: 43 (1993), 39 (1998), 34 (2001), 34 (2004), 31 (2007), 39 (2010), 42 (2013), 40 (2016), 41 (2019)

Notes

Satisfaction with democracy
For satisfied with democracy, the response categories are: (1969-1979, 1998-2019) 'very satisfied' and 'fairly satisfied' combined; (1996) 'satisfied' and 'fairly satisfied' combined. For not satisfied with democracy, the response categories are: (1969-1979) 'not satisfied'; (1996-2019) 'not very satisfied' and 'not at all satisfied' combined.

Trust in government
For people in government look after themselves, the response categories are: (1969, 1979) look after self; (1993-2019) 'usually look after themselves' and 'sometimes look after themselves' combined. For people in government can be trusted, the response categories are: (1969, 1979) 'do the right thing'; (1993-2019) 'sometimes can be trusted to do the right thing' and 'usually can be trusted to do the right thing' combined.

Who the government is run for
For 'few big interests', estimates combine 'entirely run for the big interests' and 'mostly run for the big interests'. For 'all the people', estimates combine 'mostly run for the benefit of all' and 'entirely run for the benefit of all'.

Political efficacy and the use of the vote
For who people vote for can make a big difference, estimates combine codes '1' and '2'. For who people vote for won't make any difference, estimates combine codes '4' and '5'.

Makes a difference who is in power
For it makes a big difference who is in power, estimates combine codes '1' and '2'. For it doesn't make any difference who is in power, estimates combine codes '4' and '5'.

Politicians know what ordinary people think
For politicians know what ordinary people think, estimates combine codes '1' and '2'. For politicians don't know what ordinary people think estimates combine codes '4' and '5'.

The Queen, the flag and republicanism
For Queen important, estimates combine 'very important' and 'fairly important'. For favour republic, estimates combine (1993–2019) 'strongly favour becoming republic' and 'favour becoming republic'. For favour flag change, estimates combine 'strongly for flag change' and 'for flag change'.

Government control of parliament
The question was not asked in 1996.

The power of trade unions and big business

━━━ **Unions have too much power**
━━━ **Big business has too much power**

Data points (Unions have too much power): 52, 60, 82, 71, 69, 62, 62, 53, 48, 41, 37, 49, 45, 47, 42

Data points (Big business has too much power): 60, 62, 68, 51, 65, 62, 65, 71, 72, 72, 69, 72, 66, 74, 76
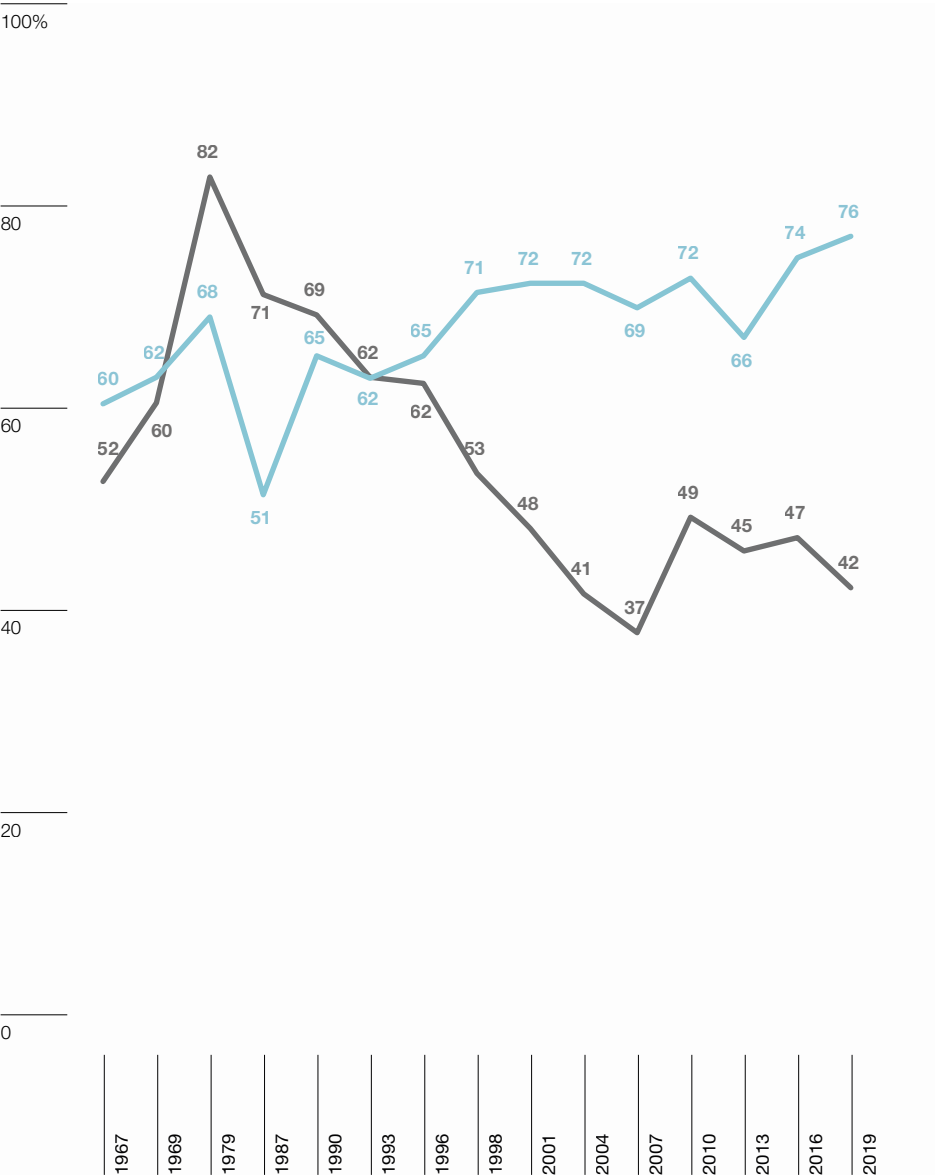
Class self-image

━━━ Upper
━━━ Middle
━━━ Working

Data points (Middle): 57, 49, 57, 51, 48, 46, 50, 50, 54, 53, 57, 57, 54, 50

Data points (Working): 43, 50, 41, 51, 48, 48, 49, 44, 44, 42, 42, 44, 48

Data points (Upper): 1, 2, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2

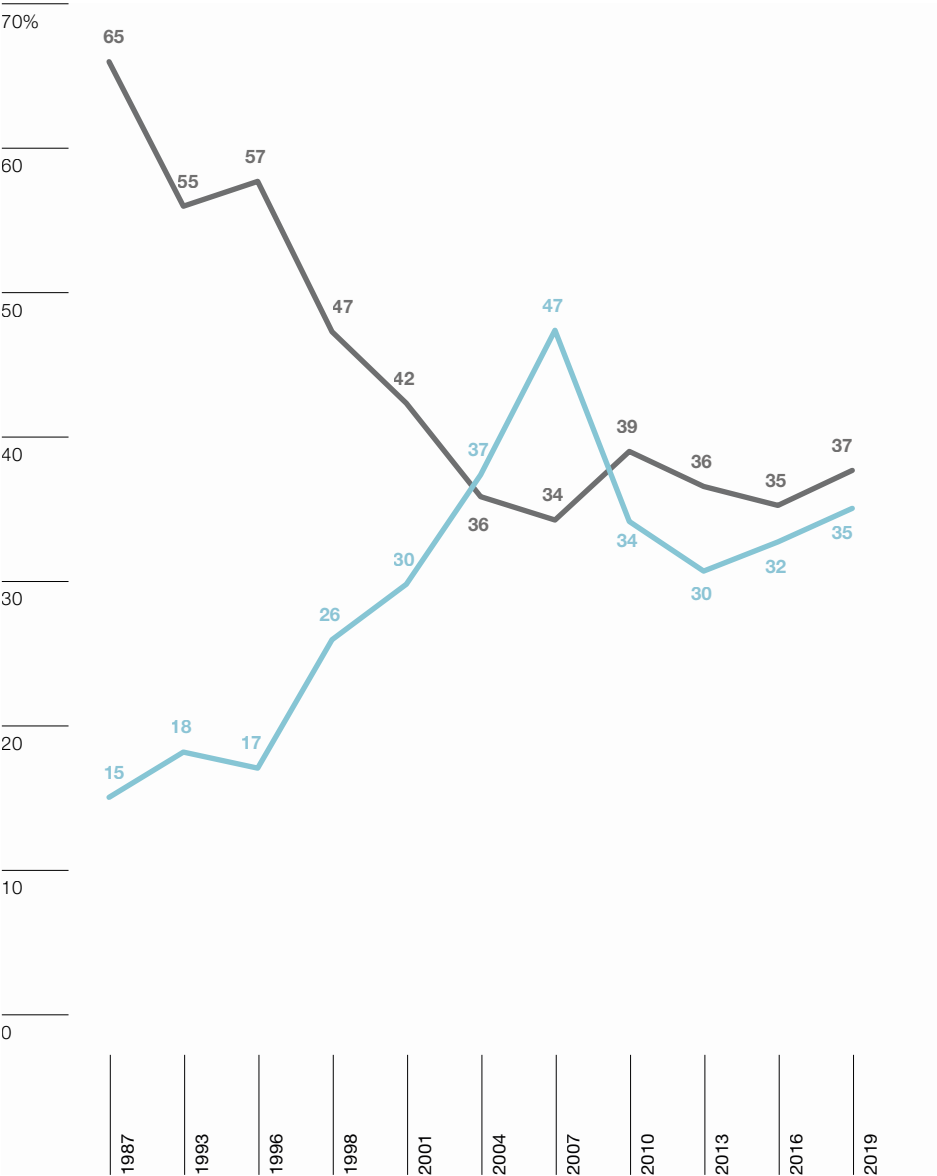Years: 1967, 1969, 1979, 1987, 1990, 1993, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019
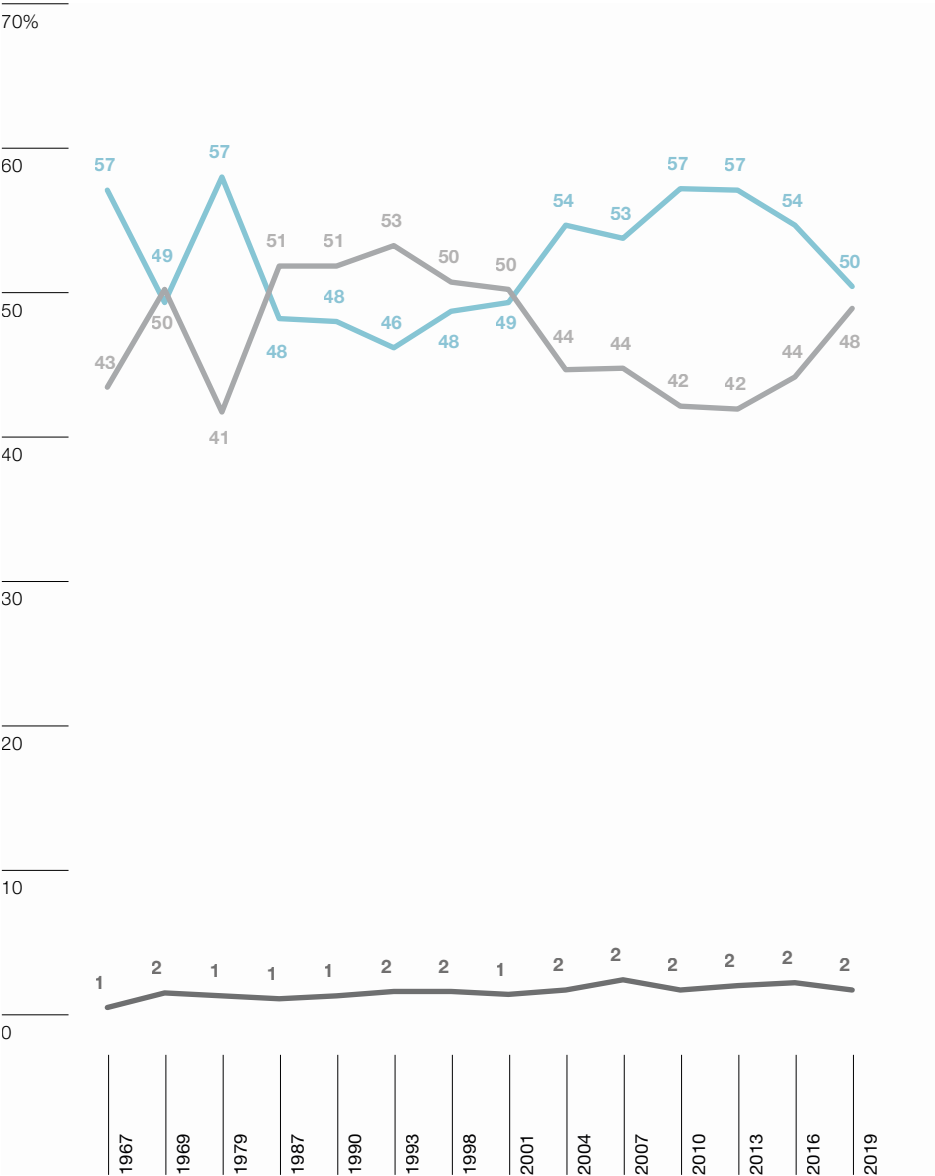
Trade union membership and support for industrial action

— **Belong to union**
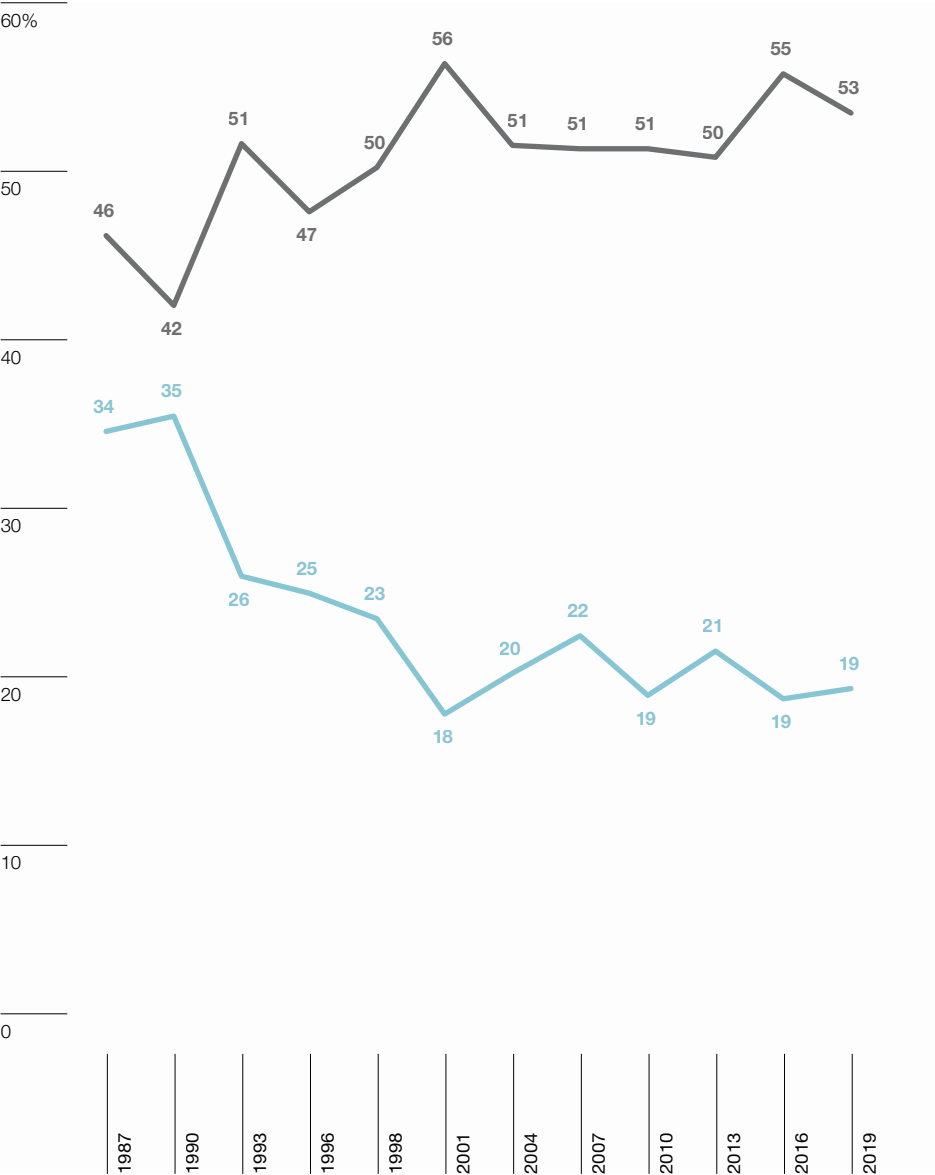— **Stricter laws for unions**
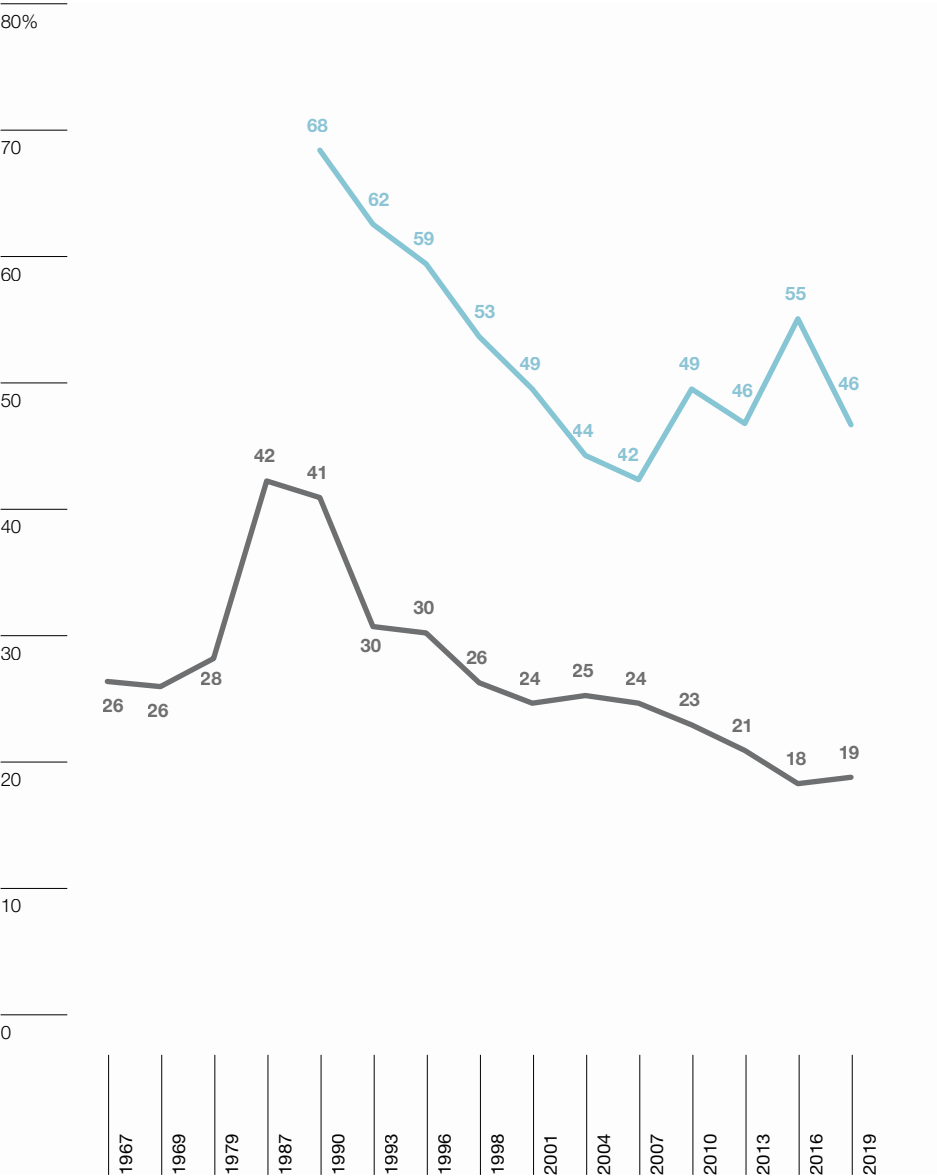
Government spending: less tax or more social services

— **Favours less tax**
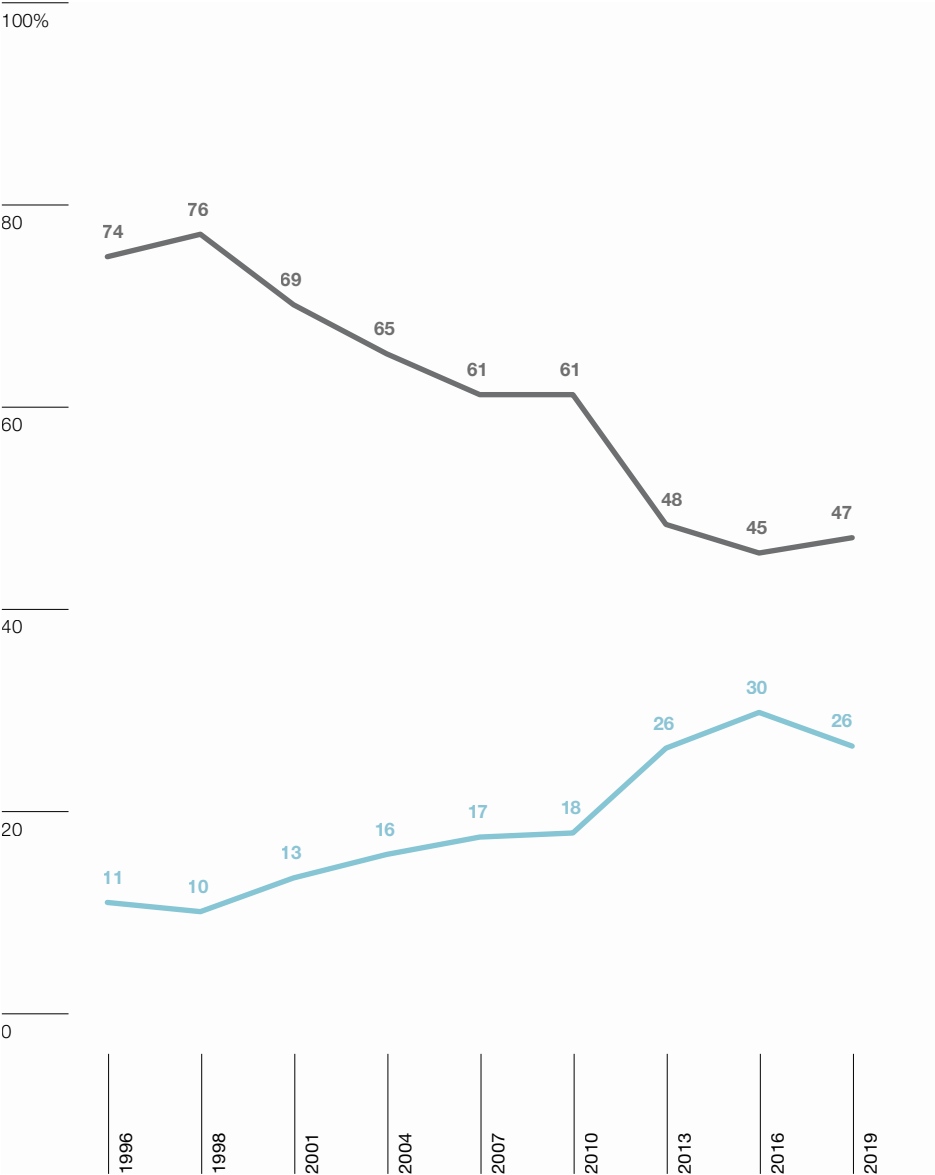— **Favours spending more on social services**

Redistribution of income and wealth

—— **Income and wealth should be redistributed**
—— **Income and wealth should not be redistributed**

60%

56

55
51   51   51   51   53
50   50
51
47
46
50
42

34   35

30
26   25
23
22   21
20   20
19   18   19   19   19

10

0

1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

High tax makes people unwilling to work

—— **Agree**
—— **Disagree**

100%

80   76
74
69
65
61   61

60

48   47
45

40

30
26   26
26
18
20   16   17
13
11   10

0

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Notes

The power of trade unions and big business
For unions have too much power, estimates for 1990–2019 combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. For big business has too much power, estimates for 1990–2019 combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'.

Class self-image
From 2010–2019 'None' was included in the list of responses and percentages adjusted accordingly.

Trade union membership and support for industrial action
Estimates for stricter laws for unions combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'.

Government spending: less tax or more social services
For favours less tax, estimates combine 'strongly favour reducing taxes' and 'mildly favour reducing taxes'. For favours spending more on social services, estimates combine 'mildly favour spending more on social services' and 'strongly favour spending more on social services'.

Redistribution of income and wealth
For income and wealth should be redistributed, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. For income and wealth should not be redistributed, estimates combine 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.

High tax makes people unwilling to work
'Agree' combines 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. 'Disagree' combines 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree'.

Attitudes towards sex and nudity in films and magazines

- **Gone too far**
- **Not gone far enough**
- **About right**


```
70%
73?
59
54        56
49              54
46   50   48
44              46
        45        43   43
38   37   39        41        48   53   57
33              40        46        48
                              43   37
                                   32

8    8    8    8    7    9    10   11   11   9    10   12

1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
```
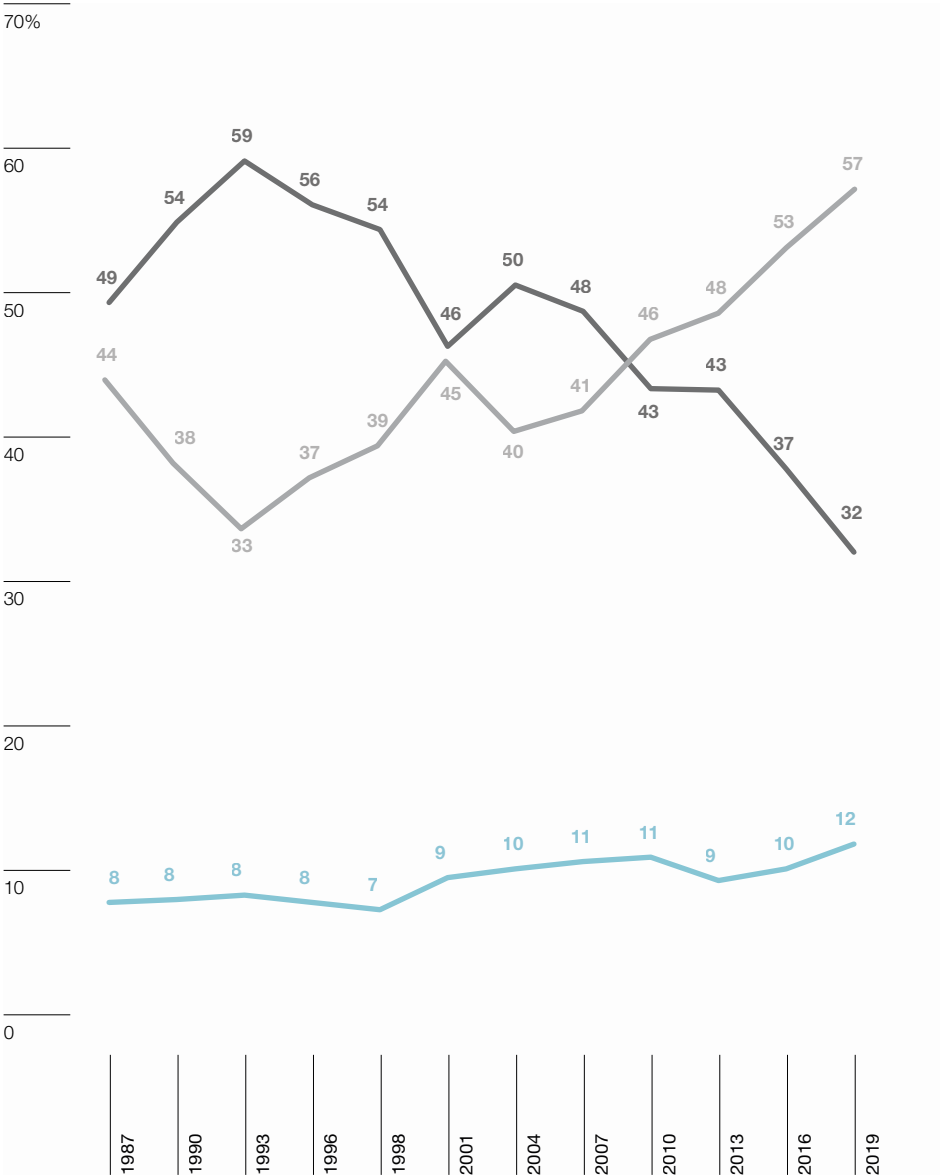
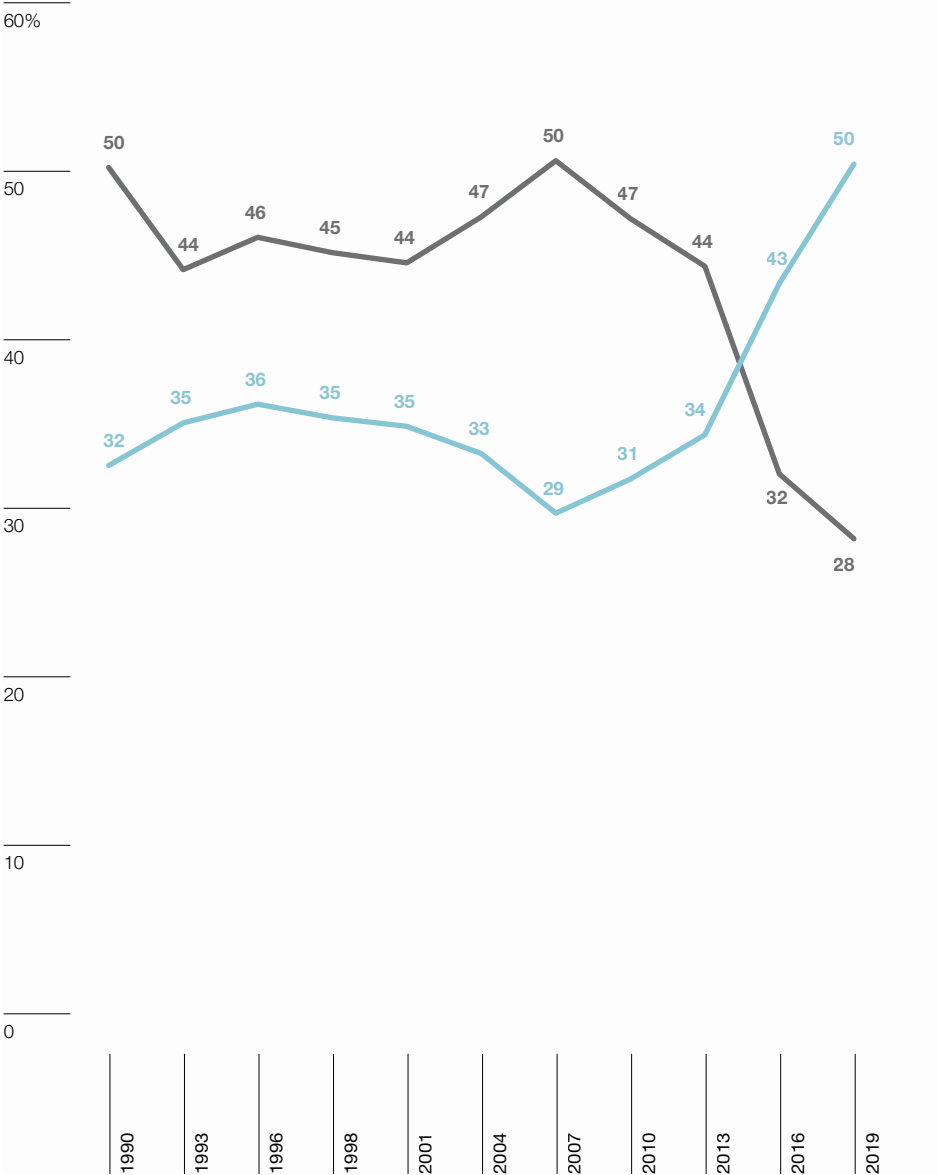## Attitudes towards abortion

- **Obtain readily**
- **Special circumstances**
- **Banned**


```
80%
                                                  73
                                             69
                                        66
                              61        63
                         61   59   61
        53        56
55              53
49
46   39
        41        39   42        37   35
        34        35        35        33   30   27
                                             23

5    6    6    5    6    5    4    4    4    4    4    4    5

1979 1987 1990 1993 1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
```
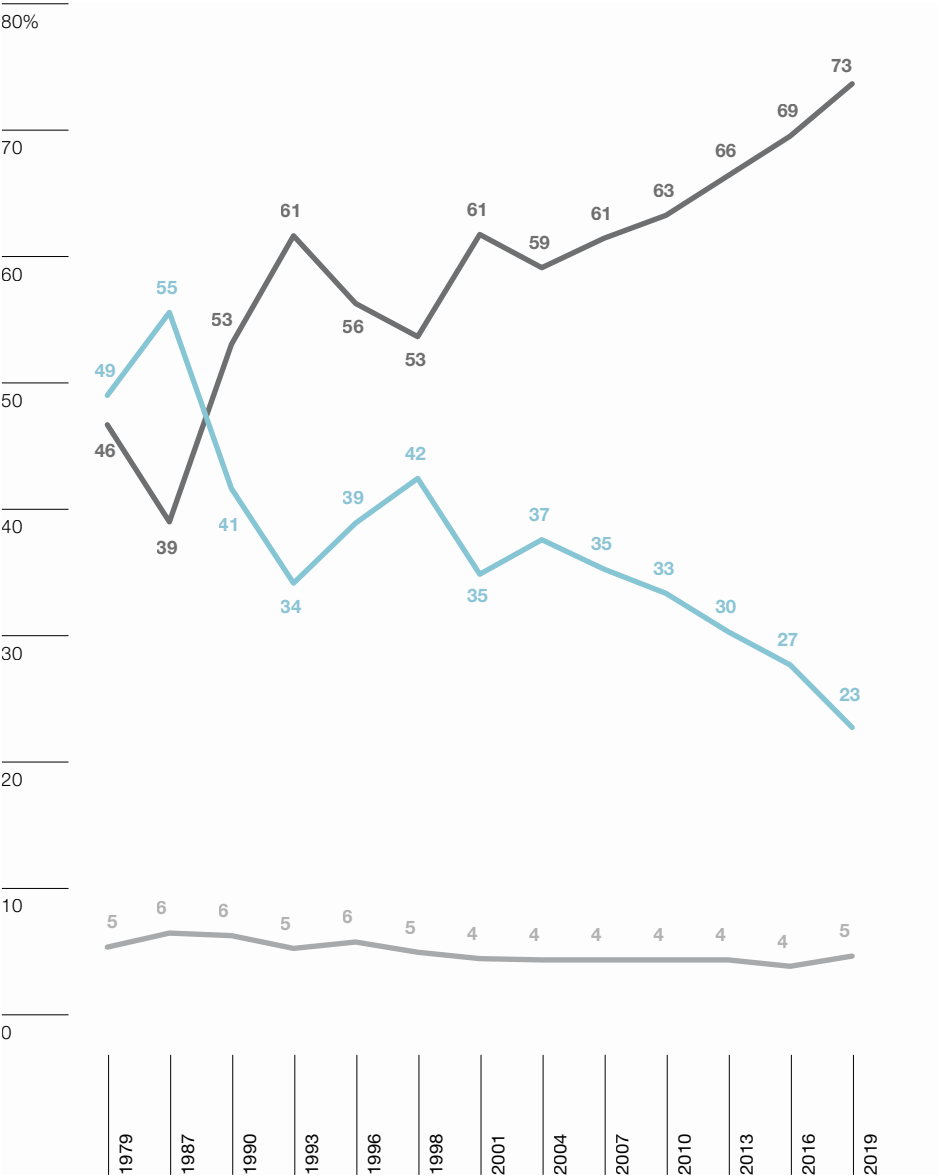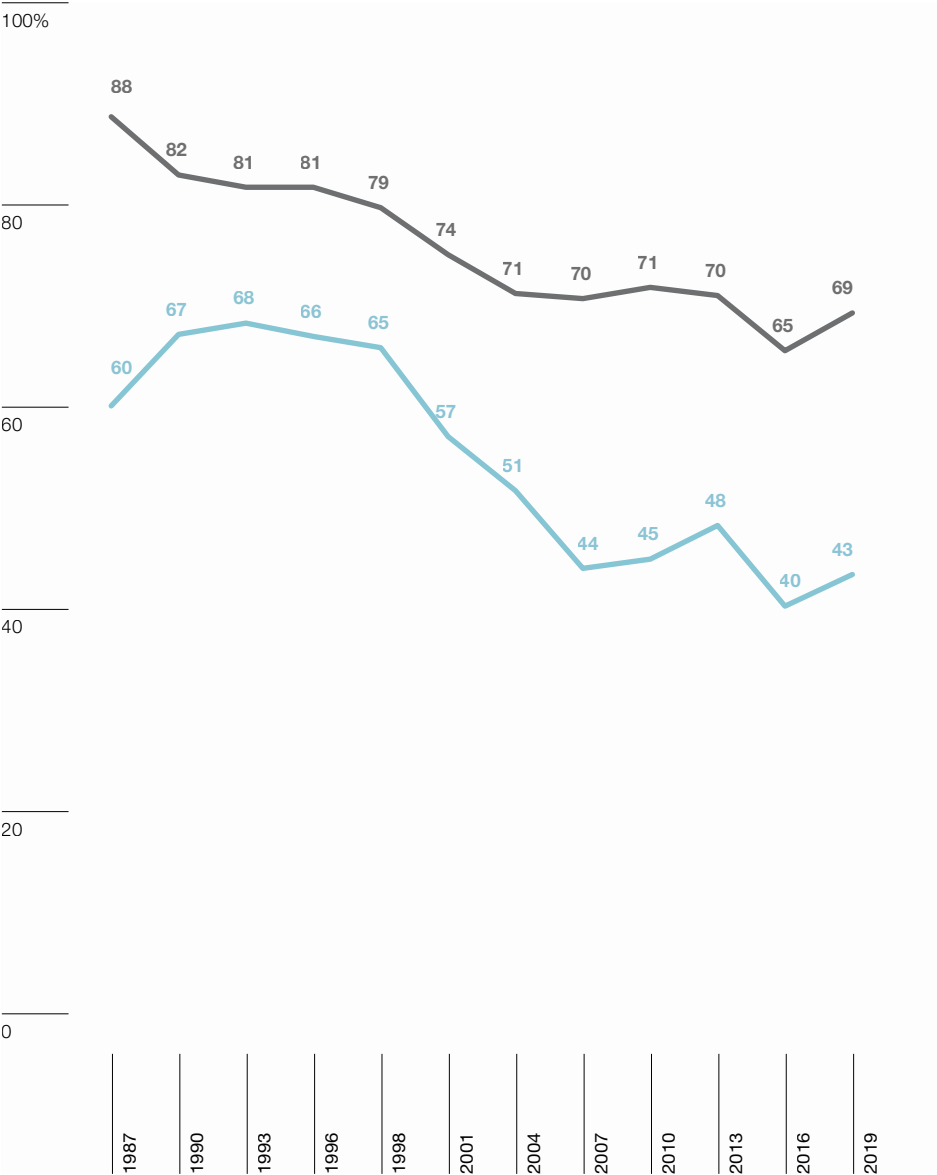
Attitudes towards the legal status of marijuana

—— **Marijuana should be a criminal offence**
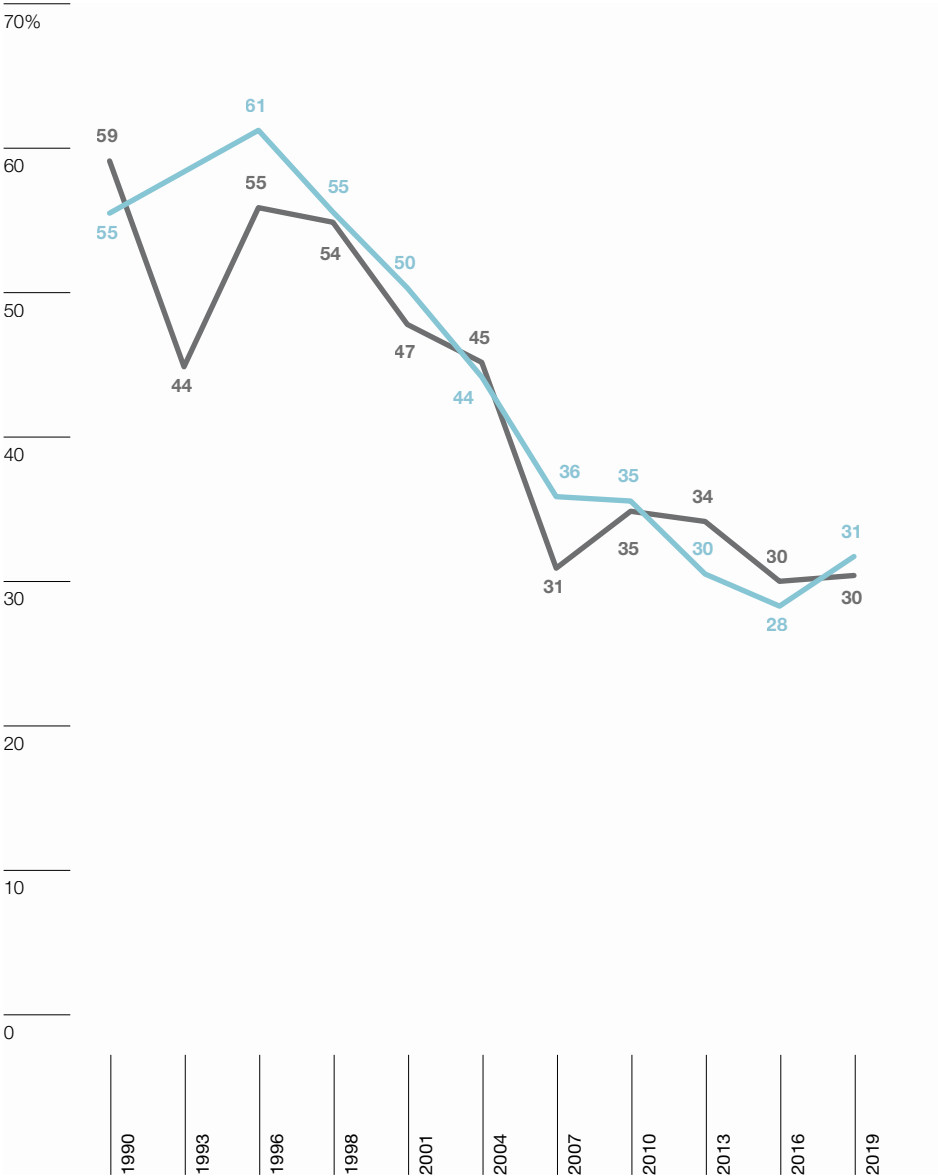—— **Marijuana should not be a criminal offence**

Attitudes towards jail sentences and capital punishment

—— **Stiffer sentences for criminals**
—— **Reintroduce death penalty for murder**

Attitudes towards policies on Indigenous Australians

━━━ **Government help for Indigenous Australians gone too far**

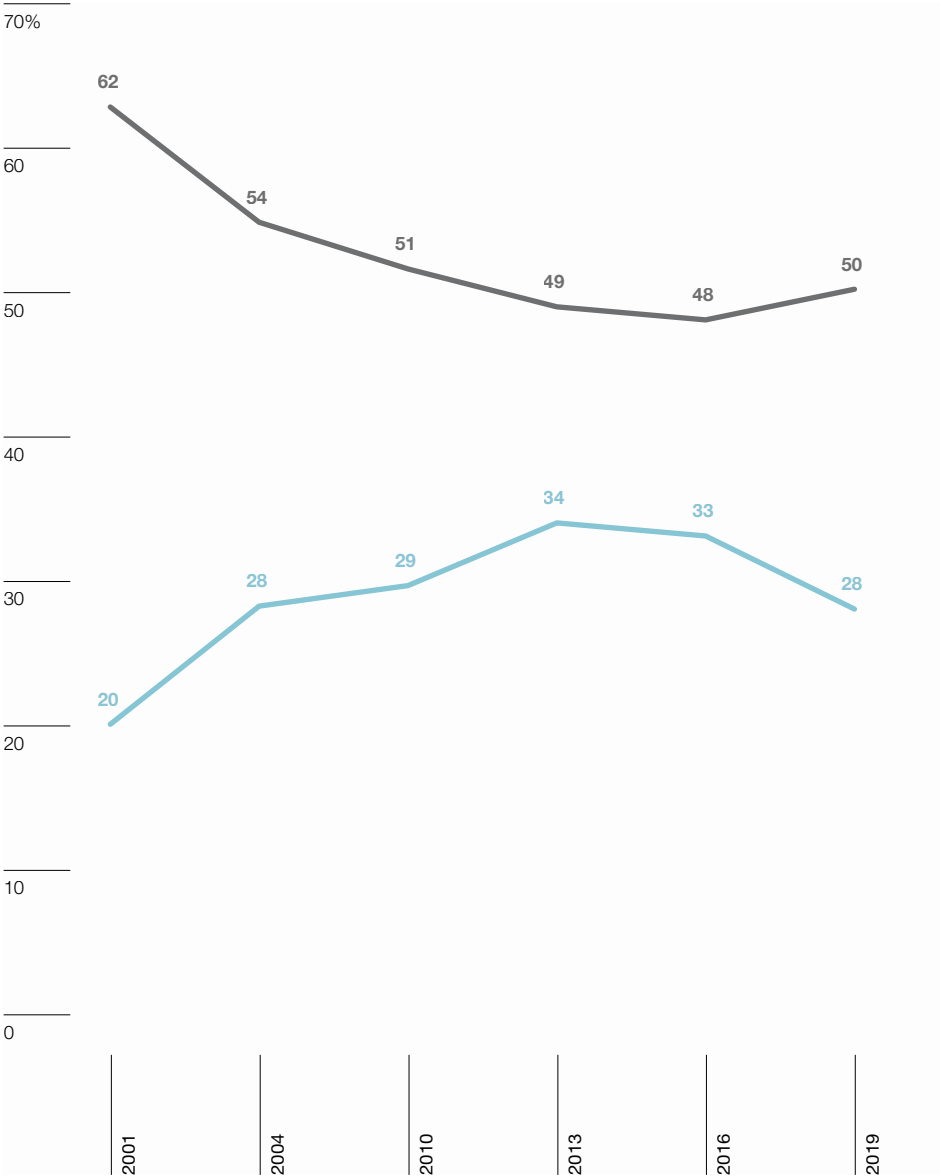━━━ **Transfer of land rights to Indigenous Australians gone too far**

Attitudes towards gender equality

━━━ **Equal opportunity for women gone too far**

━━━ **Women should be given preferential treatment**
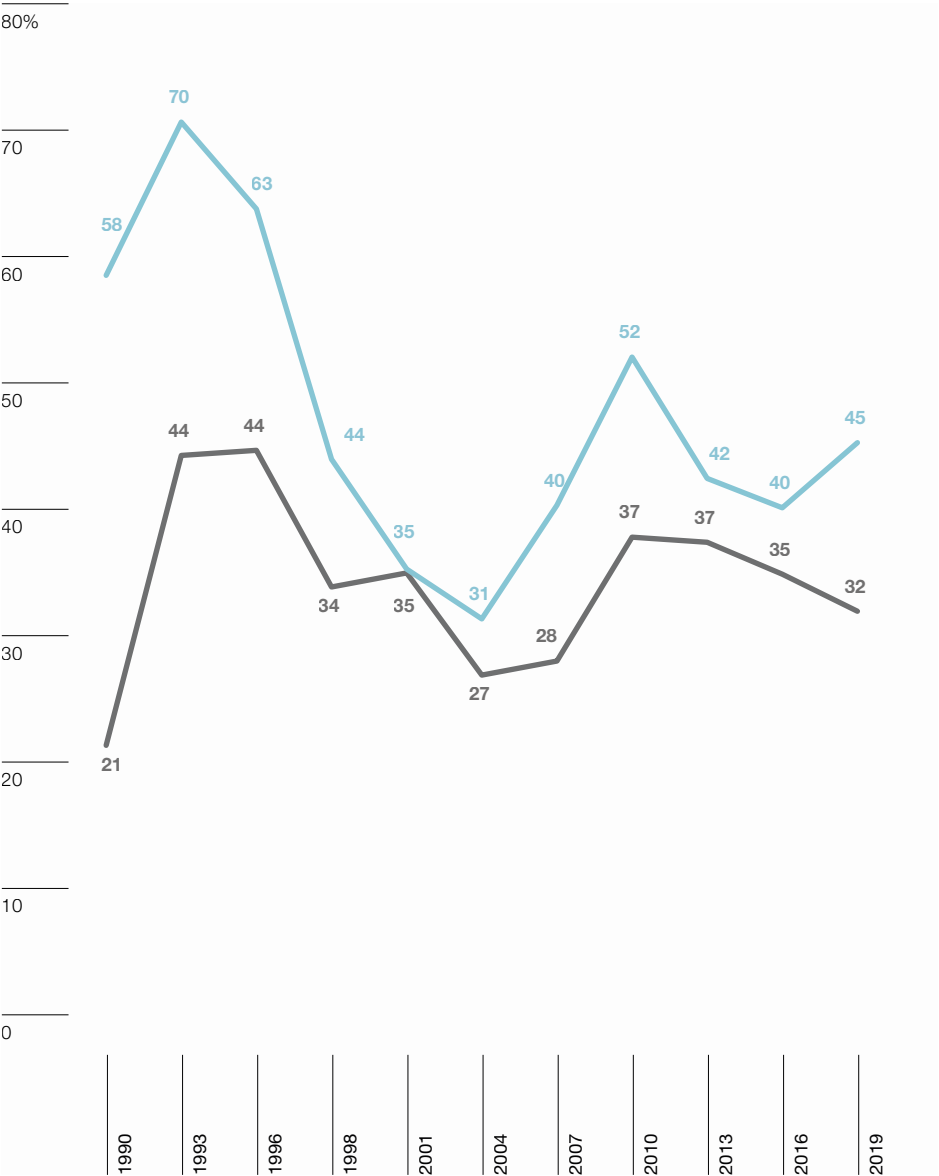
━━━ Should increase business opportunities for women
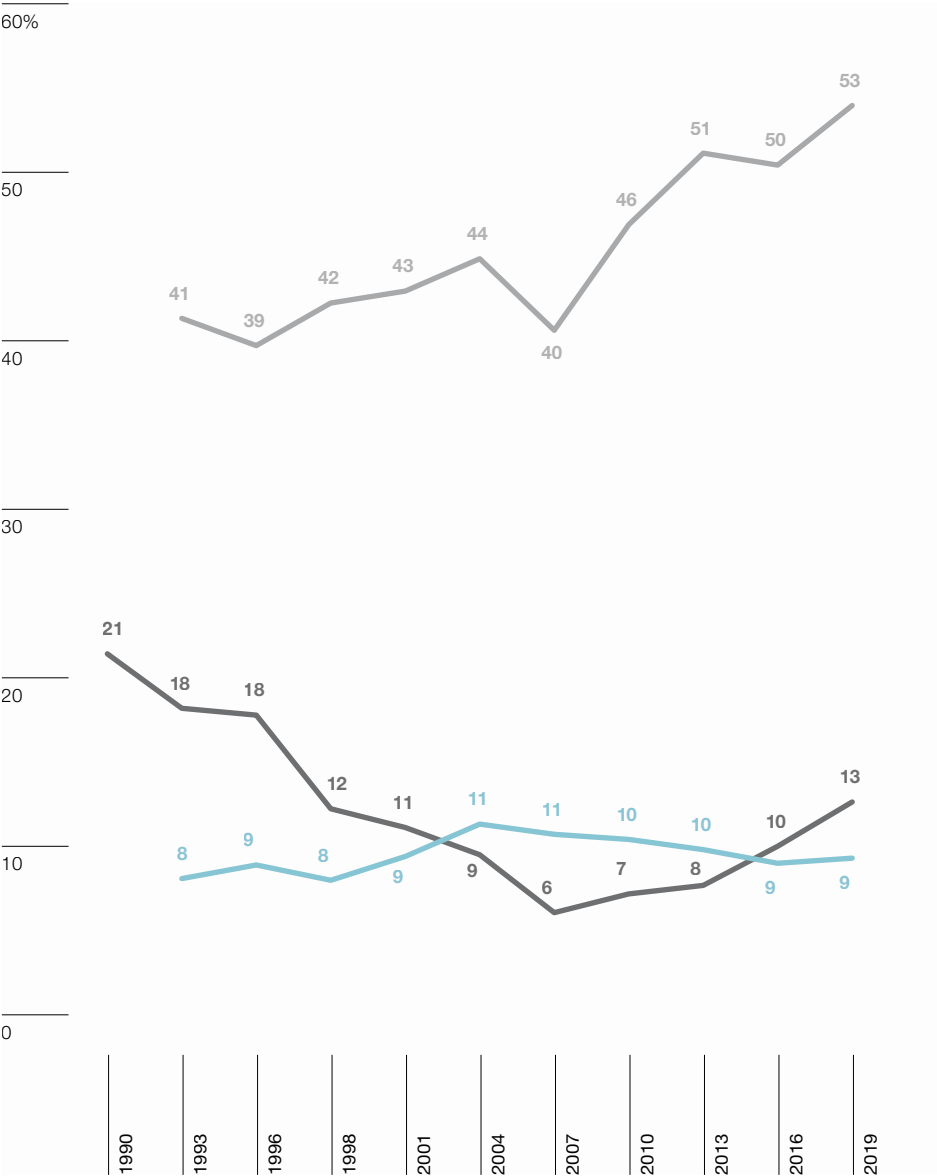
Attitudes towards asylum seeker arrivals by boat

— **Boats should be turned back**
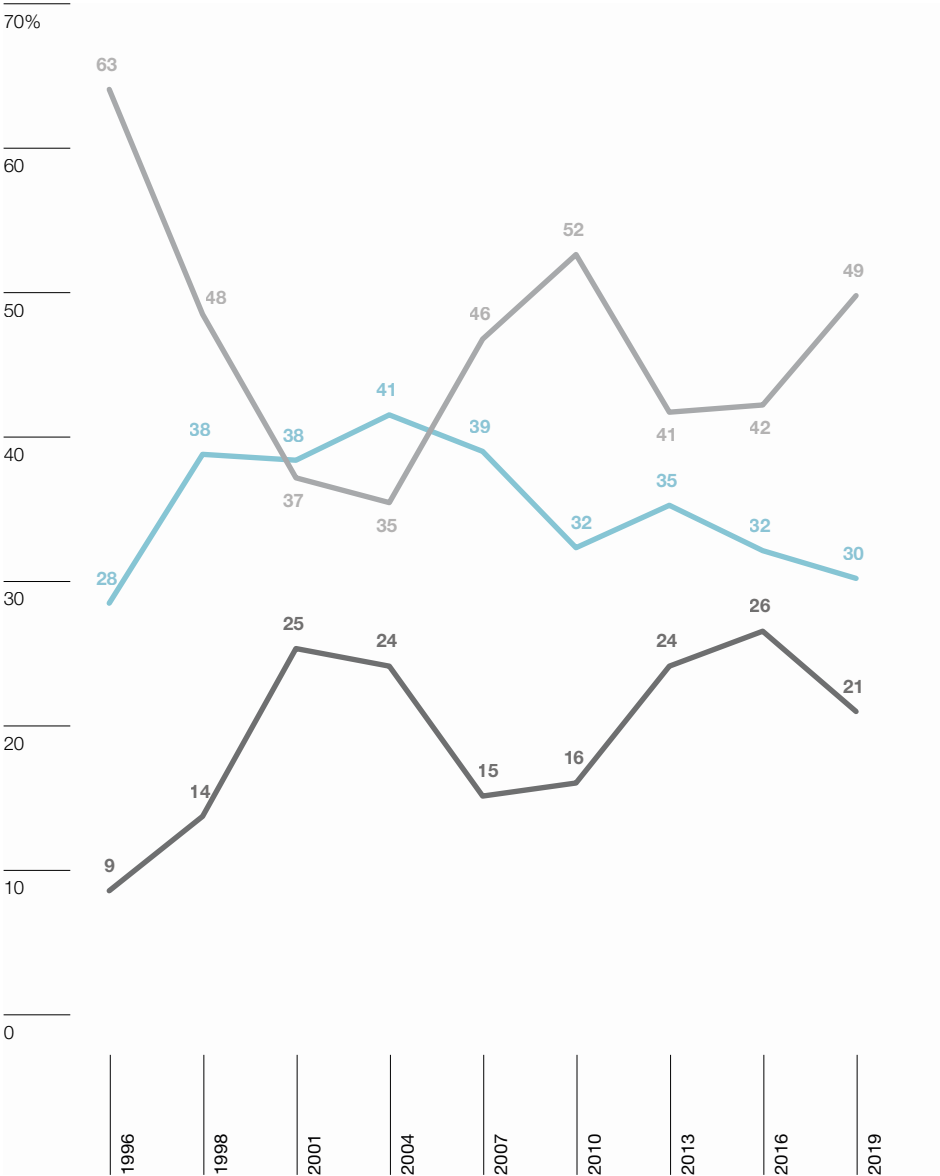— **Boats should not be turned back**

Attitudes towards immigrants and immigration

— **Equal opportunity for migrants gone too far**
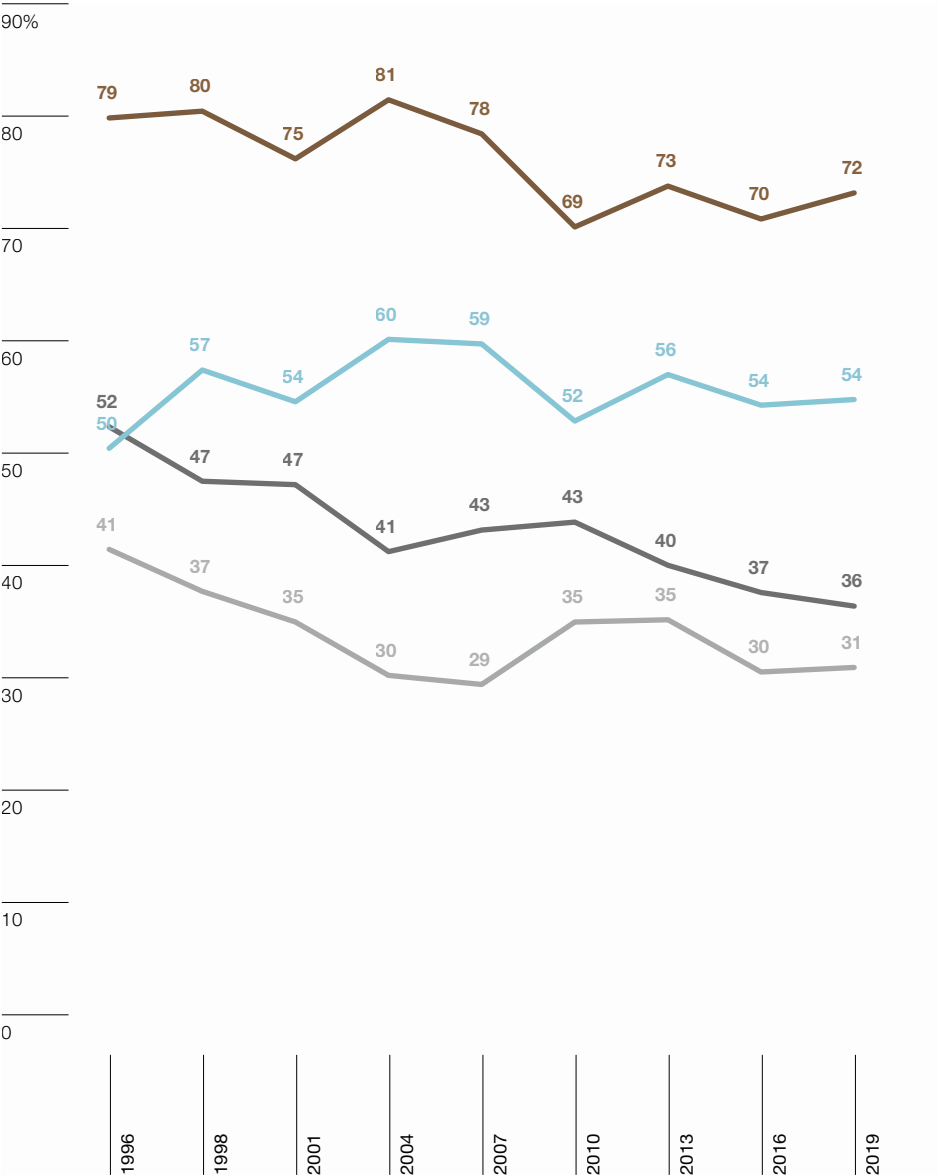— **Number of migrants allowed into Australia gone too far**

Attitudes towards the level of immigration into Australia

——— Increase immigration
——— Keep immigration levels the same
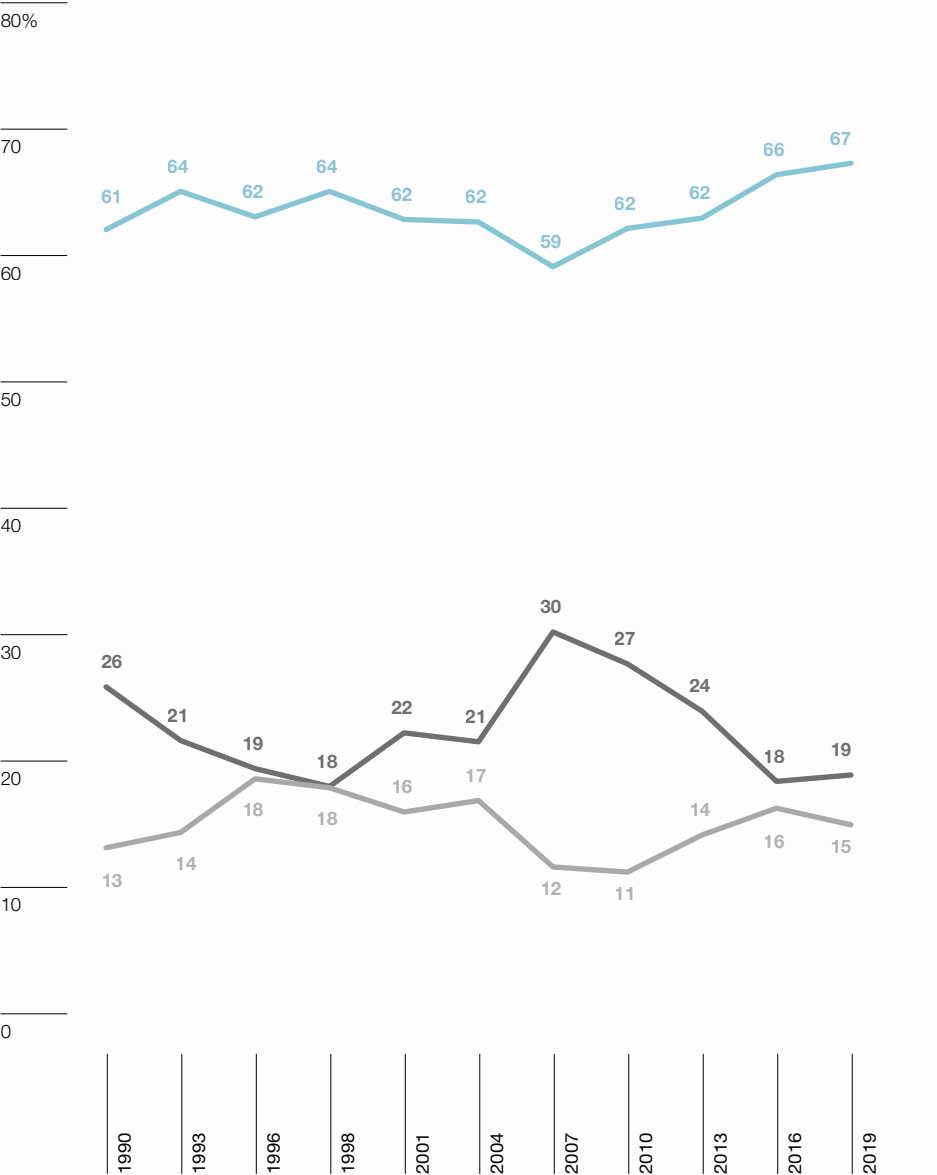**———** Reduce immigration

70%

63
48
38   38   41   39
28   37   46   52
      37   35   32   35   42   49
            25   24   24   26
      14   15   16   21   30
9

70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

The consequences of immigration

——— Immigrants increase crime rate
——— Immigrants good for economy
——— Immigrants take jobs away from Australian born
——— Immigrants make Australia more open to ideas and cultures

90%

79   80   81
            75   78
                              69   73   70   72

52   60   59
50   57   54   52   56   54   54
41   47   47   43   43
      37   41   40   37   36
            35   35   35
                  30   29   30   31

80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Materialist and postmaterialist values

— **Materialist**
— **Mixed**
— **Postmaterialist**

Threat of global warming

— **Serious threat**
— **Not a serious threat**
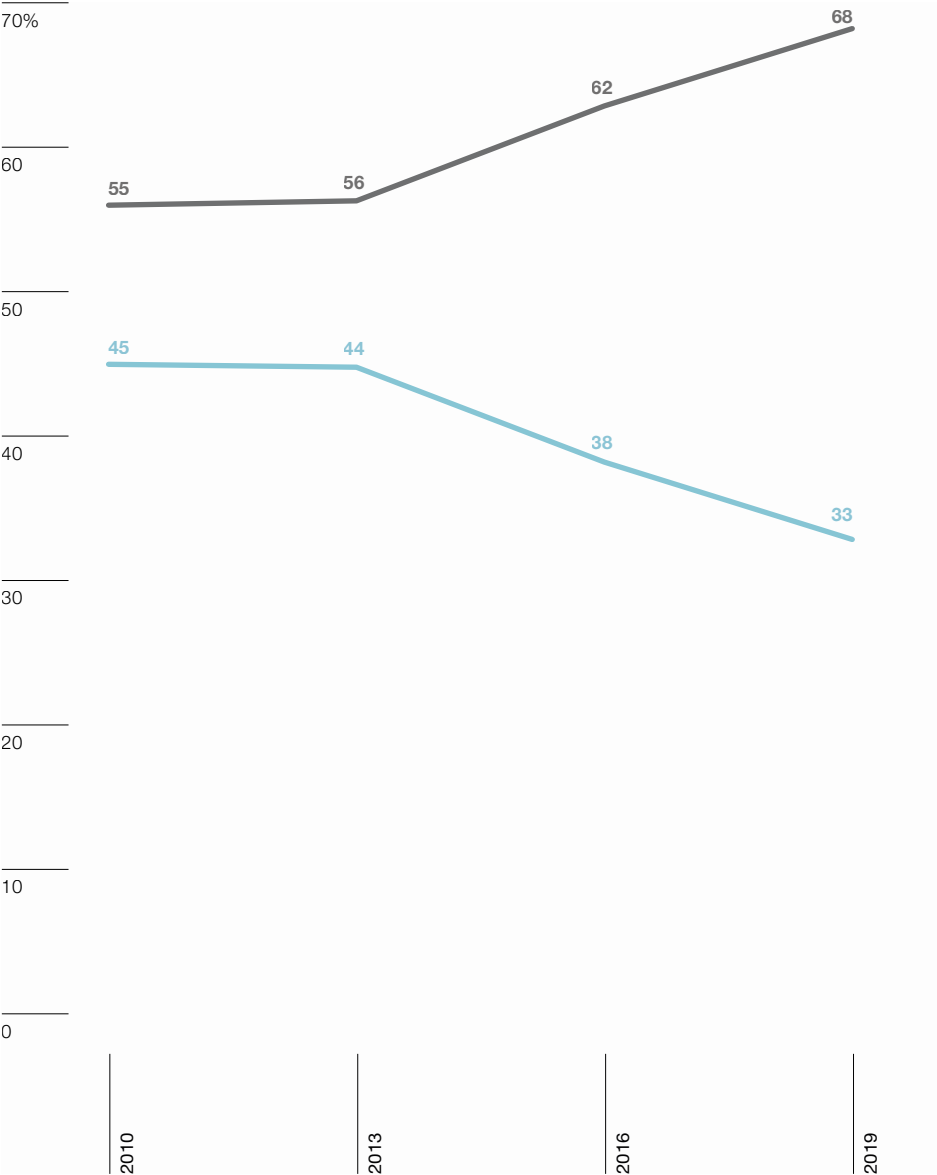
Notes

Attitudes towards nudity and sex in films and magazines
For nudity and sex in films and magazines gone too far, estimates for 1990–2019 combine 'gone much too far' and 'gone too far'. For nudity and sex in films and magazines not gone far enough, estimates for 1990–2019 combine 'not gone far enough' and 'not gone nearly far enough'.

Attitudes towards abortion
From 2010–2019 'Don't know' was included in the list of responses and percentages adjusted accordingly.

Attitudes towards the legal status of marijuana
For marijuana should not be a criminal offence, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. For marijuana should be a criminal offence, estimates combine 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.

Attitudes towards jail sentences and capital punishment
For stiffer sentences for criminals, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. For reintroduce death penalty for murder, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'.

Attitudes towards policies on Indigenous Australians
For government help for Indigenous Australians gone too far, the estimates for 1993–2019 combine 'much too far' and 'too far'. For transfer of land rights to Indigenous Australians gone too far, the estimates for 1990–2019 combine 'much too far' and 'too far'. Transfer of land rights to Indigenous Australians was not included in 1993.

Attitudes towards gender equality
For equal opportunity for women gone too far, estimates combine 'much too far' and 'too far'. For women should be given preferential treatment, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. For should increase business opportunities for women, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'.

Attitudes towards asylum seeker arrivals by boat
For boats should be turned back, estimates combine ' strongly agree' and 'agree'. For boats should not be turned back, estimates combine 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree'. This question was not included in 2007.

Attitudes towards immigrants and immigration
For equal opportunity for migrants gone too far, the response categories are 'much too far' and 'too far'. For number of migrants allowed into Australia gone too far, the response categories are 'much too far' and 'too far'.

Attitudes towards the level of immigration into Australia
For increase immigration, estimates combine 'increased a lot' and 'increased a little'. For keep immigration levels the same, estimates are for 'remain about the same'. For reduce immigration, estimates combine 'reduced a little' and 'reduced a lot'.

The consequences of immigration
For immigrants increase crime rate, immigrants good for economy, immigrants take jobs away from Australian born, immigrants make Australia more open to ideas and cultures, the response categories are (1996–2019) 'strongly agree' and 'agree'.

Threat of global warming
Question asks 'How serious a threat do you think global warming will pose to you or your way of life in your lifetime?' 'Serious threat' combines 'very serious' and 'fairly serious'. 'Not a serious threat' combines 'not very serious' and 'not at all serious'.

Attitudes towards Australia's defence capability

——— Australia able to defend itself if attacked
——— Australia's defence stronger than 10 years ago

70%
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

28
23
32
55
54
50
39
45
41

15
20
16
19
23
31
28
31
30

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
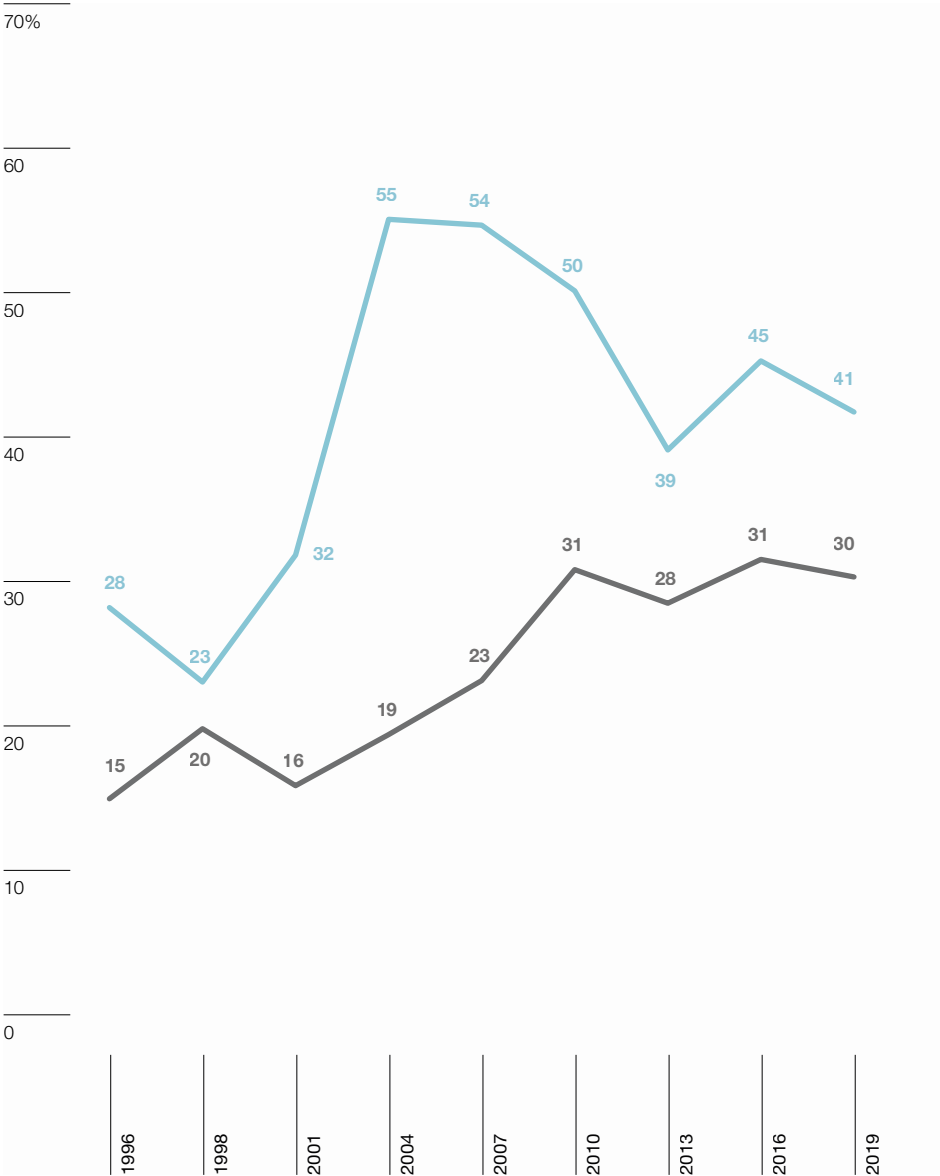
Support for war on terrorism

——— Agree
——— Disagree

80%
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

69
57
52
53
44
52
52

13
20
21
21
25
20
21

2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
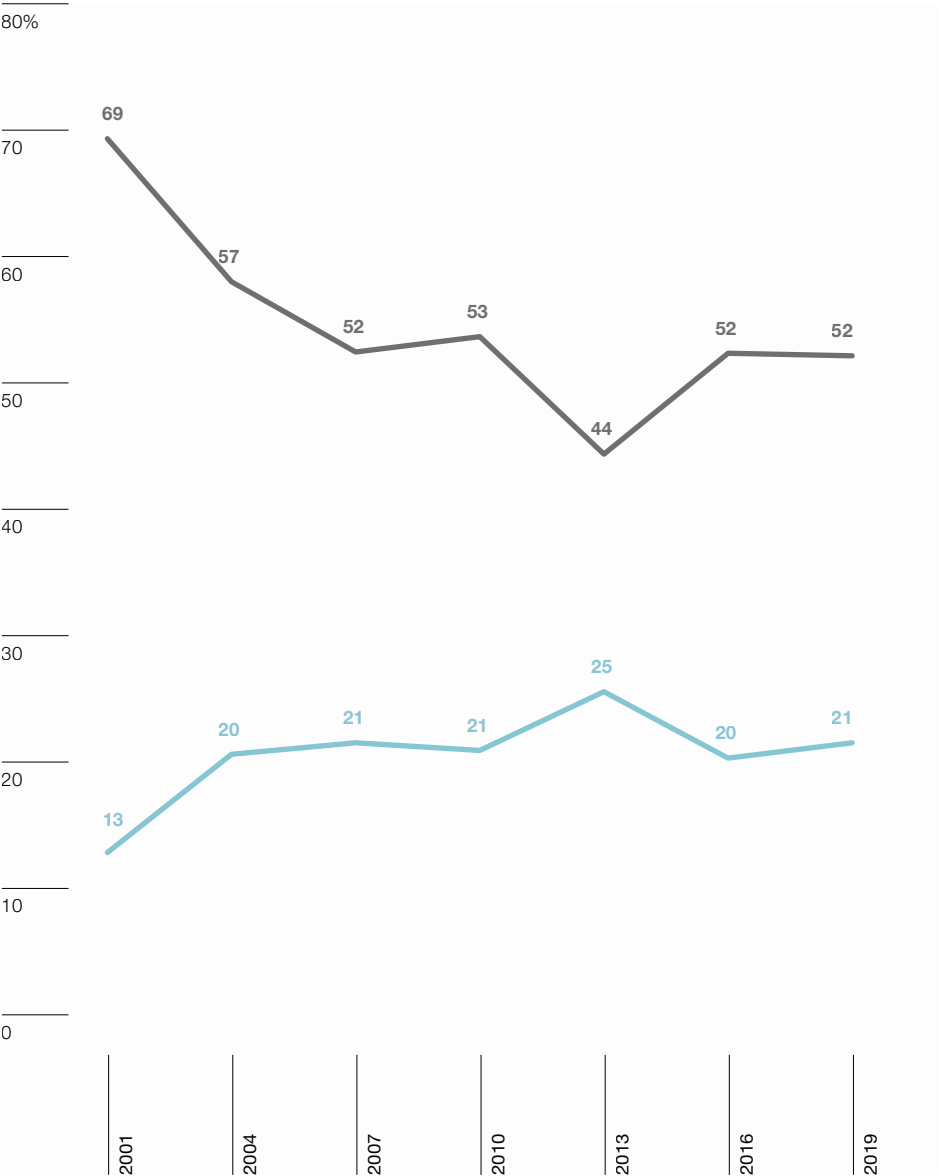
Indonesia as a security threat to Australia

——— **Very likely**
——— **Fairly likely**
——— Not very likely
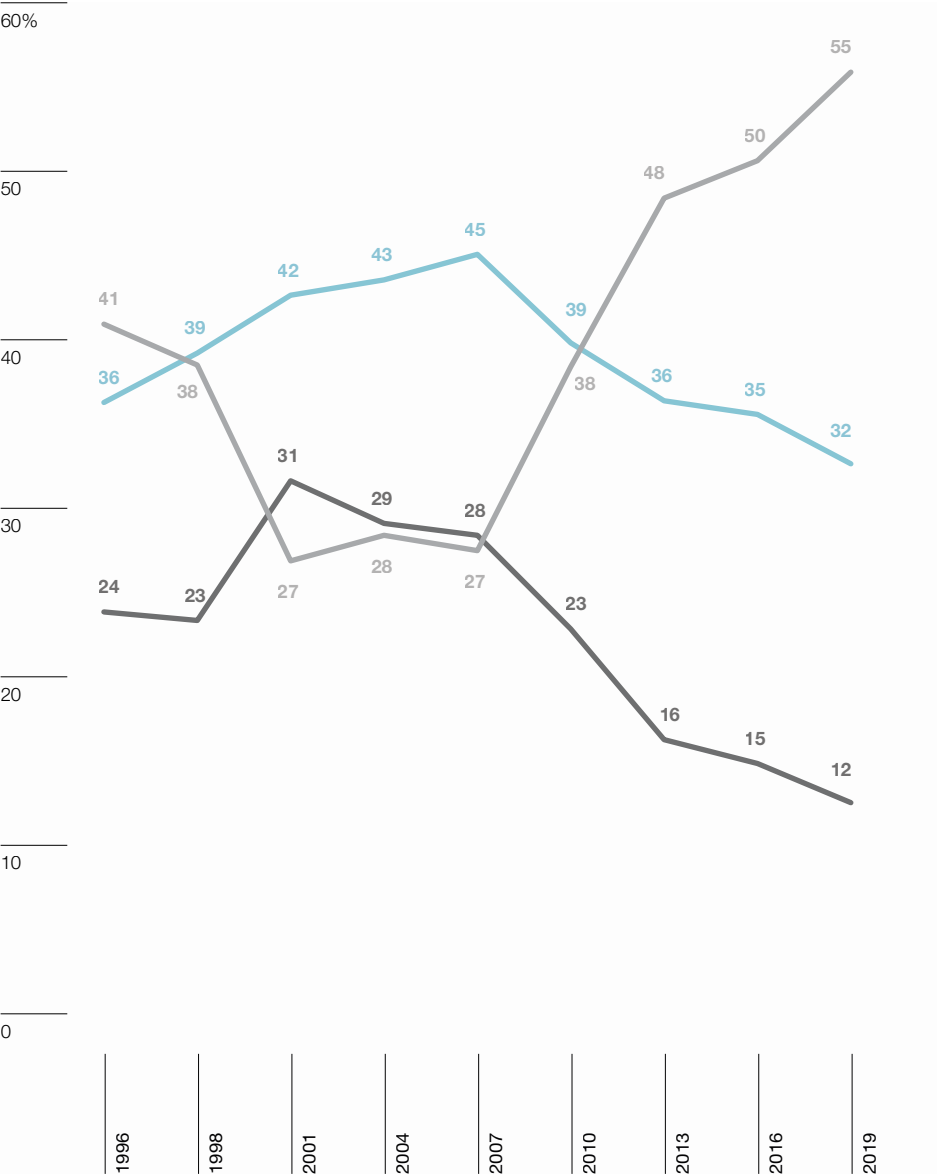
China as a security threat to Australia
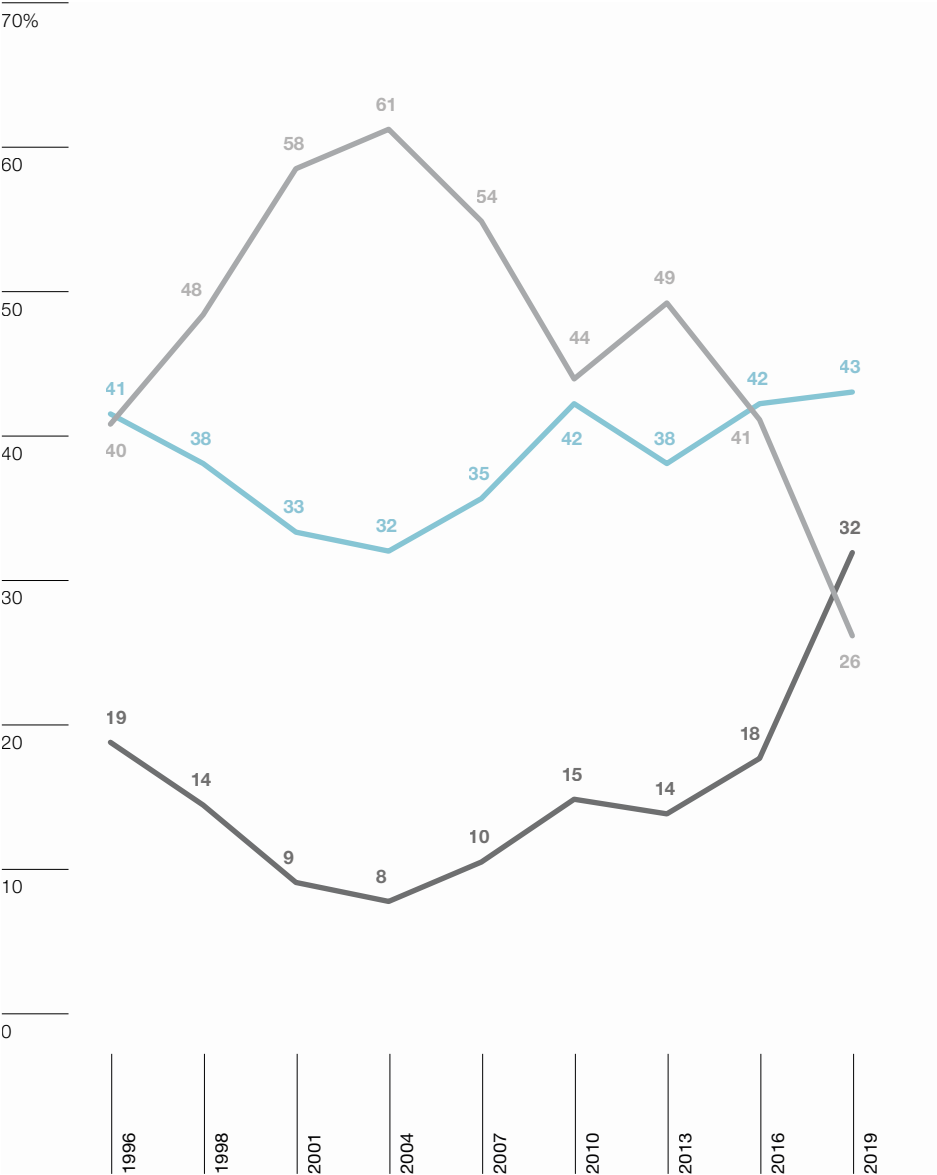
——— **Very likely**
——— **Fairly likely**
——— Not very likely

Japan as a security threat to Australia
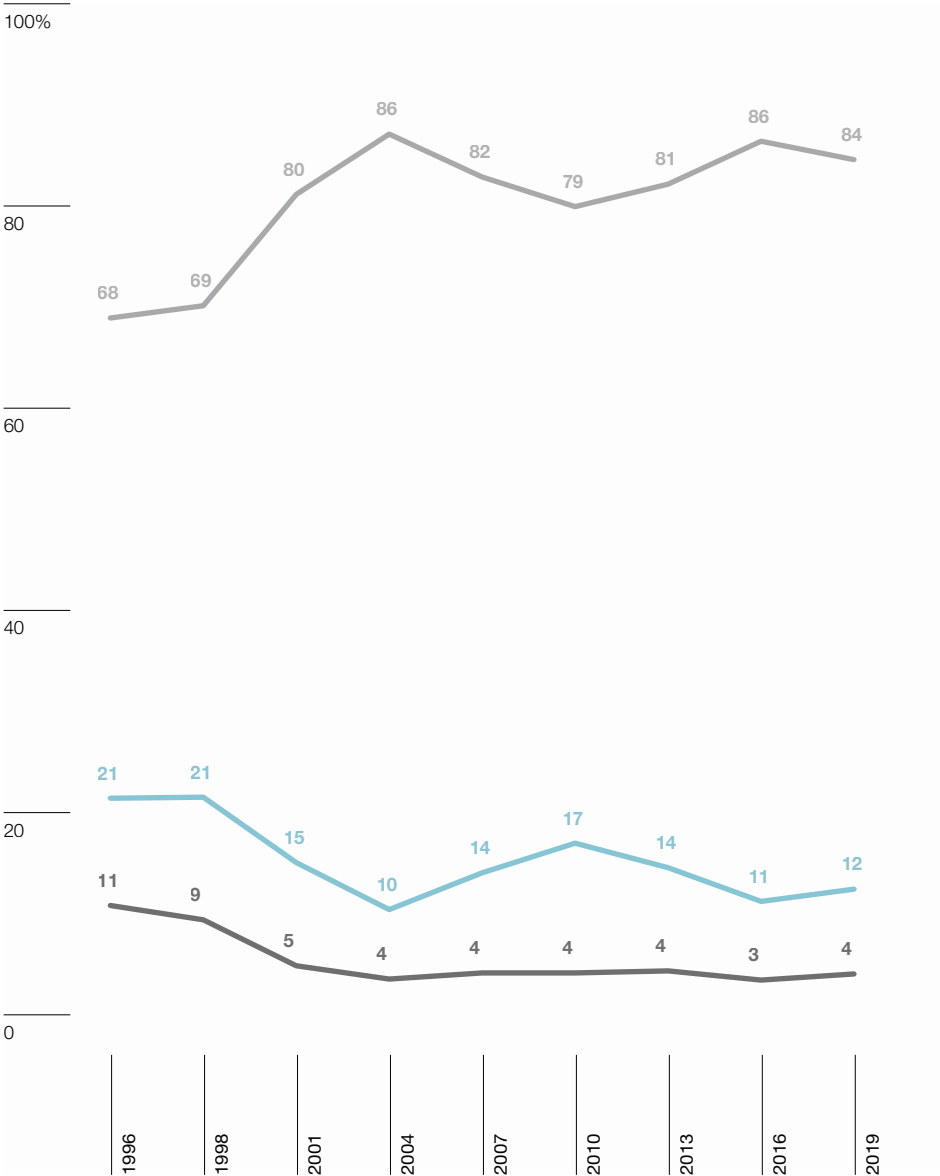
━━━━ **Very likely**
━━━━ **Fairly likely**
━━━━ Not very likely

100% ─
80 ─
60 ─
40 ─
20 ─
0 ─

Not very likely: 68, 69, 80, 86, 82, 79, 81, 86, 84
Fairly likely: 21, 21, 15, 10, 14, 17, 14, 11, 12
Very likely: 11, 9, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 4

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Malaysia as a security threat to Australia

━━━━ **Very likely**
━━━━ **Fairly likely**
━━━━ Not very likely

80% ─
70 ─
60 ─
50 ─
40 ─
30 ─
20 ─
10 ─
0 ─

Not very likely: 66, 63, 65, 62, 66, 70, 76, 76, 79
Fairly likely: 26, 30, 29, 31, 27, 24, 19, 19, 18
Very likely: 8, 8, 7, 7, 7, 6, 6, 5, 4

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
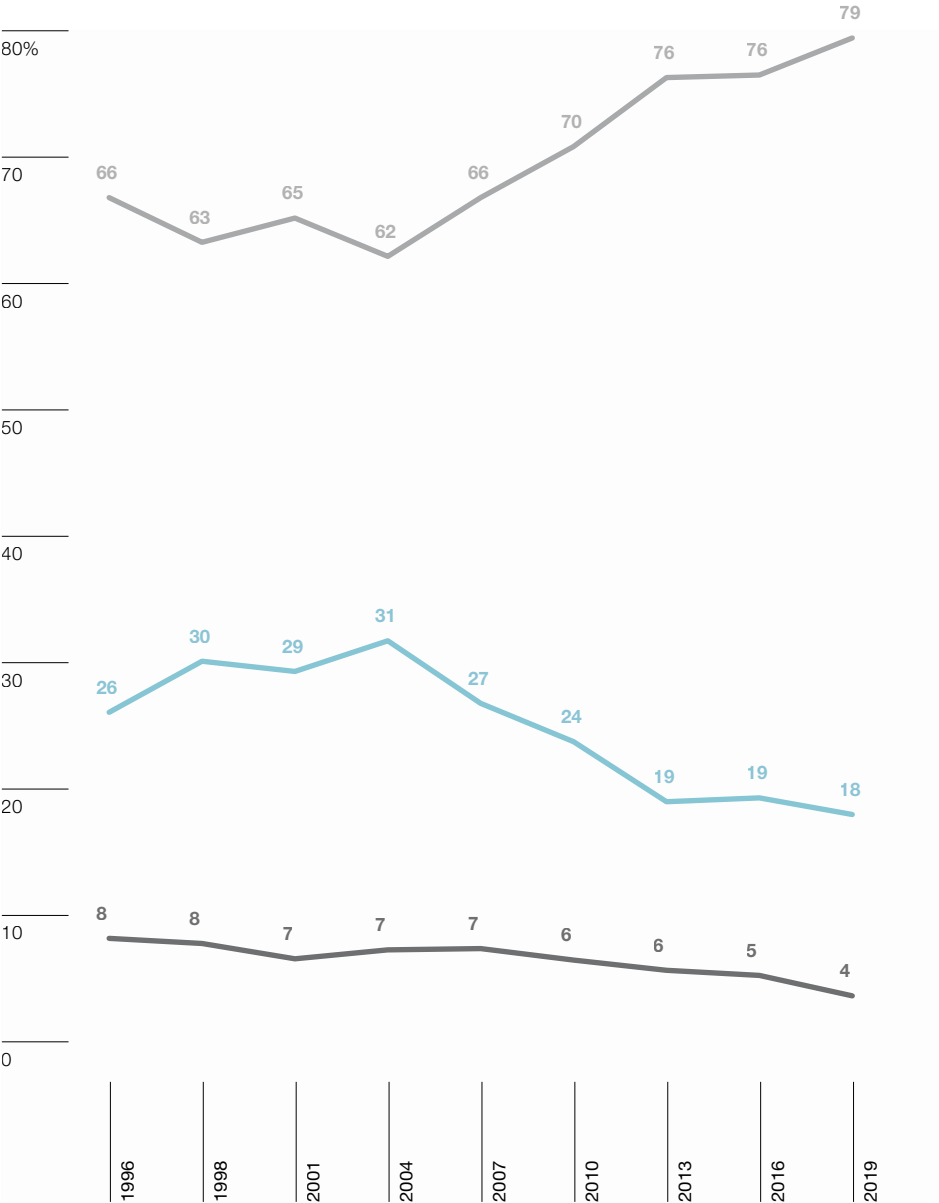
Vietnam as a security threat to Australia

Very likely
Fairly likely
Not very likely

100%

80

60

40

20

0

Not very likely: 75, 76, 80, 81, 80, 80, 83, 83, 88

Fairly likely: 20, 19, 17, 16, 16, 17, 14, 13, 10

Very likely: 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 4, 3

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019
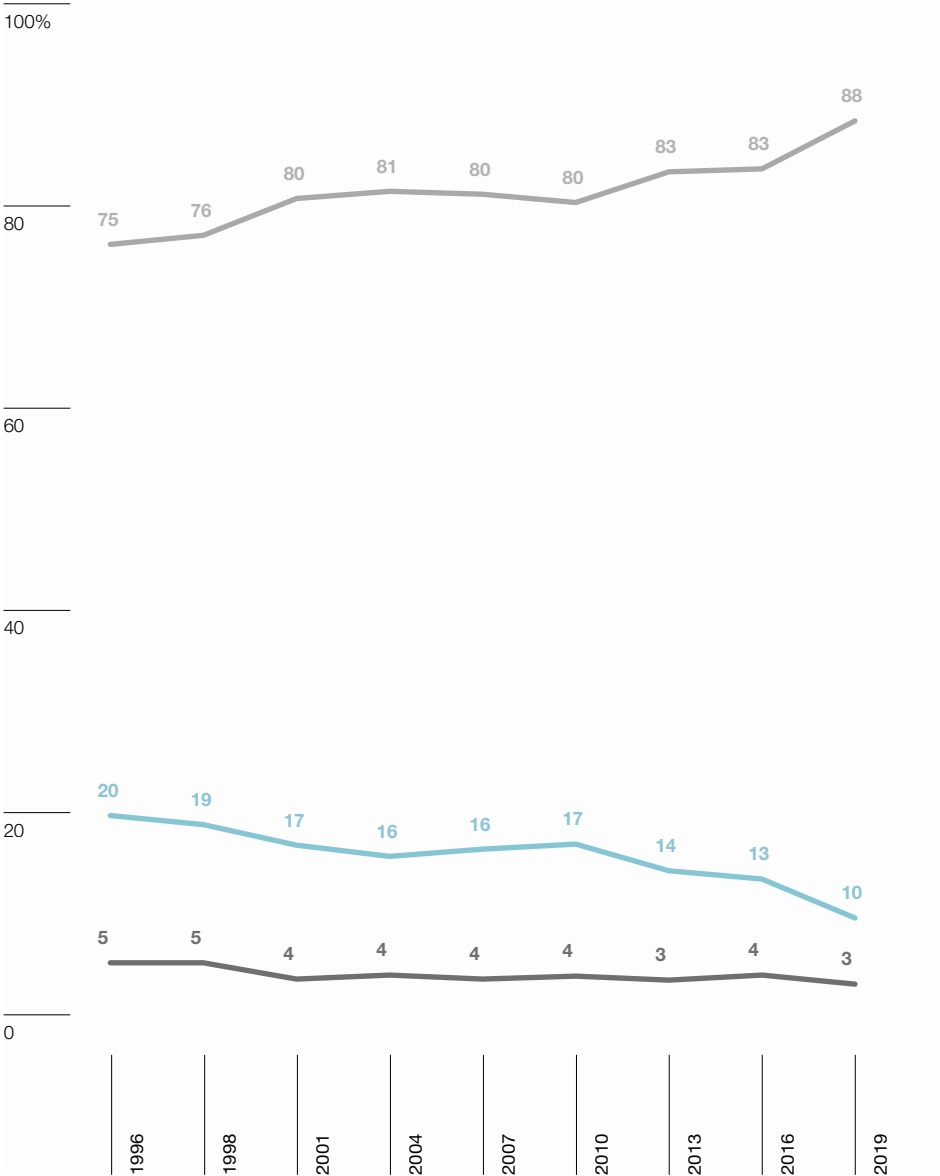
The United States as a security threat to Australia
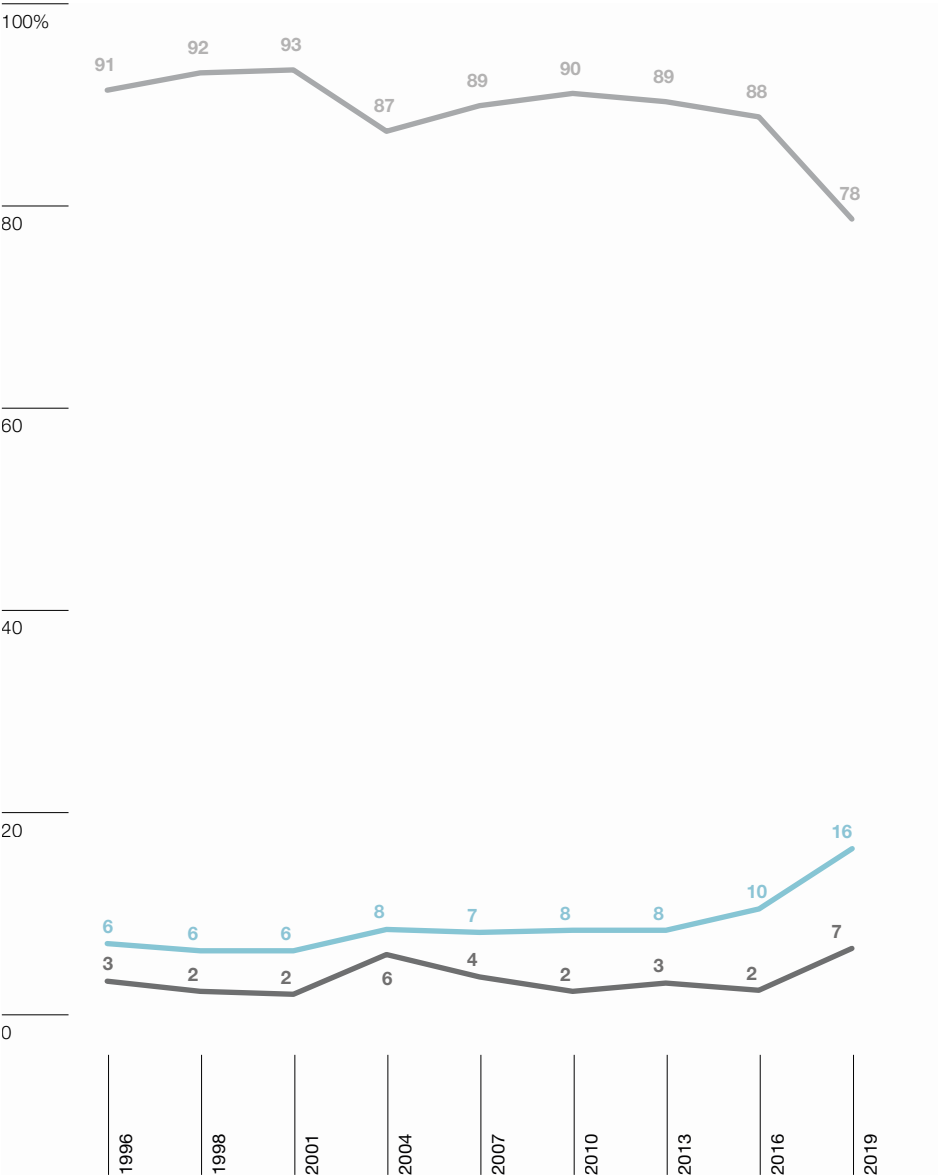
Very likely
Fairly likely
Not very likely

100%

80

60

40

20

0

Not very likely: 91, 92, 93, 87, 89, 90, 89, 88, 78

Fairly likely: 6, 6, 6, 8, 7, 8, 8, 10, 16

Very likely: 3, 2, 2, 6, 4, 2, 3, 2, 7

1996 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019

Attitudes towards defence links with the United States

—— **United States alliance under ANZUS important**
—— **Trust in the United States to come to Australia's defence**

Attitudes towards closer relations with Asia

—— **Relations with Asia gone too far**
—— **Relations with Asia about right**
—— **Relations with Asia not gone far enough**
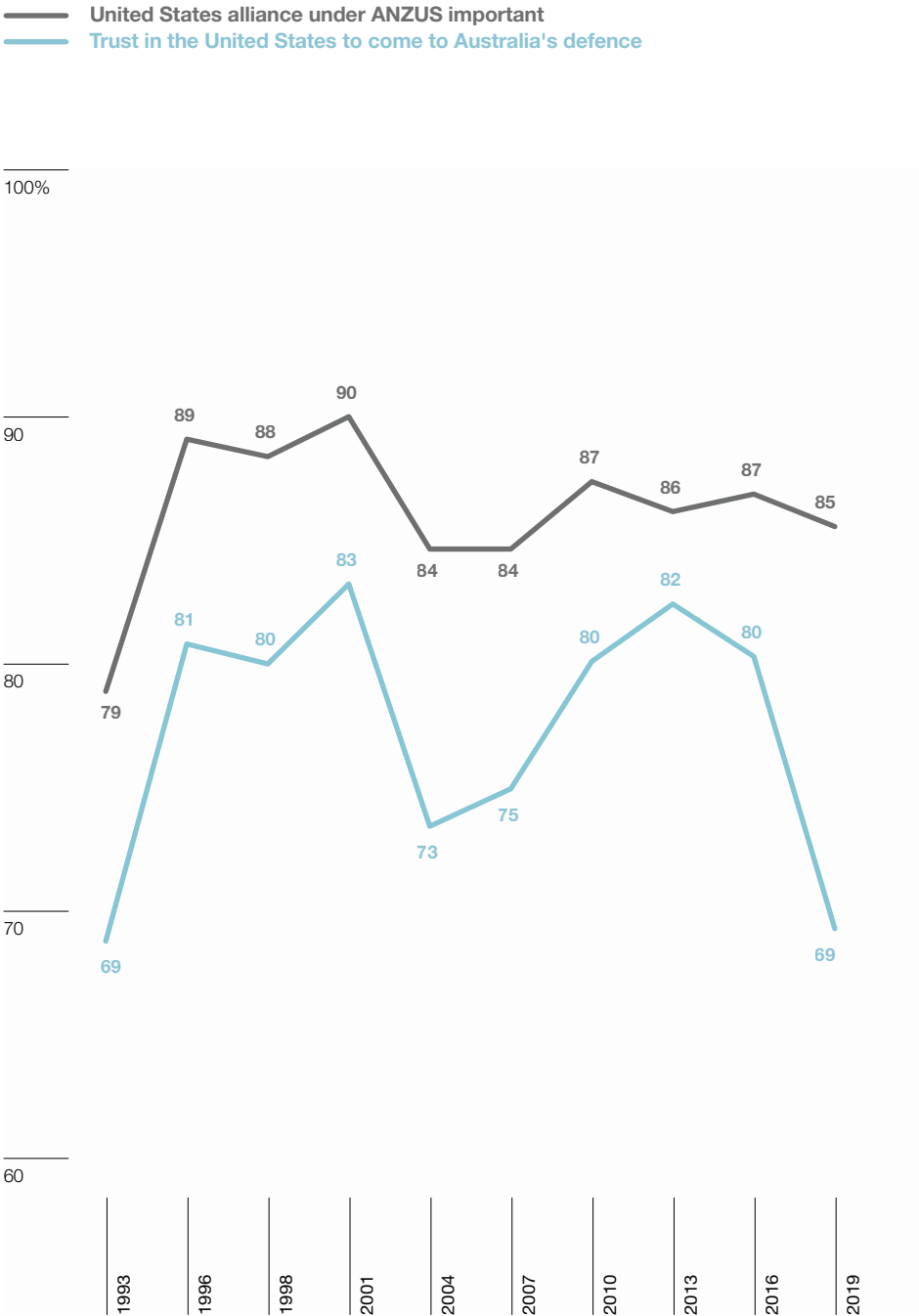
Attitudes towards more trade relations with Asia

Agree
Not sure
Disagree

	1993	1996	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
Agree	69	66	55	57	63	65	67	71	62	66
Not sure	24	26	30	33	28	29	26	22	29	25
Disagree	8	8	15	11	9	6	7	7	9	9
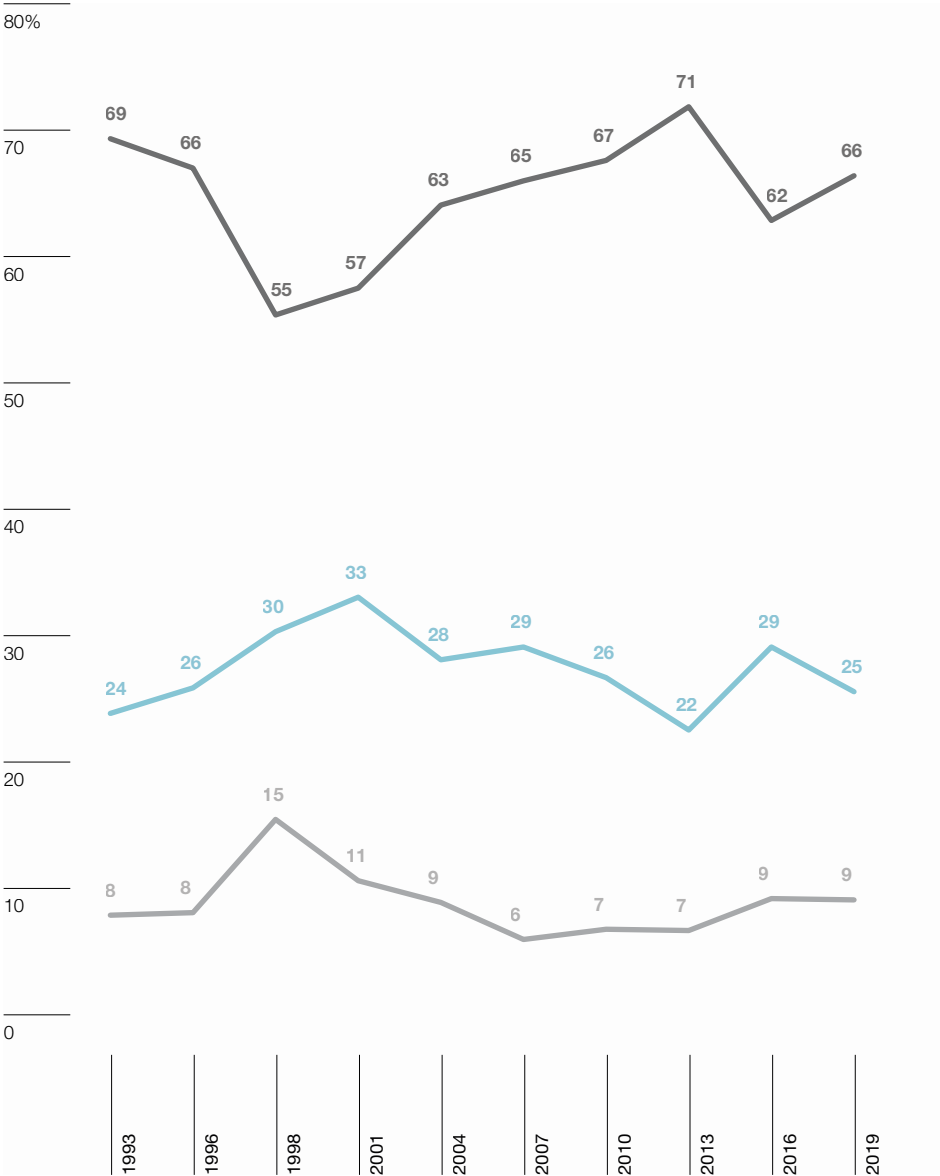
Notes

Attitudes towards Australia's defence capability
For Australia able to defend itself if attacked and Australia's defence stronger than 10 years ago, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'.

Support for war on terrorism
Question asks whether 'Australia should provide military assistance for the war on terrorism'. 'Agree' combines 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. 'Disagree' combines 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree'.

Attitudes towards defence links with the United States
For United States alliance under ANZUS important, estimates combine 'very important' and 'fairly important'. For trust in the United States to come to Australia's defence, estimates combine 'a great deal' and 'a fair amount'.

Attitudes towards closer relations with Asia
For relations with Asia gone too far, estimates combine 'gone much too far' and 'gone too far'. For relations with Asia not gone far enough, estimates combine 'not gone far enough' and 'not gone nearly far enough'.

Attitudes towards more trade relations with Asia
Question asks whether 'Australia's trading future lies in Asia'. For agree, estimates combine 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. For disagree, estimates combine 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.

References

To cite data from the Australian Election Study or the Australian National Political Attitudes Survey please use the following references:

McAllister, I., Sheppard, J., Bean, C., Gibson, R., Makkai, T. (2019). Australian Election Study 2019 [computer file], December 2019.

McAllister, I., Makkai, T., Bean, C., Gibson, R., (2017). Australian Election Study 2016 [computer file], February 2017.

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McAllister, I., Mughan, A. (1987). Australian Election Study 1987 [computer file], November 1987.

Aitkin, D. (2007). Australian National Political Attitudes Survey, 1979 [computer file], May 2007.

Aitkin, D., Kahan, M., Stokes, D. (2005). Australian National Political Attitudes Survey, 1969 [computer file], September 2005.

Aitkin, D., Kahan, M., Stokes, D. (2005). Australian National Political Attitudes Survey, 1967 [computer file], September 2005.

Appendix: Methodology

The Australian Election Study (AES) surveys are designed to collect data following federal elections for academic research on Australian electoral behaviour and public opinion. The AES commenced operation in 1987 and has fielded surveys after every federal election since. Since 1998 the AES has been a member of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) group (see www.cses.org). Prior to the AES, three academic surveys of political behaviour were collected by Don Aitkin in 1967, 1969 and 1979, respectively, but they are not strictly speaking election surveys. Where comparable measures exist from these studies, they have been incorporated in the trends in this report. Details on the earlier surveys are available on the Australian National Political Attitudes Survey Dataverse.

The AES routinely collects data among a nationally representative sample of voters and among major party candidates standing for election. Both the voter and candidate instruments combine a common set of questions. The AES is mounted as a collaborative exercise between several Australian universities. The 1987 and 1990 surveys were funded by a consortium of universities and the 2007 survey by ANU; all of the intervening and subsequent surveys have been funded by the Australian Research Council. Each of the surveys conducted to date has had a central theme:

1987
The economy

1990
The environment and environmentalism

1993
Political culture

1996
National identity and citizenship

1998
Constitution, rights and minorities

1999
Constitutional referendum

2001
Challenges to governance

2004
The decline of political parties

2007
Democracy and representation

2010
The dynamics of political choice.

2013
Volatility and electoral change

2016 - 2019
Political engagement among the young

Australian Election Study Overview, 1987–2019

Year	Principal investigators	Funder	Study number
1987	Ian McAllister, Anthony Mughan	University of NSW, ANU	ASSDA 445
1990	Ian McAllister, Roger Jones, David Gow	University of NSW, ANU	ASSDA 570
1993	Roger Jones, Ian McAllister, David Denemark, David Gow	ARC/ A79131812	ASSDA 763
1996	Roger Jones, David Gow, Ian McAllister	ARC/ A79530652	ASSDA 943
1998	Clive Bean, David Gow, Ian McAllister	ARC/A79804144	ASSDA 1001
1999	David Gow, Clive Bean, Ian McAllister	ARC/ A79937265	ASSDA 1018
2001	Clive Bean, David Gow, Ian McAllister	ARC/ A00106341	ASSDA 1048
2004	Clive Bean, Ian McAllister, Rachel Gibson, David Gow	ARC/ DP0452898	ASSDA 1079
2007	Clive Bean, Ian McAllister, David Gow	ACPSPRI/ACSR	ASSDA 1120
2010	Ian McAllister, Clive Bean, Rachel Gibson, Juliet Pietsch	ARC/DP1094626	ASSDA 1228
2013	Ian McAllister, Juliet Pietsch, Clive Bean, Rachel Gibson	ARC/ DP120103941	ADA 1259
2016	Ian McAllister, Juliet Pietsch, Clive Bean, Rachel Gibson, Toni Makkai	ARC/ DP160101501	ADA 01365
2019	Ian McAllister, Jill Sheppard, Clive Bean, Rachel Gibson, Toni Makkai	ARC/ DP160101501	ADA 01446

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australianelectionstudy.org

All of the data are publicly available from australianelectionstudy.org and from Dataverse (dataverse. ada.edu.au/dataverse/aes).

Voters

All the Australian Election Study (AES) surveys are national, post-election self-completion surveys. The 1987 – 2013 surveys were based on samples drawn randomly from the electoral register. The 2016 survey used a split sample method, with half of the sample coming from the electoral register, and half from the Geo-Coded National Address File (G-NAF). The 2019 survey was based solely on a sample drawn from the G-NAF. The 1993 AES oversampled in some of the smaller states and because of this the sample was weighted down to a national sample of 2,388 respondents. The overall response rates are listed below. In 2001 and 2004 an online survey was conducted in parallel with the regular AES. In 2010, 2013, and 2016 an online option was available to the survey respondents, and in 2013 an additional sample was collected online in order to correct for an under-representation of younger voters. In 2019 a 'push-to-web' methodology was used, with a hard copy completion being available to respondents who opted for it. The 1993 and post 2010 surveys are weighted to reflect the characteristics of the national electorate. The 2019 AES also included a panel component, based on respondents who were interviewed in both 2016 and 2019.

Candidates

The Australian Candidates Study (ACS) surveys are conducted in parallel with the surveys of voters. In 1987 all candidates for the House of Representatives and Senate were surveyed. Between 1990 and 2016 the surveys were restricted to all major party candidates, plus identifiable Greens and other environmental candidates. This restriction was designed to cut costs, since about half of the total number of candidates were minor party or independent candidates, almost all of whom lost their deposits. In 1993 the criteria were broadened to include non-major party candidates whom it was anticipated would obtain more than 10 per cent of the first preference vote. In 2019 all candidates were contacted if they supplied a valid email address on their nomination papers.

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Full technical details of the sampling methodology and question wording is available in the survey codebooks, available at www.australianelectionstudy.org.

Australian Election Study voter response rates, 1987 – 2019

Year	Total sample	Valid response	Effective response (%)
1987	3,061	1,825	62.8
1990	3,606	2,020	58.0
1993	4,950	3,023	62.8
1996	3,000	1,795	61.8
1998	3,502	1,896	57.7
2001	4,000	2,010	55.4
2004	4,250	1,769	44.5
2007	5,000	1,873	40.2
2010	4,999	2,003	40.1
2013	12,200	3,955	33.9
2016	12,497	2,818	22.5
2019	5,175	2,179	42.1

The response rate is estimated as: valid responses / (total sample–moved or gone away).

Australian Candidate Survey response rates, 1987 – 2019

	Election candidates			Australian Candidate Study		
Year	House of Representatives	Senate	Total	Total contacted	Valid response	Effective response (%)
1987	613	255	868	868	612	70.5
1990	782	223	1,005	631	410	65.0
1993	943	266	1,209	593	415	70.0
1996	908	255	1,163	672	427	63.5
2001	1,039	285	1,324	840	477	56.8
2004	1,091	330	1,421	998	535	53.6
2007	1,054	367	1,421	952	470	49.9
2010	849	349	1,198	543	247	45.5
2013	1,188	529	1,717	556	192	34.5
2016	994	631	1,625	591	182	30.8
2019	1,056	458	1,514	1,278	482	37.7

The 1987 and 2016 elections were double dissolution elections for the Senate. Other elections are half-Senate.
The response rate is estimated as valid responses / total contacted.

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australianelectionstudy.org

> Access complete data files and
documentation to conduct your
own analysis

> Explore interactive charts to
examine differences in political
attitudes by age, gender, education
level and vote

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