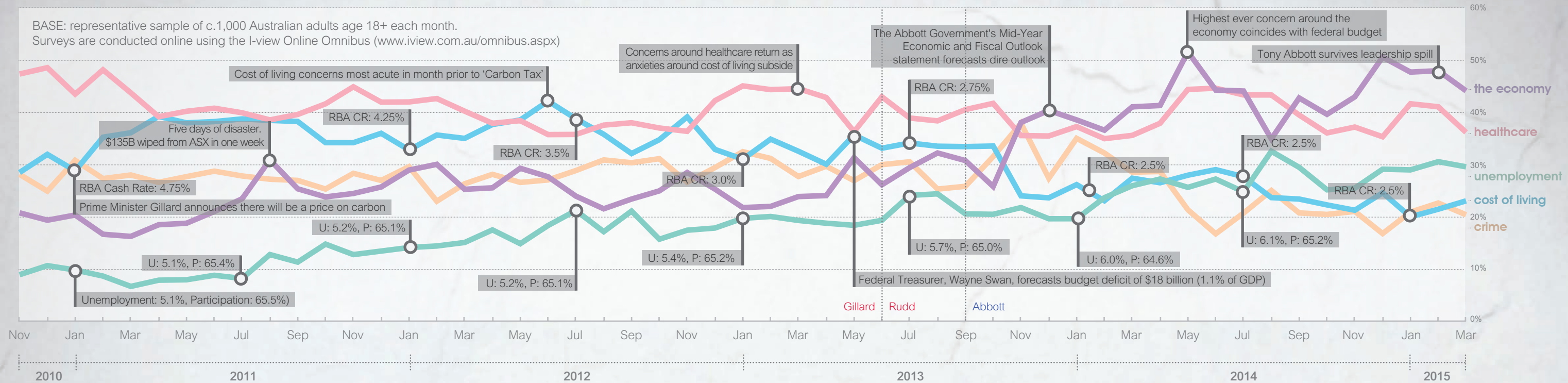


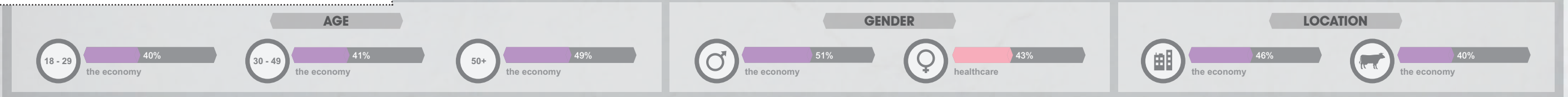
THE TOP ISSUES FACING AUSTRALIA

MARCH 2015

What would you say are the three most important issues facing Australia?



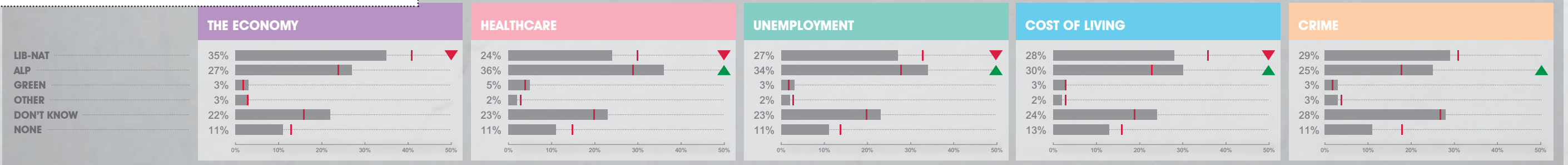
MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR...



MOST CAPABLE OF MANAGING...

Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues

▲ = Sep 2013
▲ ▼ denotes significant difference (Sep 2013 to Mar 2015)



IN SUMMARY



Dan Evans
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Is Australia about to slide into a winter of discontent?
'The Economy' has been the top issue facing Australia for eight consecutive months and for 15 of the 19 months we have been under a Coalition government. 'The Economy' was never the top issue under Ms Gillard or Mr Rudd. Australians were much more concerned about 'Healthcare' and, for a brief (pre-interest-rate-cut) period 'Cost of Living'. Sometimes the sun is at your back. Other times dust blows in your face. It really wasn't that long ago that Australia sailed through the eye-of-GFC-storm at an even keel and with barely a splash on the bow;

a sensible banking system our saviour, geography and geology our two greatest assets. The slashing of interest rates helped stimulate the economy and our relative post-GFC growth brought jobs, revenue, previously unseen wealth to many and, of course, a hope that it will continue for forever and a day.
But Australians have been observing a receding economic-tide for some time, informing our concern around 'The Economy'. We are worried about the sustainability of our lifestyle and the commitments that the good-times afforded us. While low interest-rates are helping keep household debt at relatively sustainable levels, these same cuts are

delivering a genuine investor-led boom in housing prices in Sydney and Melbourne. An uncertain jobs-market and no real measure yet on how beneficial the dipping dollar has been to tourism and exports are also informing our concern.
As argued by Steinbeck, "it's so much darker when a light goes out than it would have been if it had never shone".
While any sensible Australian would acknowledge that the economic conditions facing the Coalition are less favourable than what was afforded their predecessor, we are – as a nation – less confident in the

Coalition's ability to manage that issue now compared to when they were elected. And, as Mr Abbott and team prepare to deliver their mid-term budget on what will undoubtedly be a chilly Canberra evening, it remains to be seen whether they will be able to warm the nation at all through this winter.

ALL ISSUES FACING AUSTRALIA

MARCH 2015

What would you say are the three most important issues facing Australia?

	2010	2011				2012				2013				2014												2015		
	Nov - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
The Economy	20%	18%	19%	27%	25%	28%	27%	23%	26%	23%	27%	31%	34%	39%	37%	41%	41%	52%	44%	44%	35%	43%	40%	43%	51%	48%	48%	44%
Healthcare	48%	45%	40%	39%	43%	42%	37%	37%	39%	45%	41%	39%	38%	37%	35%	36%	38%	44%	45%	43%	43%	39%	36%	37%	35%	42%	41%	36%
Unemployment	10%	8%	8%	11%	14%	14%	17%	20%	17%	20%	19%	23%	21%	20%	24%	26%	27%	26%	27%	25%	33%	29%	25%	25%	29%	29%	31%	30%
Cost of Living	30%	33%	38%	38%	35%	34%	39%	36%	36%	33%	33%	34%	27%	26%	23%	27%	26%	28%	29%	28%	24%	23%	22%	21%	25%	20%	21%	23%
Crime	26%	29%	28%	27%	27%	26%	27%	30%	29%	30%	29%	27%	32%	35%	32%	29%	29%	21%	17%	21%	25%	21%	20%	21%	17%	21%	23%	20%
Education	15%	15%	11%	11%	12%	16%	13%	16%	20%	18%	18%	19%	21%	17%	19%	18%	19%	21%	23%	22%	19%	21%	18%	20%	22%	17%	20%	18%
Housing	24%	23%	22%	19%	21%	19%	20%	19%	18%	18%	17%	17%	18%	16%	17%	15%	16%	14%	14%	15%	13%	14%	15%	15%	17%	16%	15%	18%
Defence	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%	5%	3%	3%	2%	4%	10%	15%	23%	17%	10%	21%	18%	17%
Immigration	19%	22%	22%	24%	24%	20%	19%	27%	23%	21%	25%	23%	22%	24%	23%	23%	22%	18%	16%	20%	19%	19%	22%	20%	16%	18%	16%	16%
Drug Abuse	13%	13%	12%	11%	11%	11%	11%	12%	12%	13%	12%	11%	14%	21%	18%	18%	14%	10%	9%	11%	12%	13%	9%	11%	10%	10%	12%	14%
Poverty	10%	9%	9%	9%	11%	9%	9%	11%	10%	10%	11%	10%	10%	8%	12%	9%	11%	13%	16%	15%	17%	12%	14%	13%	14%	12%	10%	12%
Taxation	6%	6%	7%	9%	7%	8%	9%	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	7%	14%	11%	9%	7%	9%	9%	10%	8%	10%	7%	9%
Environment	20%	20%	18%	18%	16%	15%	13%	12%	12%	13%	12%	12%	12%	9%	13%	11%	11%	8%	10%	9%	8%	7%	10%	10%	12%	9%	9%	9%
Personal Debt	15%	12%	14%	13%	12%	12%	14%	10%	11%	10%	10%	9%	8%	6%	8%	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	5%	6%	8%
Transport	10%	12%	11%	10%	9%	10%	10%	9%	10%	10%	11%	9%	8%	7%	9%	7%	6%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%	7%
Population	10%	9%	9%	8%	8%	8%	7%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%	8%	7%	7%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	4%	6%
Racism	6%	7%	5%	7%	4%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	10%	7%	13%	9%	7%	8%	6%	6%
Petrol Prices	9%	13%	18%	13%	15%	15%	18%	12%	12%	12%	9%	13%	10%	11%	8%	11%	9%	8%	8%	8%	5%	7%	4%	6%	5%	3%	4%	5%
Indigenous Issues	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	3%

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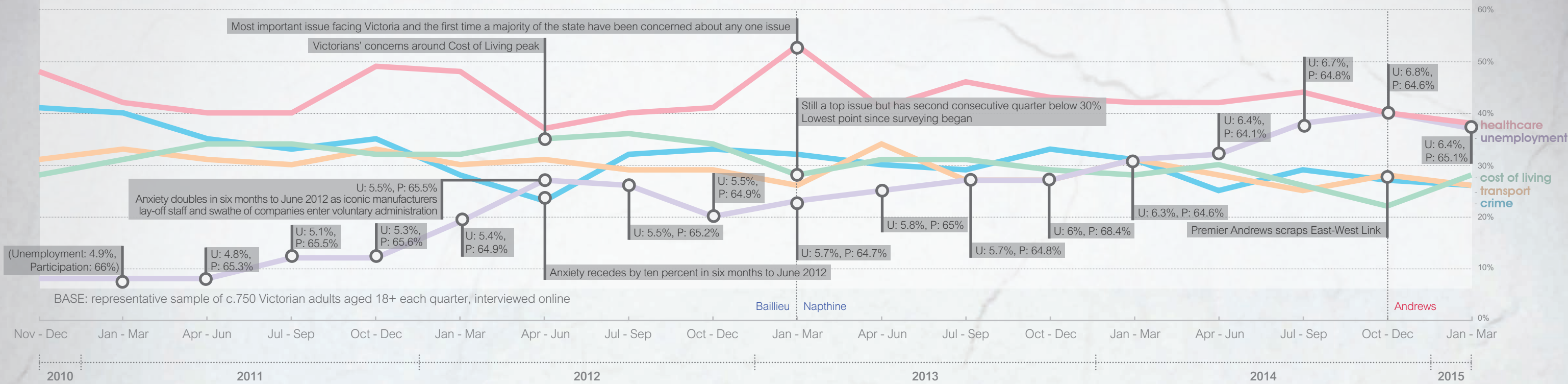


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At Ipsos Social Research Institute we invest time and resources to help us better understand general society. We do this to ensure that when we conduct a specific research project we have grounding as to how the findings of that project fit in within the broader context.

THE TOP ISSUES FACING VICTORIA JANUARY TO MARCH 2015

What would you say are the three most important issues facing Victoria?



KEY COMPARISONS

▲ ▼ denotes significant difference (January to March 2015)

	VICTORIA	REST OF AUSTRALIA	MELBOURNE	REST OF METROPOLITAN AUSTRALIA	REGIONAL VICTORIA	REST OF REGIONAL AUSTRALIA
HEALTHCARE	38%	42%	37%	40%	40%	46%
UNEMPLOYMENT	37%	35%	36%	32%	42%	41%
COST OF LIVING	28%	31%	28%	32%	27%	29%
TRANSPORT	▲ 26%	▼ 17%	▲ 28%	▼ 20%	▲ 22%	▼ 13%
CRIME	26%	26%	25%	24%	29%	28%

IN SUMMARY



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Victorians worry about transport. We always have, and probably always will. Across the five years we have been administering the Issues Monitor, Victorians have consistently demonstrated more concern about 'Transport' issues relative to the balance of Australians. For example, Victorians surveyed between January and March selected 'Transport' as the fourth most important issue facing our state, an issue which was eighth most important for all other Australians. Given this, it's not surprising that Victorian transport projects are high-profile, contentious and often discussed at an ideological level. When these projects get politicked, Victorians notice. East-West Link was politicked by all sides. Ultimately the project and Victorians lost out. It remains to be seen whether the recently re-announced and rejuvenated Melbourne Metro Rail tunnel will receive the same treatment.

One would think not, given investment in public transport has broader appeal than road. In a recent survey we asked 3,000 Victorians to prioritise attributes that make somewhere a good place to live. Victorians were twice as likely to select 'reliable and efficient public transport' than 'a lack of road congestion'. In fact, 'reliable and efficient public transport' was considered the fourth most important attribute behind 'feeling safe', 'high quality health services' and 'affordable decent housing'. 'A lack of road congestion' was stuck in traffic, and came in 14th. While it is true that we Victorians worry about transport and are more supportive of rail relative to road, right now a lack of jobs trumps all. 'Unemployment' has been the second most important issue facing Victoria for one year and for the past six months has competed with 'Healthcare' for the number one position.

Big infrastructure is usually sold twice. First as an economic stimulant, then as a legacy dividend. Scrapping East West Link was a bold move given actual unemployment rates are the highest they have been for several years. This decision cost Victoria jobs, a fact not lost on Victorians. It also cost the government stories about jobs. The ALP took away the stimulant, by arguing the legacy was not worth the outlay. With major construction on Melbourne Metro Rail not beginning until 2018, Premier Andrews and Minister Pallas have the responsibility in their maiden May budget to start re-building Victorians' confidence in governments' decision making. Doing so will assist in the delivery of much-needed jobs and hopefully a legacy of sensible, equitable, enabling infrastructure.

ALL ISSUES FACING VICTORIA JANUARY TO MARCH 2015

What would you say are the three most important issues facing Victoria?

	2010	2011				2012				2013				2014				2015
	Nov - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Healthcare	48%	42%	40%	40%	49%	48%	37%	40%	41%	53%	41%	46%	43%	42%	42%	44%	40%	38%
Unemployment	8%	8%	8%	12%	12%	19%	27%	26%	20%	23%	25%	27%	27%	31%	32%	38%	40%	37%
Cost of Living	28%	31%	34%	34%	32%	32%	35%	36%	34%	28%	31%	31%	29%	28%	30%	26%	22%	28%
Transport	31%	33%	31%	30%	33%	30%	31%	29%	29%	26%	34%	27%	27%	31%	28%	25%	28%	26%
Crime	41%	40%	35%	33%	35%	28%	23%	32%	33%	32%	30%	29%	33%	31%	25%	29%	27%	26%
Housing	28%	33%	32%	29%	30%	24%	25%	23%	23%	18%	24%	21%	22%	18%	21%	20%	20%	23%
The Economy	12%	7%	9%	16%	11%	16%	18%	15%	14%	14%	17%	20%	17%	21%	23%	18%	19%	23%
Education	16%	12%	13%	14%	11%	19%	19%	23%	24%	25%	21%	20%	18%	18%	20%	19%	22%	22%
Drug Abuse	15%	15%	15%	11%	12%	14%	10%	13%	14%	14%	14%	13%	16%	17%	16%	20%	17%	18%
Poverty	7%	7%	8%	7%	8%	5%	7%	8%	9%	7%	6%	7%	8%	7%	9%	10%	10%	9%
Environment	17%	15%	12%	13%	12%	10%	7%	7%	7%	9%	8%	7%	11%	9%	7%	7%	9%	8%
Personal Debt	11%	11%	11%	12%	11%	9%	12%	10%	10%	7%	7%	8%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%
Taxation	4%	4%	4%	6%	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%	6%	5%	6%	7%
Petrol Prices	11%	16%	21%	17%	19%	18%	24%	14%	17%	18%	12%	18%	18%	17%	13%	13%	10%	6%
Population	8%	8%	10%	8%	7%	8%	5%	8%	6%	7%	7%	6%	8%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%
Immigration	6%	8%	9%	9%	7%	8%	8%	6%	8%	8%	9%	8%	7%	6%	7%	8%	7%	5%
Defence	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	4%	5%
Racism	5%	7%	5%	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	7%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	6%	4%
Indigenous Issues	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%

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ABOUT US: VICTORIA



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