

Australians more anxious ahead of 2025 election, with misinformation and economic instability driving concerns

New research reveals growing scepticism around political news, social media, and AI-generated misinformation

Sydney, April 2025 – Australians are heading into the 2025 federal election with higher anxiety levels than in both 2022 and 2019, with economic instability, global tensions, and misinformation among their biggest concerns.

According to new findings from the [Real Concerns Report 2025](#) by Real Insurance, Australians' concern level has risen to an index score of 61.9, up from 59.7 in 2022 and 44.5 in 2019. Financial issues – including the rising cost of living and economic uncertainty – remain the top concern for over half (52%) of Australians, up from just over one in three (35%) in 2022. However, concerns over the state of the nation, particularly international relations and global instability (13%), are also high on the agenda.

To paint a picture of the top worries on Australians' minds as they head into the election, the survey asked respondents to identify their overall greatest concern. The findings revealed a strong focus on financial stability, the state of the nation, and concerns surrounding health, the environment, and technology.

Greatest Overall Concerns for Australians in 2025:

- Financial concerns (i.e., cost of living, economic stability, and financial security) – 52%
- Health concerns (i.e., efforts required to eat/exercise right, stay safe, and be healthy) – 13%
- State of the nation (i.e., clarity in government policies, stability in local politics, international relations) – 13%
- Climate change and environment (i.e., degrading environment and legacy left for children) – 10%
- Work and education (i.e., work-life balance, stress, career development, and job security) – 7%

Financial concerns top the list for voters in 2025

Australians are deeply worried about financial challenges in 2025. Almost all (91%) are concerned about the rising cost of living – including general expenses and utilities – while 84% worry about instability in the global economy, and 81% are concerned about instability in the local economy.

Financial concerns are felt more strongly by women compared to men, as well as by Gen Y and those with children at home. Over three in four (76%) worry about having enough money for emergencies, with concern highest among females (80%), Gen Y (84%), and parents with children at home (83%). Housing affordability is also a major issue, with 77% seeing it as a concern – particularly among Gen Y (86%).

Global instability and political transparency cause growing concern

Beyond financial stress, Australians are increasingly worried about global conflicts and political instability. Almost nine in ten (88%) are concerned about international relations and global instability, while more than eight in ten (85%) worry about government transparency and integrity. A similar proportion (84%) are concerned about the lack of effective leadership within political parties.

Baby Boomers are particularly troubled by the state of the nation, with over one in three (35%) expressing very strong concern regarding international relations, compared to less than three in 10 (29%) overall.

The rising threat of misinformation, deepfakes and AI in an election year

While only a small portion (5%) of Australians cite technology as their biggest overall concern, anxiety around misinformation, fake news, and AI-generated content is rising. In contrast to the 2022 federal election, where AI-generated images and deepfakes were less prolific, the 2025 election sees these technologies playing a much larger role in shaping voter perceptions.

Dr Marian-Andrei Rizoiu, Associate Professor at The University of Technology Sydney, says:

“As we approach the 2025 election, Australians are increasingly concerned about the role of deepfakes and AI-generated content in shaping public discourse. Research shows that misinformation spreads not because of bad facts, but through the strategic manipulation of emotional reactions and community belonging. This represents a fundamental shift from previous elections, where identifying false content was more straightforward. Today, voters need to understand that even factually accurate content can be weaponised when presented selectively or out of context to trigger specific emotional responses.”

According to the data, nearly nine in 10 (87%) Australians are concerned that deepfakes and AI-altered images make it harder to distinguish real from fake, while a similar proportion (86%) worry about misinformation spreading rapidly online.

Internationally, deepfakes and fake news have already caused significant disruption in elections, where they have been used to spread misinformation and undermine trust. In Australia, nearly seven in 10 (68%) say it is harder to trust news and information now compared to two years ago, while 66% feel more sceptical of political news than in previous election years.

In fact, over one in three (33%) Australians admit they have had to correct or fact-check someone close to them about misinformation – a trend even more common among Gen Z (44%) and Gen Y (40%). The report also revealed that most (85%) are concerned about the growing negative influence of social media on political discourse.

How Australians are fighting back

In response to rising scepticism, Australians are adopting more rigorous news verification habits. Nearly four in five (77%) are making a conscious effort to fact-check political news at least sometimes. The most common tactics include checking multiple news sources (59%), assessing the credibility of the news outlet (40%), reviewing primary sources such as official statements and reports (38%), and discussing political news with friends, family, and colleagues (38%).

Similarly, nearly nine in 10 (86%) have adjusted their online habits to avoid misinformation – many now actively avoid clickbait content (41%), rely on trusted news sources (36%), and read beyond headlines before forming opinions (35%).

With misinformation becoming more sophisticated, experts are encouraging Australians to sharpen their critical thinking skills ahead of voting.

Dr Marian-Andrei Rizoiu comments:

“Australians' growing scepticism toward political news reflects a broader erosion of trust in our information ecosystem. Our research has identified a clear pathway from initial exposure to misinformation toward potential radicalisation, with distinct intervention points along the way. During this election season, the most effective defence isn't just fact-checking—it's developing media literacy skills that help voters recognise manipulation techniques and understand how recommendation algorithms can trap them in information bubbles. The finding that 86% of Australians have already changed their tech habits to avoid misinformation shows a promising awareness that citizens can take control of their information diet.”

As Australians prepare for the challenges ahead, the findings from the report highlight a nation that is increasingly vigilant, resilient, and determined to stay informed. While financial pressures, global tensions, and misinformation continue to shape our concerns, the growing focus on media literacy and community awareness offers a hopeful path forward. By staying engaged and aware, Aussies are better equipped to navigate an increasingly complex world.

For more information or to access the full Real Concerns Report 2025, [click here](#).

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About the Real Concerns Report 2025

The Real Concerns Report 2025 was compiled based on research commissioned by Real Insurance and conducted by MYMAVINS between 28–31 March 2025. The research was carried out through a quantitative online survey, gathering 1,366 responses from Australians aged 18 and above. The sample is broadly representative of the Australian population in terms of age, gender, wealth, and region.

About Real Insurance

Real Insurance is an award-winning brand of insurance products, specialising in life, income protection, funeral, health, home, car, pet, travel and landlords' insurance. In the market since 2005, Real Insurance have helped protect the quality of life of many Australians through the delivery of innovative products. Real Insurance is the proud recipient of many product and service awards, most recently being announced a winner of the 2023 Roy Morgan Customer Satisfaction - Risk & Life Insurer of the Year, 2025 ProductReview.com.au Award for Life Insurance and Funeral Insurance, 2024 WeMoney Finalist award for Best in Flexibility in the life insurance category, and Feefo's 2025 Platinum Trusted Service Award across a range of products. Real Insurance is a trading name of Greenstone Financial Services Pty Ltd.