

The Queensland election will be held in six days on the 31 January. Queensland is the sole Australian state with only one parliamentary chamber; the upper house was [abolished by Labor in 1921](#).

The lower house has 89 single member seats, with members elected via *optional*

preferential voting (OPV). Whereas full preferential voting requires voters to number every square on the ballot paper, under OPV a “1” vote for a chosen candidate is valid. If there is no preference for candidates left in the count following the exclusion of a voter’s chosen candidate, that vote exhausts, and does not remain in the count.

Due to these exhausted votes, OPV is better for candidates who lead on primary votes than full preferential voting because there are less votes left in the count for trailing candidates to potentially overtake. Since the introduction of OPV in 1992, “1” only votes have [risen from 23% of the electorate](#) to 70% in 2012. Most of this increase is driven by the major parties, but “1” only votes accounted for over 50% of non-major party votes in 2012.

According to [Antony Green’s analysis](#), the Liberal National Party (LNP) won four seats in 2012 that it would probably have lost under full preferential voting. However, Labor was helped by OPV to hold Mulgrave and Mackay. In Queensland, regional seats often have right wing Others voters, and the exhaustion of these votes helps Labor rather than the LNP. This was particularly the case in [Labor’s 2001 landslide](#), when the conservative vote was split between the Coalition, One Nation and the City Country Alliance.

[At the 2012 election](#), the LNP won 49.7% of the primary vote to Labor’s dismal 26.7%. Katter’s Australian Party (KAP) won 11.5% and the Greens 7.5%. This resulted in the LNP winning a crushing 78 of 89 seats, with Labor winning only 7 seats, KAP 2 and Independents 2. The statewide Two Party Preferred (2PP) vote has been estimated at 63-37 to the LNP; the Queensland Electoral Commission does not conduct a Labor vs LNP 2PP count in seats where either party did not make the final two candidates, so a statewide 2PP must be estimated.

While the Queensland 2012 result was terrible for Labor, it was actually a better performance in statewide vote terms than the [NSW 2011 election](#), which Labor lost by a statewide 64-36, yet managed 20 of 93 seats. The difference is that Labor had many very safe seats in NSW, but in Queensland the electoral geography was dire for Labor in a wipeout election.

Since 2012, Labor has gained Redcliffe and Stafford from the LNP at by-elections, and three LNP members have defected, one to the KAP and two becoming Independents. The party standings at the end of this parliamentary term are thus: LNP 73, Labor 9, KAP 3 and Independents 4. Labor needs to gain 36 seats to win majority government.

At the 2009 election, Labor's comfortable majority of 51 of 89 seats was created by winning [34 of the 40 seats](#) in Greater Brisbane. Brisbane has had 40 seats since 1992, and Labor has won at least 31 of these seats during the 1992-2009 period; they were in government for that period apart from one brief interruption from 1996-98. At the 2012 election, Labor won only four of Brisbane's seats. Brisbane is the area where Labor needs to make the most gains to win government, and Labor probably needs at least 30 Brisbane seats. North Queensland could provide other Labor gains.

We have had two statewide polls conducted since last weekend. A [ReachTEL poll](#) taken Tuesday night had the LNP leading by 52-48, a 2% gain for the LNP since the 6 January ReachTEL. Primary votes were 42.0% for the LNP (up 1.7), 36.7% for Labor (down 1.4), 8.4% for the Greens (up 0.8) and 5.2% for Palmer United Party (PUP) (down 1.1%). Newman's total good rating was 32% (down 4) and his total poor rating was 46% (down 1) for a net approval of -14. Palaszczuk's net approval was -3, up from -8.5. By a 51.5-48.5 margin, voters thought the LNP was better for the economy than Labor; note that this was a forced choice question, and polls that give an undecided option have much wider leads for the LNP on economic management. Voters opposed the 99-year asset lease plans of the LNP by a 47-38 margin. This poll had a sample of 1600.

A [Morgan SMS poll](#) of 1200 voters, conducted last weekend 16-18 January, has the LNP leading by a narrow 50.5-49.5 margin, unchanged on a late November Morgan. Primary votes are 39.5% for the LNP (up 0.5), 37% for Labor (up 0.5), 10% for the Greens (up 0.5) and 4% for PUP (steady). As Morgan's SMS polls performed poorly at the Victorian election, I would trust the other polls more than Morgan; these polls all show a rise in the LNP primary vote since the election was called, and a likely LNP win. However, the ReachTEL poll was conducted last Tuesday night, so there is still time for Labor to regain ground.

A [Newspoll survey](#) of the electorates of Cairns, Keppel and Ipswich West, taken Tuesday and Wednesday nights from a combined sample of 610, shows a 13% swing to Labor across these three seats. However, these seats are not "key seats" because Labor needs to win many seats on 10%+ margins, not the 6-9% margins by which these seats are held. This seat poll is good news for Labor, but unless the 13% swing is replicated across the board, Labor would probably

lose.

Polls are using 2012 preference flows to calculate their Two Party Preferred (2PP) estimates. It is very likely that preference flows at this election will be better for Labor than in 2012 because the Greens despise both Newman and Abbott, and PUP was originally formed due to Clive Palmer's hatred of Newman. At both the 2013 Federal election and the 2014 Victorian state election, preference flows to Labor have been higher than most pollsters anticipated, but the pollsters have been about right on the 2PP as they have underestimated the Coalition's primary vote performance. Whether this happens in Queensland is to be determined.

With PUP support falling to 5% in ReachTEL, it is highly unlikely that PUP will win any seats. The Greens have 10% in Morgan and 8% in ReachTEL, but pollsters always overestimate Greens support, and the Greens are also unlikely to win any seats. I have discussed Newman's prospects in Ashgrove in previous articles.

Other State Morgan Polls

[Morgan took SMS polls](#) for all states on the 16-18 January. Except for Victoria, the comparisons here are with a similar Morgan SMS poll in late November. Sample sizes were 1100 in NSW, 1050 in Victoria, 430 in both WA and SA and 285 in Tasmania.

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In NSW, the Coalition leads by 54-46, a 1% gain for Labor. Primary votes are 44.5% for the Coalition (up 0.5), 35% for Labor (up 2.5) and 11% for the Greens (down 1.5). The NSW election will be held in late March.

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In Victoria, Labor leads by 59-41, a 7% gain for Labor since their November election win; this honeymoon bounce is to be expected. Primary votes are 45% for Labor (up 7), 35% for the Coalition (down 7) and 11.5% for the Greens (steady).

In WA, Labor leads by 50.5-49.5, a 2% gain for Labor. In SA, Labor leads by 52-48, a 0.5%

gain for Labor. In Tasmania, Labor leads the Liberals by 39.5-38.5 on primary votes with the Greens on 17%.

Greek Election Today

The Greek election will be held today, with results coming in early tomorrow morning Australian time. I have [previewed this election here](#) . Since that article, the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) has widened its lead over the centre-right New Democrats, and the [final polls have SYRIZA](#)

leading by between 3 and 11 points, with an average lead of around 7%. It is very likely that SYRIZA will win the vote, and thus also win 50 bonus seats. Seat projections based on these polls suggest SYRIZA will win 140-150 of the 300 seats, so they may need to negotiate with another party to form government.

I will update this article tomorrow with the Greek election results.

Adrian Beaumont does not work for, consult to, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has no relevant affiliations.

Read more <http://theconversation.com/queensland-election-preview-36700>