Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
INQUIRY INTO CIVICS EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT, AND PARTICIPATION IN AUSTRALIA

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE
Australian Electoral Commission

Subject:	Factors impacting turnout
Question date:	13 September 2024
Question type:	Hearing Proof Hansard, page 33
Response date:	24 September 2024

Question

Ms CHANEY: There's an assumption built into here that younger voter turnout is declining. Firstly, is that the case, and, secondly, is that entirely attributable to enrolments going up? Are there other specific cohorts where you're seeing turnout decline, or is it pretty steady?

Response

The following analysis is based on the last five federal elections, 2010 to 2022. Quoted turnout uses a slight approximation based on voter mark-off instead of ballot papers admitted to the count (as per the note below).

Analysis
- Between 2010 and 2022, percentage turnout declined across all broad age groups.
- The proportion of eligible youth voting increased more than other age groups.
- The youth enrolment rate increased more than the overall enrolment rate.

Turnout from mark-off[1]

	FE2010	FE2013	FE2016	FE2019	FE2022	Relative variation
All ages	93.7%	93.8%	91.8%	92.4%	90.3%	-0.3
18-24	**91.6%**	**92.2%**	**88.3%**	**89.8%**	**86.9%**	**-0.4**
25-39	91.9%	91.9%	88.6%	88.9%	86.3%	-0.5
40+	94.8%	94.8%	93.7%	94.1%	92.4%	-0.2

[1] *Note: Turnout used in this table uses "mark-off data" rather than "admitted ballot papers data" (that is used in the turnout calculations provided on the AEC website) as mark-off is data is where age information is available.*

Enrolment rate

	FE2010	FE2013	FE2016	FE2019	FE2022	Relative variation
All ages	90.9%	92.4%	95.0%	97.0%	96.8%	+0.5
18-24	**80.3%**	**81.5%**	**87.3%**	**88.8%**	**88.1%**	**+0.8**

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RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE
Australian Electoral Commission

Subject: Digital literacy and education resources for parliamentarians
Question date: 13 September 2024
Question type: Hearing Proof Hansard, page 36
Response date: 24 September 2024

Question

Senator REYNOLDS: I haven't heard the term 'prebunking', but I think that it is actually quite a powerful concept. In terms of all of the things that you're doing—I hadn't heard of the AEC TV, for example. Are there ways that we, as in parliamentarians—and maybe one of the things in this report could be about: what more can we do to be aware of and up-to-date with what you're doing? These statistics are fantastic, and that whole package of things makes a lot of sense, but it shouldn't just be up to the AEC. You're doing a great job in all of these areas, but this is not just your sole responsibility.

Are there ways, perhaps on notice, that you could suggest for how we could, as parliamentarians—there would be few, if any, members or senators who wouldn't like to—engage in our own communities in terms of literacy about the process and integrity of the process, particularly in that civic space and with that younger cohort, who are particularly cynical, disengaged and prone to social media bots and misinformation.

Response

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has developed a range of education and engagement resources to support the electoral participation of the Australian community. Many of these resources can be used by Senators and Members within their communities.

General community education resources
Community education resources are available on the AEC website for stakeholders, community groups and others to use with their community. There is a PowerPoint presentation and a facilitator guide. Resources are available from: https://www.aec.gov.au/community/.

AEC TV
The AEC's You Tube channel—AEC TV—has a range of videos that explain complex electoral information including in accessible formats and in-language. Many videos address emerging questions and help to ensure the community has an easily digestible source of truth on electoral matters. AEC TV can be accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/AECTV.

Accessible resources
The AEC publishes accessible and in-language resources, such as Easy Read Guides and translated materials. These are available at: https://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/ Translated_information/.

Resources for schools and teachers
The AEC has a range of teacher resources on the AEC for Schools website to support teaching civics and electoral education in the classroom. These resources include the Get Voting program, which offers free election equipment packs to schools, as well as the Teacher Professional Learning program. The AEC for Schools website is at: https://education.aec.gov.au.

Bookable community education sessions
The AEC runs community education sessions online and across Australia. These can be booked through the AEC website at: https://www.aec.gov.au/community/book-session.htm.

Online practise voting tool
The AEC's online practise voting tool allows voters to practice completing both a House of Representatives and Senate ballot paper and is available in translated versions. This can be shared with communities and is available at: https://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/How_to_vote/practice/.

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RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE
Australian Electoral Commission

Subject: Informal voting
Question date: 13 September 2024
Question type: Hearing Proof Hansard, page 36
Response date: 24 September 2024

Question

CHAIR: Just quickly—and you can take this on notice—could you provide the information about informal voting by voting type and also whether you keep informal voting information by polling booth or electorate? How do you keep it?

Response

Data for federal elections and referendums conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission is available to view and download from the Tally Room at https://results.aec.gov.au/. This includes national, state, divisional and polling place data.

For example, House of Representatives data for the 2022 federal election includes:

- Informal votes by state
  https://results.aec.gov.au/27966/Website/HouseInformalByState-27966.htm
- Informal votes by division
  https://results.aec.gov.au/27966/Website/HouseInformalByDivision-27966-NAT.htm

Further inspection of the divisional data provides informality by vote type and polling place. Detailed data on informal votes by polling place is also included in the 'First preferences by candidate by polling place' download files, available on https://results.aec.gov.au/27966/Website/HouseDownloadsMenu-27966-Csv.htm.