The 2024 Queensland Election: Still 'Six Queenslands'?

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Abstract: Public opinion polls for the 2024 Queensland election long forecast an electoral landslide for the Liberal-National Party (LNP) and its moderate leader David Crisafulli. The result, however, was a narrow majority for a regionally-strong LNP that barely breached Labor's Brisbane 'wall'. The 2024 election once again underscores the power of the regions in Queensland politics and, as the third in a longitudinal study of the state's regional vote, the article confirms the 'six Queenslands' thesis which posits that Queensland voter behaviour is best analysed across six discrete regions.

INTRODUCTION

This article disaggregates the results of the 2024 Queensland election of 26 October for the state's 58th parliament. The election produced a rare change of government to interrupt, or perhaps terminate, the second Labor 'hegemony'[2] during which Labor governed the state for 30 of the 35 years between 1989 and 2024. Indeed, it is just the third occasion since 1957 on which

[1] The author thanks anonymous referees for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

[2] It has been argued that Queensland for much of the 20th and 21st centuries has endured three electoral 'hegemonies': First Labor (1915-29; 1932-57); Coalition / National Party (1957-98); Second Labor (1989-1996; 1998-2012; 2015-2024). See Paul D. Williams, 'The Queensland Election of 7 February 2004: The Coming of the Second Labor Hegemony?' *Australian Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 39, No. 3, 2004, pp. 635-44; Paul D. Williams, 'How did they do it? Explaining Queensland Labor's Second Electoral Hegemony'. *Queensland Review: Labor in Queensland, 1989-2011.* Special Edition. Vol. 18, No. 2, 2011, pp. 112-33; Paul D. Williams, 'Queensland', in *Australia's Politics and Public Policy*, in Peter J. Chen, Nicholas Barry, John R. Butcher, David Clune, Ian Cook, Adele Garnier, Yvonne Haigh, Sara C. Motta and Marija Taflaga. Eds. University of Sydney Press. 2026 pp. 245-64.

conservatives have formed government from opposition at a Queensland general election.[3] The outcome, a Liberal-National Party (LNP) majority, was rarely doubted given a series of opinion polls had long raised expectations of an LNP 'landslide'. Even before a mid-2024 *Resolve Strategic* poll apportioned 58.5 per cent of the two-party-preferred vote (2PP) to the LNP to Labor's 41.5[4] – sufficient to secure 31 additional seats for an LNP total of 65 – Premier Miles had conceded Labor would 'very likely' lose.[5]

The result, however, defied many of those expectations: the LNP captured just 52 of the Legislative Assembly's 93 seats for a narrow majority of five. Critically, the LNP, despite performing strongly outside the capital, failed to make substantial inroads into Brisbane, with Labor retaining 31 of the 40 districts located across Greater Brisbane, defined below. It is this question of regional disparity which drives this research: the third[6] successive study of disaggregated Queensland election results published in this journal. Together, the three articles comprise a unique longitudinal study offering insight into geographically-based electoral behaviour of Queensland voters between 2017 and 2028: a period defined by a single electoral redistribution[7] covering the 2017, 2020 and 2024 state elections.

[3] The Borbidge-Sheldon National-Liberal Coalition Government, 1996-98, assumed office after Labor's defeat in the Mundingburra by-election of February 1996 that saw Labor Premier Wayne Goss resign after losing his parliamentary majority.

[4] Matt Dennien, 'Crisafulli gains more ground with voters as Labor support slides again.' *Brisbane Times*, 10 September 2024. https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/crisafulli-gains-more-ground-with-voters-as-labor-support-slides-again-20240909-p5k900.html

[5] Hayden Johnson, 'Long way to go': Premier's 'base camp' backflip after admitting election doubts', *Courier Mail*, 28 April 2024.

[6] Paul D Williams, 'One, Two or Many Queenslands? Disaggregating the regional vote at the 2017 Queensland state election. *Australian Parliamentary Review.* Vol. 33, No. 2, 2018, pp. 57-79; Paul D. Williams, 'Revisiting 'Six Queenslands: Disaggregating the regional vote at the 2020 Queensland State Election'. *Australasian Parliamentary Review*. Vol. 38, No. 1, 2023. pp. 108-27. Paul. D. Williams, 'Queensland's Role in the 2019 Australian Federal Election: A case study of regional difference'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History*. Vol. 67, No. 1, 2021, pp. 158-59.

[7] For context for the expansion of the Legislative Assembly in 2016, see Paul D. Williams, 'Political Chronicle – Queensland, January-June, 2020'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History*. Vol. 66, No. 4, 2020, pp. 630-31.

THE 'SIX QUEENSLANDS' THESIS

Earlier analyses of Queensland electoral behaviour were commonly made under a 'two Queenslands' thesis that assumed Queensland voters could be dichotomised between just two constituencies, routinely described as 'coastal' versus 'rural', or 'Brisbane' versus 'the bush', or simply the 'southeast' versus 'the rest'.[8] Such analysis was not entirely misplaced: it provided broad insight into how Brisbane – home to less than half the state's population[9] and described since the 1990s as a progressive Labor 'fortress'[10] - could behave at the ballot box so differently from the state's northern and western districts. But neither does a 'two Queenslands' thesis capture the clear distinctions between the many seats previously and collectively described as 'regional'. It ignored, for example, the subtle variations in voter behaviour between Maryborough and Mermaid Beach – separated by just 336 km.[11] A 'two Queenslands' thesis also ignores the subtle variations in the populist discourse comprising much of Queensland political culture.[12] Where the cultural nationalism and 'nativism' [13] of One Nation[14] finds traction from the Brisbane fringes to eastern provincial cities to southern and western farmlands, the 'agrarian socialism'[15] of Katter's Australian Party (KAP) is confined to the northern and north-

[8] See, for example, Malcolm Mackerras, 'The Swing: Variability and Uniformity'. *Politics* 8 (1), 1973, p. 238; John Holmes, 'Coast versus Inland: Two Different Queenslands?'. *Australian Geographical Studies* 32 (2), 1994, pp. 167-182; Neils Kraaier, 'How the 2017 Same-Sex Marriage Postal Survey and the 2017 Queensland State Election Underscore the 'Two Queenslands' Thesis'. *Queensland Review* 25 (1), 2018, p. 39.

[9] Queensland remains the only mainland Australian state where more people live outside the capital than within.

[10] Mackenzie Scott and Lydia Lynch, 'LNP wins 7 per cent swing but Labor to retain Brisbane fortress'. *Australian*, 5 November 2024; Paul D. Williams, 'Smith is the fall guy as Labor pays the wages of past political sins.' *Courier Mail*, 1 May 2012, p. 26.

[11] Despite both seats being 'regional', Maryborough has swung between Labor, Liberal-LNP and One Nation while Mermaid Beach has been loyally LNP.

[12] Paul D. Williams, 'Leaders and Political Culture: The Development of the Queensland Premiership, 1859-2009.' *Queensland Review* 16 (1) 2009, pp. 15-34; Paul D. Williams, 'Queensland's Role in the 2019 Australian Federal Election: A case study of regional difference'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 67(1) 2021, pp. 150-68.

[13] Benjamin Moffitt and Kurt Sengul, 'The populist radical right in Australia Pauline Hanson's One Nation'. *Journal of Language and Politics* 22 (3), pp. 306-23.

[14] Pauline Hanson's One Nation was officially renamed One Nation in October 2025.

[15] Leisa Scott and Ben Cheshire, 'Bob Katter's been an MP for 50 years but there's one topic he rarely talks about'. *ABC News*, 14 April 2025. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-04-14/bob-katter-federal-election-minority-government-mother-mp-qld/105023932.

western hinterland. By contrast, the 'positive populism'[16] of Clive Palmer's United Australia Party appears contained to the Sunshine Coast. As argued previously,[17] this article posits that Queensland voter behaviour is more accurately defined by a 'six Queenslands' taxonomy that divides the state's 93 electoral districts into six distinct regions. These are anatomised below.

IDENTIFYING 'SIX QUEENSLANDS'

The first region, Brisbane City[18], aligns closely with the boundaries of the Brisbane City Council, and is home to 21 districts. Brisbane City boasts a broad occupational mix dominated by professionals and managers, with the number of tertiary-educated residents significantly higher than the Queensland mean.[19] The second region, the Brisbane Fringe[20] – encompassing the satellite cities of Logan, Ipswich, Moreton Bay, and Redlands – is comprised of 19 seats. Residents here have fewer tertiary qualifications, and are more likely to be employed in the trades, and earn lower incomes. The third, Gold Coast,[21] extends from Yatala to the New South Wales border. This region contains 11 seats and is driven largely by small business ('sales' is a major occupation), with residents boasting university qualifications at the Queensland mean. The fourth, Sunshine Coast[22] is home to nine districts and stretches from Beerburrum in the south to Rainbow Beach in the north. While this region also boasts a significant small business

[16] John Wanna, 'Now for the $55 million question: what does Clive Palmer actually want?' *The Conversation*, 2 May 2019. https://theconversation.com/now-for-the-55-million-question-what-does-clive-palmer-actually-want-11635

[17] Williams, 'One, Two or Many Queenslands? Disaggregating the regional vote at the 2017 Queensland state election; Williams, 'Revisiting 'Six Queenslands: Disaggregating the regional vote at the 2020 Queensland State Election'.

[18] Brisbane City covers Aspley, Mansfield, South Brisbane, Ferny Grove, Mt Ommaney, McConnel, Miller, Stretton, Toohey, Greenslopes, Cooper, Bulimba, Lytton, Stafford, Inala, Clayfield, Chatsworth, Everton, Moggill, Maiwar and Nudgee.

[19] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census data, 'Greater Brisbane'. https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/3GBRI

[20] Brisbane Fringe covers Capalaba, Redlands, Springwood, Redcliffe, Pine Rivers, Bancroft, Logan, Kurwongbah, Macalister, Morayfield, Murrumba, Jordan, Waterford, Ipswich, Sandgate, Algester, Bundamba, Oodgeroo and Woodridge.

[21] Gold Coast covers Gaven, Bonney, Currumbin, Coomera, Theodore, Burleigh, Mermaid Beach, Southport, Mudgeeraba, Broadwater and Surfers Paradise.

[22] Sunshine Coast covers Pumicestone, Glass House, Nicklin, Ninderry, Maroochydore, Buderim, Kawana, Noosa and Caloundra.

constituency, its population is significantly older than the Queensland average. The fifth region, Eastern Provincial,[23] follows the seaboard from Gympie to Cape York, and westward to the Great Dividing Range; it is comprised of 21 seats. The region is an eclectic economic mix – Townsville is home to a military base with other centres dominated by tourism and port facilities – that supports inland agricultural, pastoralism and mining enterprises. Blue-collar incomes here are often above the Queensland mean but more subject to global vagaries which can cultivate mercurial voter behaviour and a predilection for populism. The final region, Western Rural,[24] covers 12 seats across western and north-west Queensland where, again, a mix of mining, pastoralism and agriculture dominate. Described as the most conservative region,[25] voters here have fewer university qualifications and are more likely to identify as Christian.

METHOD

This study offers a contextual backdrop to the 2024 election via a brief account of the 57th Parliament before moving to a summary of the campaign between 1 October and 26 October. It then examines public opinion data before a tabling of results – by party and seats won – across Queensland, and in each of the six regions defined above. This research employs a qualitative interpretative method of analysis that, as expounded by Wiesner, moves the researcher toward 'reflection beyond a mere qualitative content analysis'.[26]

[23] Eastern Provincial covers Townsville, Mundingburra, Barron River, Maryborough, Keppel, Cairns, Thuringowa, Rockhampton, Cook, Mackay, Mulgrave, Gladstone, Whitsunday, Burdekin, Bundaberg, Gympie, Hervey Bay, Mirani, Hinchinbrook, Hill and Burnett.

[24] Western Rural covers Traeger, Ipswich West, Gregory, Nanango, Scenic Rim, Southern Downs, Toowoomba North, Toowoomba South, Condamine, Warrego, Lockyer and Callide.

[25] Williams, 'Queensland's Role in the 2019 Australian Federal Election'; Ben Reid and Gang-Jun Liu, 'One Nation and the Heartland's Cleavage: An Exploratory Spatial Data Analysis', in B. Grant, T. Moore and T. Lynch (eds) *The Rise of Right-Populism*. Singapore: Springer. Ben Reid and Gang-Jun Lui, 'One Nation and the Heartlands Cleavage: An explanatory spatial data analysis'. Paper delivered to the Australian Political Studies Association Conference, 2017.
https://dro.deakin.edu.au/articles/chapter/One_Nation_and_the_Heartland_s_Cleavage_An_Exploratory_Spatial_Data_Analysis/20673201

[26] Claudia Wiesner, "Doing qualitative and interpretative research: reflecting principles and principled challenge", *Political Research Exchange*, Vol 4 (2022), pp. 2-3.

The 57th Parliament, 2020-2024

The 2020 election saw the Palaszczuk Labor Government returned with an increased majority, likely via a 'gratitude vote' for its tight management of the Covid-19 pandemic.[27] Labor was initially untroubled by the LNP Opposition or its moderate leader, David Crisafulli, until questions of integrity arose in early 2022. By late 2022, the LNP had changed tactics to personally attack Palaszczuk as a 'red carpet', 'checked out' leader. By 2023, public policy failures – from closed maternity wards to forensic laboratory blunders – coalesced with deepening 'crises' in the 'cost of living', youth crime, housing, and health.[28] Despite collapses in public opinion polls, Palaszczuk resisted calls to resign but, in December 2023, when United Workers' Union head Gary Bullock shifted his support from Palaszczuk to the Left's Steven Miles, the latter assumed the premiership. As discussed below, Miles's accession provided Labor with a brief 'honeymoon' but, between mid-2024 and the commencement of the campaign proper, Labor and Miles's public approval significantly lagged the LNP and Crisafulli's. The LNP faced its own challenges, including claims of branch-stacking, and public division between state and federal leaders over nuclear energy.[29] Crisafulli also appeared to be personally damaged by reports he acted as director of a training agency in 2015-16 before the company went into liquidation in June 2016, owing creditors $3 million.[30]

The Campaign Proper, 1-26 October

Miles entered the campaign assertively with popular 'cost of living' policies, including already implemented $1000 electricity rebates and 50-cent public transport fares, and pledges for state-owned petrol stations, capped fuel increases, and free school lunches for primary school children.[31] Miles also undertook a pervasive *TikTok* social media campaign that framed him as

[27] Paul D. Williams, 'The Grateful State: The 2020 Queensland Election.' *Queensland Review*. 28 (1) 2021, pp. 57-72.

[28] SEC Newgate, *Mood of the Nation*, September 2024, p. 30. https://www.secnewgate.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/SEC-Newgate-Mood-of-the-Nation-Report-September-24.pdf

[29] Paul. D. Williams, 'Political Chronicle, Queensland, January-June, 2024, p. 806.

[30] Hayden Johnson and Taylah Fellows, 'Crisafulli got funding for ineligible students', *Courier Mail*, 11 September 2024, p. 7.

[31] The Australia Institute. 'Polling – Queensland Labor policies', 23 October 2024**.** https://australiainstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Polling-Queensland-Labor-policies-Web.pdf

both doting father and hyper-masculine weightlifter.[32] As argued below, Labor and Miles's public approval thereafter improved substantially, especially among younger voters and those living in Brisbane. Commentators rated Miles the 'winner' of the campaign overall,[33] with Labor's promises costed at $9.7 billion.

The LNP, too, began strongly with its capstone 'adult crime, adult time' laws, with Crisafulli pledging to resign as premier should youth crime numbers not fall.[34] Crisafulli also pledged to abolish Labor's Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro project, abandon the First Nations Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry, and review Labor's Olympic infrastructure plans.[35] However, the LNP campaign was soon derailed by KAP leader Robbie Katter's declaration he would introduce a bill to repeal Labor's *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018.* With some LNP candidates publicly supporting the recriminalisation of abortion, Crisafulli repeatedly insisted there would be 'no change' to existing abortion laws under his government, despite repeated refusals to disclose his personal view on a woman's right to choose.[36] Only in the campaign's final week did Crisafulli affirm his support for a woman's choice but, when a *DemosAU* poll finding 75 per cent of Queenslanders supporting legal abortion,[37] it appeared the damage, especially in Brisbane, was already done. The LNP's policies were costed at $7.1 billion, despite the Opposition offering arguably the smallest policy target seen in modern Queensland.[38]

[32] Mackenzie Scott, 'TikTok push a winner for Miles', *Australian*, 2 November 2024, p. 6.

[33] Cameron Milner, 'Elite Miles won the battle, but small target Crisafulli won the war', *Courier Mail*, 27 October 2024.

[34] Hayden Johnson, 'Crime slogan's reality check', *Courier Mail*, 5 October, p. 4.

[35] Mackenzie Scott, 'LNP muddies water on dam row', *The Australian*, 14 October 2024, p. 2.

[36] Madura McCormack, 'LNP'S Conscience vote is unclear', *Courier Mail*, 9 October 2024, p. 5.

[37] Madura McCormack, 'Voters deliver clear message to rogue MPs on abortion', *Courier Mail*, 10 October 2024.

[38] Editorial, 'Editor's view: Cashed-up 'daggy dad' vs small target yes man - Qld deserves better', *Courier Mail*, 17 September 2024.

PUBLIC OPINION

This section explores Queenslanders' voting intention, as published in public opinion polls, between February 2022 and October 2024.

Figure 1[39]

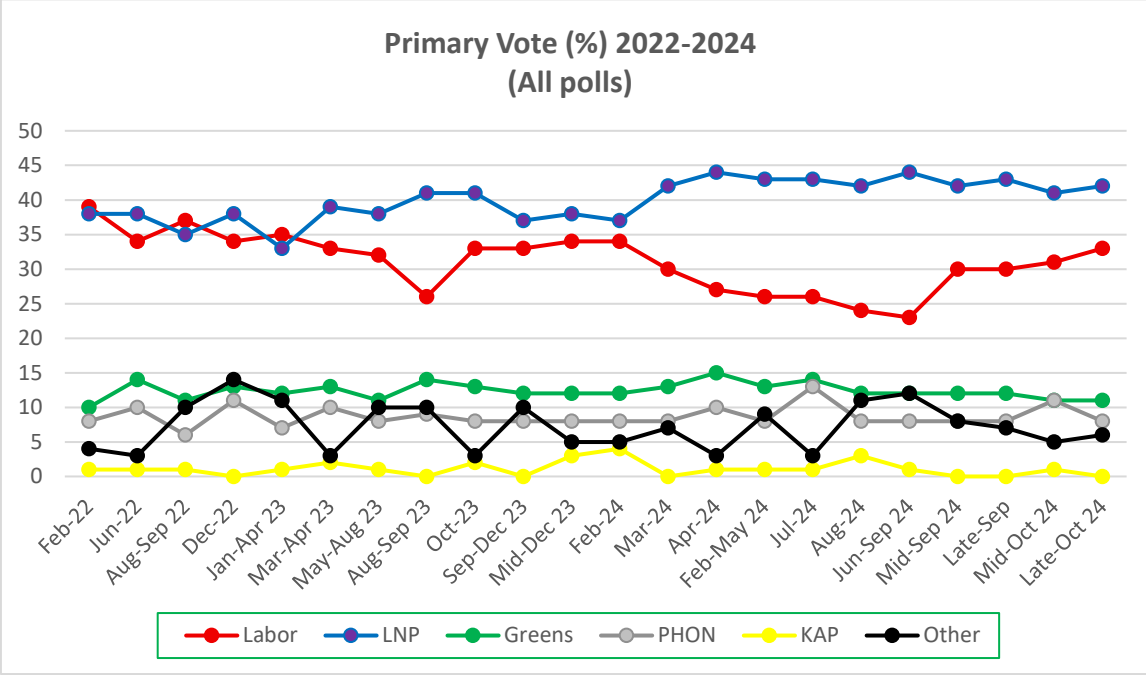


Figure One, above, reveals Labor's primary support was slightly ahead of the LNP's early in 2022 before allegations of compromised integrity engulfed the Palaszczuk Government. Labor's fortunes eroded further from late 2022 when the LNP attacked Palaszczuk for an alleged 'red carpet' life. From mid-2023, the increasing salience of 'youth crime' saw a more dramatic collapse in Labor support to just 26 per cent.[40] Labor's minor recovery from September is

[39] Source: An aggregation of all polls published between 2022 and 2024, including YouGov, Newspoll, Resolve Strategic, AFR Freshwater, UComms and SEC Newgate, as published in The Courier Mail, The Australian, Brisbane Times, Australian Financial Review and Guardian Australia. NB: No polls were published between the 2020 election and February 2022.

[40] Stephanie Bennett, 'New Qld poll shows 'strong mood' to dump Labor'. *Courier Mail*, 9 September 2023.

plausibly attributable to Palaszczuk's 'strong' leadership when she defied calls to resign.[41] Miles's succession as leader offered Labor another minor recovery early in 2024 before the government entered a longer and more profound decline that saw Labor reach a nadir of just 23 per cent – lower than the party's 2012 result – between June and September.[42] Labor's generous 'cost-of-living' measures likely explains a subsequent increase in Labor's primary support in the weeks preceding the campaign proper. The Government's revival continued throughout October – Labor closed the campaign on 33.6 per cent support[43] - with Premier Steven Miles also enjoying improved public approval.[44] The LNP, by contrast, established its first clear lead over Labor from April 2023, and continued to lead the government until polling day. Labor's moderate recovery in late 2023, and a Miles 'honeymoon' in early 2024, saw a commensurate decline in LNP support, with the Opposition reaching a low of 37 per cent in February.[45] From March, however, the LNP opened a significant lead – reaching 43 per cent in a February-May *Redbridge* poll[46] - with the opposition then 21 points ahead of Labor between June and September.[47] LNP support stabilised between April and September before suffering a minor decline during the campaign proper which the LNP ended on 39.3 per cent.[48] Support for the Greens, KAP and One Nation was largely stable, while support for 'Other' candidates was more volatile.

[41] Hayden Johnson, 'I'm going nowhere', *Courier Mail*, 12 September 2023, p. 1.

[42] Dennien, 'Crisafulli gains more ground with voters as Labor support slides again.'

[43] Matt Eaton, 'As Queensland's election campaign enters its final hours, there are signs the ground has shifted', *ABC News*, 25 October 2024. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-10-25/queensland-election-campaign-poll-shows-ground-shifting/104516204

[44] Rose Innes, 'Youth vibing with Mr TikTok', *Courier Mail*, 19 October 2024, p. 4.

[45] Hayden Johnson, 'From Miles back to even Steven', *Courier Mail*, 23 February 2024, p. 6.

[46] Lucy Slade, 'Queensland Labor government to facing election wipe-out, exclusive polling data reveals', *9News*, 5 June 2024.

[47] Dennien, 'Crisafulli gains more ground with voters as Labor support slides again'.

[48] Matt Eaton, 'As Queensland's election campaign enters its final hours'.

FIGURE 2[49]

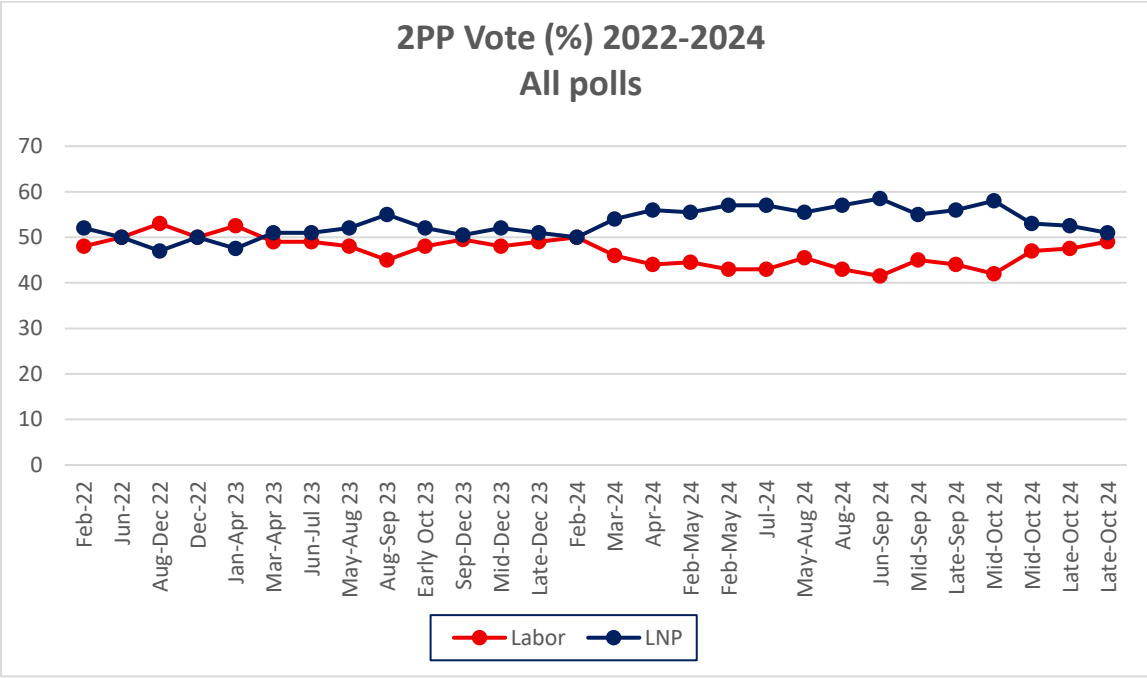


Figure Two, above, shows the 2PP vote lead changing hands several times before mid-2023, at which point 'crime' – and other 'crises' such as 'cost of living', 'housing' and 'hospital ramping' – peaked in voter salience. Labor never again led in 2PP support.[50] New leader Miles again closed the 2PP gap – tied at 50-50 in February 2024[51] – before widening to a significant 17 points, 41.5 to 58.5, between June and September.[52] Perhaps most remarkably, Labor concluded its

[49] Source: An aggregation of all polls published between 2022 and 2024, including YouGov, Newspoll, Resolve Strategic, AFR Freshwater, UComms and SEC Newgate, as published in The Courier Mail, The Australian, Brisbane Times, Australian Financial Review and Guardian Australia. NB: No polls were published between the 2020 election and February 2022.

[50] SEC Newgate, *Mood of the Nation.*

[51] Hayden Johnson, 'From Miles back to even Steven'.

[52] Dennien, 'Crisafulli gains more ground with voters as Labor support slides again'.

campaign just two points behind the LNP, 49 to 51, with Miles overtaking Crisafulli as preferred premier for the first time, 45 to 42 per cent.[53]

RESULTS

As seen in Table One, below, the LNP secured strong primary and 2PP swings overall, yet won just 52 seats in the Legislative Assembly.

TABLE 1: 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION BY VOTE, SWING (%) AND SEATS WON (N)[54]

Party	Cand. (+/-) N (change)	Pri. Vote	Pri. Swing (+/-)	2PP Vote	2PP Swing (+/-)	Seats (+/-) N (change)
LNP	93 (0)	41.52	+5.63	53.8	+7.0	52 (+18)
Labor	93 (0)	32.56	-7.01	46.2	-7.0	36 (-16)
Greens	93 (0)	9.89	+0.42	-	-	1 (-1)
PHON	93 (+3)	8.00	+0.88	-	-	0 (-1)*
Katter's Australian	11 (-2)	2.44	-0.08	-	-	3* (0)
Family First	59 (+59)	1.86	+1.86	-	-	0 (0)
Legalise Cannabis	29 (+6)	1.60	+0.69	-	-	0 (0)
Animal Justice	12 (-1)	0.31	-0.03	-	-	0 (0)
Libertarian	4 (+4)	0.13	+0.13	-	-	0 (0)
Independent	38 (-31)	1.69	-0.79	-	-	1 (0)

[53] Matt Eaton, 'As Queensland's election campaign enters its final hours.'

[54] Source: Electoral Commission of Queensland. *2024 State General Election.* https://results.elections.qld.gov.au/SGE2024 NB: Libertarian Party was formerly the Liberal Democratic Party. *Stephen Andrew was first elected to Mirani for PHON in 2017, then disendorsed in 2024. He joined KAP in late 2024, then lost the seat to the LNP on 26 October.

REGIONAL DISAGGREGATION

To identify exactly where the LNP failed to attain a larger majority, the article now disaggregates results – by primary vote and seats won – across Queensland's six regions.

TABLE 2: LABOR PRIMARY VOTE AND SWING (%), 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION, BY REGION[55]

Region	Primary Vote 2024	Primary Vote 2020	Primary Swing (+/-)
Brisbane City	37.85	42.98	-5.13
Brisbane Fringe	42.73	50.84	-8.11
Gold Coast	26.37	33.47	-7.10
Sunshine Coast	27.49	31.73	-4.24
Eastern Provincial	30.27	38.90	-8.63
Western Rural	20.88	27.89	-7.01

Table Two reveals the swing against Labor was most contained in Brisbane City, excepting the swing in the Gold Coast region which saw Labor decline votes from an already low base. Also expected were the significant swings against Labor in those districts most vulnerable to 'cost of living' pressures, especially on the Brisbane Fringe and in Eastern Provincial districts.

[55] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

TABLE 3: LABOR SEATS WON, 2020 AND 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTIONS, BY REGION[56]

Region	Total seats in region	Seats won 2024	% region won 2024	Seats won 2020	% region won 2020	% change 2020-2024
Brisbane City	21	16	76.2	15	71.4	+5.2
Brisbane Fringe	19	15	78.9	18	94.7	-15.8
Gold Coast	11	1	9.1	1	9.1	0
Sunshine Coast	9	0	0	3	33.3	-33.3
Eastern Provincial	21	3	14.3	14	66.7	-52.5
Western Rural	12	1	8.3	1	8.3	0

As outlined earlier, Labor's loss of seats across Greater Brisbane was modest: the party lost three in the Brisbane Fringe and just one in Brisbane City. As Table Three indicates, Labor maintained its sole Gold Coast seat despite facing a high-profile LNP candidate in Gaven.[57] Not unexpectedly, Labor lost its entire Sunshine Coast representation, one temporarily enhanced in 2020 via a pandemic 'gratitude vote'. While Labor maintained its sole Western Rural representative – Ipswich West, a semi-rural constituency despite its proximity to Brisbane[58] – the party was decimated in the more volatile Eastern Provincial region after losing 11 of its 14 seats. In short, the region opened for the LNP an essential if narrow gateway to government.

[56] Source**:** Author's calculation from ECQ data

[57] Taylor Fellows, 'Meaghan Scanlon's almighty scare, backs Steven Miles to lead Labor', *Courier Mail*, 30 October 2024.

[58] Ipswich West was lost by Labor to the LNP in a by-election in early 2024. See Paul D. Williams, 'Political Chronicle: Queensland, January-June 2024'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 70 (4) 2024, p. 810.

TABLE 4: LNP PRIMARY VOTE AND SWING (%), 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION, BY REGION[59]

Region	Primary Vote 2024	Primary Vote 2020	Primary Swing (+/-)
Brisbane City	38.07	34.24	+3.83
Brisbane Fringe	35.03	26.53	+8.50
Gold Coast	51.36	46.04	+5.32
Sunshine Coast	45.47	40.75	+4.72
Eastern Provincial	37.19	31.27	+5.92
Western Rural	51.55	46.22	+5.33

Table Four, above, confirms the smallest swings to the LNP occurred in Brisbane City where the LNP's appeal was likely muted by Brisbane's enthusiastic adoption of 50-cent public transport fares,[60] and by leader David Crisafulli's poor handling of the abortion issue. The swing to the LNP on the Brisbane Fringe, traditionally comprised of Labor strongholds, was the largest in the state, with the party enjoying substantial swings across the remaining regions.

[59] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

[60] Will Murray, 'Queensland's 50c public transport fares hit six-month mark, with patronage up nearly 20pc'. *ABC News* 10 February 2024. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-02-10/queensland-50c-fares-public-transport-analysis/104910866

TABLE 5: LNP SEATS WON, 2020 AND 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTIONS, BY REGION[61]

Region	Total seats in region	Seats won 2024	% region won 2024	Seats won 2020	% region won 2020	% change 2020-2024
Brisbane City	21	4	19.0	4	19.0	0
Brisbane Fringe	19	4	21.1	1	5.3	+15.8
Gold Coast	11	10	90.9	10	90.9	0
Sunshine Coast	9	8	88.9	5	55.6	+33.3
Eastern Provincial	21	16	76.2	4	19.0	+57.2
Western Rural	12	10	83.3	10	83.3	0

Table Five, above, indicates the extent to which the LNP was constrained in Greater Brisbane. While the Opposition made no new gains in Brisbane City – contrasting strongly with the LNP's landslide in this region under Campbell Newman in 2012[62] – the party seized just three additional seats on the Brisbane Fringe for a modest total of eight across Greater Brisbane. The LNP continued to dominate the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Western Rural regions, and seized a majority of seats in the Eastern Provinces.

[61] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

[62] Paul D. Williams, 'Political Chronicle: Queensland, January-June 2012'. *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 58 (4) 2012, pp. 642-43.

TABLE 6: GREENS PRIMARY VOTE AND SWING (%), 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION, BY REGION[63]

Region	Primary Vote 2024	Primary Vote 2020	Primary Swing (+/-)
Brisbane City	18.47	17.39	+1.08
Brisbane Fringe	9.10	7.92	+1.18
Gold Coast	7.98	8.14	-0.16
Sunshine Coast	9.06	10.09	-1.03
Eastern Provincial	5.50	5.08	+0.42
Western Rural	5.36	4.72	+0.64

Table Six, above, confirms pre-election expectation of a growth in Greens support across Brisbane City. The party's modest growth, however, surprised many, and it appears Labor's 'cost-of-living' policy program, and Miles's aggressive social media campaign targeting younger voters, slowed the 'greening' of Queensland.[64] Also unexpected was the minor party's (small) increase in conservative strongholds on the Brisbane Fringe, in the Eastern Provinces, and even in Western Rural districts. Only in the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast regions did Greens support contract.

[63] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

[64] Paul D. Williams, 'The Greening of the Queensland Electorate?' *Australian Journal of Political Science* 41 (3) 2006, pp. 325-37.

TABLE 7: GREENS SEATS WON, 2020 AND 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTIONS, BY REGION[65]

Region	Total seats in region	Seats won 2024	% region won 2024	Seats won 2020	% region won 2020	% change 2020-2024
Brisbane City	21	1	4.8	2	9.5	-4.7
Brisbane Fringe	19	0	0	0	0	0
Gold Coast	11	0	0	0	0	0
Sunshine Coast	9	0	0	0	0	0
Eastern Provincial	21	0	0	0	0	0
Western Rural	12	0	0	0	0	0

Table Seven, above, appears to contradict earlier data. Despite increasing their vote across the state – and expectations of not only retaining their two seats but seizing four more from Labor[66] – the Greens won no new representation, and lost South Brisbane,[67] due, in part, to the LNP's decision to preference Labor above the Greens across Brisbane.[68]

[65] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

[66] Ben Smee, 'Low and slow: the tactics that have made the Greens a threat in traditionally safe Queensland Labor seats,' *Guardian*, 22 October 2024 https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2024/oct/22/low-and-slow-the-tactics-that-have-made-the-greens-a-threat-in-traditionally-safe-queensland-labor-seats

[67] The subsequent 2025 federal election of 3 May saw the Greens vote in Queensland contract by 1.18 percentage points, with the loss of two seats, Brisbane and Griffith. See Australian Electoral Commission, *Tally Room – Queensland*, 28 May 2025. https://results.aec.gov.au/31496/Website/SenateStatePage-31496-QLD.htm

[68] Lydia Lynch, Jamie Walker and Michael McKenna, 'Miles in cheap stunt to dissolve parliament,' *Australian*, 1 October 2024, p. 6.

TABLE 8: PHON PRIMARY VOTE AND SWING (%), 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION, BY REGION[69]

Region	Primary Vote 2024	Primary Vote 2020	Primary Swing (+/-)
Brisbane City	7.28	6.16	+1.12
Brisbane Fringe	11.43	9.72	+4.71
Gold Coast	7.77	6.31	+1.46
Sunshine Coast	7.28	6.16	+1.12
Eastern Provincial	11.43	9.72	+4.71
Western Rural	11.58	10.10	+1.48

Table Eight, above, reveals four regions experienced the modest growth in PHON support across the state, despite PHON suffering a negative primary swing just months before at the Ipswich West by-election. However, two regions recording strong PHON support at the 1998 election[70] – Brisbane Fringe and Eastern Provincial, each especially exposed to 'cost-of-living' pressures – saw substantially larger increases.

[69] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

[70] Geoffrey Brennan and Nicole Mitchell, 'The Logic of Spatial Politics: The 1998 Queensland Election.' *Australian Journal of Political Science* 34 (3) 1999, pp. 379–90; Paul D. Williams, 'The Queensland Election of 17 February 2001: Reforging the Electoral Landscape?' *Australian Journal of Political Science* 36 (2) 2001, pp. 363–71.

TABLE 9: PHON SEATS WON, 2020 AND 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTIONS, BY REGION[71]

Region	Total seats in region	Seats won 2024	% region won 2024	Seats won 2020	% region won 2020	% change 2020-2024
Brisbane City	21	0	0	0	0	0
Brisbane Fringe	19	0	0	0	0	0
Gold Coast	11	0	0	0	0	0
Sunshine Coast	9	0	0	0	0	0
Eastern Provincial	21	0	0	1	4.8	-4.8
Western Rural	12	0	0	0	0	0

Table Nine, above, confirms One Nation's constrained support across the state; only from late 2025 did the party enjoy a public opinion surge. One Nation lost its sole representative – Stephen Andrew, elected for the central Eastern Provincial seat of Mirani in 2017 – before polling day when, months prior, Andrew moved to KAP before losing the seat to the LNP in October.

[71] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

TABLE 10: 'OTHER' PRIMARY VOTE AND SWING (%), 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION, BY REGION[72]

Region	Primary Vote 2024	Primary Vote 2020	Primary Swing (+/-)
Brisbane City	1.86	2.63	-0.77
Brisbane Fringe	6.10	6.40	-0.30
Gold Coast	6.52	6.04	+0.48
Sunshine Coast	10.71	11.27	-0.56
Eastern Provincial	15.60	15.03	+0.57
Western Rural	10.64	11.07	-0.43

Table 10 reveals no significant change in support for other minor party and Independent candidates in any region. Once again, the Sunshine Coast, the Eastern Provinces and Western Rural districts – often home to populist or 'maverick' politics[73] – boasted the strongest 'Other' support.

[72] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

[73] Paul D. Williams, 'The George Christensen formula — how do maverick MPs succeed in Australian politics?' *The Conversation*, 2 September 2021. https://theconversation.com/the-george-christensen-formula-how-do-maverick-mps-succeed-in-australian-politics-166190

TABLE 11 'OTHER' SEATS WON, 2020 AND 2024 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTIONS, BY REGION[74]

Region	Total seats in region	Seats won 2024	% region won 2024	Seats won 2020	% region won 2020	% change 2020-2024
Brisbane City	21	0	0	0	0	0
Brisbane Fringe	19	0	0	0	0	0
Gold Coast	11	0	0	0	0	0
Sunshine Coast	9	1	11.1	1	11.1	0
Eastern Provincial	21	2	9.5	2	9.5	0
Western Rural	12	1	8.3	1	8.3	0

Table 11, above, indicates no change in 'Other' representation, with Noosa MP Sandy Bolton remaining the sole Independent in the Legislative Assembly. As outline above, however, there was internal movement on the populist right: Mirani MP Andrew's move to KAP eliminated One Nation's representation, and bolstered the KAP's temporarily before KAP returned to its three established seats: Traeger, Hill and Hinchinbrook.[75]

CONCLUSION

This article completes a longitudinal study of Queensland elections that disaggregates voter behaviour across six geographical regions, and across the lifespan of a single electoral distribution under which the elections of 2017, 2020 and 2024 were conducted. The conclusions

[74] Source: Author's calculation from ECQ data

[75] KAP unexpectedly lost Hinchinbrook to the LNP in a November 2025 by-election when MP Nick Dametto resigned to contest (and win) the Townsville Mayoralty.

offered here are consistent with those drawn from studies following the 2017 and 2020 polls. First, a 'six Queenslands' thesis remains of far greater utility than the traditional 'two Queenslands' model when identifying the nuances of regional voter behaviour. Second, the research confirms Brisbane – defined as either Brisbane City or Greater Brisbane – remains a 'Labor town' in which the party again attained its highest primary vote and seat share. It can also be concluded that the LNP's small parliamentary majority – and potentially precarious prospects for holding government in 2028 – is a function of the LNP's failure to win a more seats across Greater Brisbane. The research also confirms that LNP strongholds remain on the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, and in the Western Rural region, with Eastern Provincial seats offering mixed evidence. While the LNP captured three-in-four provincial districts, the LNP's primary vote here was the second lowest in Queensland. That finding, too, suggests the LNP faces serious challenge to its hold on government after the next election. It can also be concluded that, once again, the Greens' strongest base is found in Brisbane City where support was two and three times as strong as in other regions. The data also offer mixed fortunes for the Greens: while their vote increased, albeit marginally, the halving of their state representation (and subsequent poor performance federally in 2025) suggests the party has met a 'ceiling'. The article also finds support for PHON increased insignificantly across four regions, and most profoundly on the Brisbane Fringe and in the Eastern Provinces. It also attributes PHON's loss of its sole representative to internal party dynamics rather than diminishing support, as the party's public opinion surge in 2026 is testimony.[76] Finally, the data reveal no significant movement for 'Other' minor parties and Independent candidates in any region, but the decline in KAP support is potentially problematic for a geographically confined party now competing directly with One Nation. The next Queensland election will be conducted under a new distribution, delivered in 2026, that produced 'moderate to significant changes' to 50 of the state's 93 seats.[77] Two districts have been abolished (Hill in the state's far north, and Stretton in Brisbane's south) and two created (Springfield in Greater Brisbane's west, and

[76] One Nation recorded a high of 24 per cent among Queensland state election respondents in a May-June *Resolve* poll. See Matt Dennien, 'Labor support sinks as One Nation ties for second in Queensland,' *Brisbane Times*, 16 June 2026. https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/one-nation-s-queensland-support-passes-1998-breakthrough-to-equal-miles-labor-20260615-p606tt.html

[77] Alex Brewster, "Queensland state electorates of Stretton and Hill to be abolished after review", *ABC News*, 29 June 2026. See also Electoral Commission of Queensland, "Final electoral redistribution", June 2026. https://redistribution.ecq.qld.gov.au/redistribution-reports/final-electoral-redistribution

Caboolture on the northern Brisbane Fringe) to produce an electoral map one report suggested was favourable to the LNP.[78] The next election is scheduled for 28 October 2028.

Critically, this article also finds implications for the Queensland Parliament. Given the state is now almost evenly cleaved between a Labor-dominated Brisbane and an LNP-dominated 'rest', questions inevitably arise as to how the Legislative Assembly can, or should, accommodate this division. The executive branch (cabinet), for example, has long recognised the needs of voters and industry distant from the capital, with ministers and assistant ministers frequently appointed to administer policy affecting voters outside Brisbane. By contrast, the legislative branch (parliament) makes no such provision – except for travel expenses, parliamentary accommodation, multiple electorate offices for MPs representing geographically large districts, and occasional regional sittings of the House. This article therefore recommends the Queensland Parliament inquire into how it might improve its own regional representative function, with particular reference to an amendment to Standing Orders regarding a guarantee of regional members on all of parliamentary committees, and the potential reinstatement of a Legislative Council where multi-member electorates can be located in discrete central, western, northern, and far northern regions. Such proposals are likely to invite vigorous debate.

[78] Hayden Johnson, "Battle lines drawn", *Courier Mail*, 30 June 2026, p. 8.