



Youth - Give young Australians the right to vote	
Party:	Australian Greens
Summary of proposal: The proposal would lower the minimum voting age to 16 years of age while also enacting a fine exemption for those aged 16-17 years that fail to vote. Funding would be provided to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to enact these changes. The proposal would start on 1 July 2025 and would be ongoing.	

Costing overview

The proposal would be expected to decrease the fiscal and underlying cash balances by around \$59.7 million over the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period (see Table 1). This impact reflects an increase in administered and departmental expenses.

Funding is associated with increased costs faced by the AEC including, additional staff required, advertising of changes in voter eligibility and additional supplies and capital required for the AEC to administer the election in line with legislative rules.

The proposal would be expected to have an impact beyond the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period. A breakdown of the financial implications (including separate public debt interest (PDI) tables) over the period to 2035-36 is provided at Attachment A.

Table 1: Youth - Give young Australians the right to vote – Financial implications (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total to 2028-29
Fiscal balance	-14.0	-14.9	-21.4	-9.4	-59.7
Underlying cash balance	-14.0	-14.9	-21.4	-9.4	-59.7

(a) A positive number represents an increase in the relevant budget balance; a negative number represents a decrease.

(b) PDI impacts are not included in the totals.

Key assumptions

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has made the following assumptions in costing this proposal.

- The departmental costs and election costs would grow in line with the consumer price index over the medium term.
- The next general elections would be during 2027-28 and every third year afterwards.

Methodology

The amount of funding has been calculated using the AEC's administered and departmental costs as at the 2025-26 Budget and scaling these costs up to account for the population of 16-17 years old who are now eligible to vote.

The forward and medium-term estimates were projected forward using expected population growth and changes in the consumer price index.

Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules.¹

Data sources

Commonwealth of Australia (2025) *Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2025*, Commonwealth of Australia.

AEC (2025) [Australian Electoral Commission - Portfolio Budget Statements 2025-26](#), Commonwealth of Australia.

¹ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Attachment A – Youth - Give young Australians the right to vote – Financial implications

Table A1: Youth - Give young Australians the right to vote – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^(a)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Expenses													
Administered													
<i>Special appropriations during election years</i>	-	-	-2.8	-	-	-2.7	-	-	-2.6	-	-	-2.8	-8.1
Departmental													
<i>Australian Electoral Commission</i>	-14.0	-14.9	-18.6	-9.4	-12.9	-19.5	-13.2	-13.4	-20.0	-13.4	-13.5	-56.9	-162.8
Total (excluding PDI)	-14.0	-14.9	-21.4	-9.4	-12.9	-22.2	-13.2	-13.4	-22.6	-13.4	-13.5	-59.7	-170.9

(a) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.

- Indicates nil.

Table A2: Youth - Give young Australians the right to vote – Memorandum item: Public Debt Interest (PDI) impacts – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Fiscal balance	-0.3	-1.0	-1.8	-2.6	-3.2	-4.1	-5.1	-5.9	-7.0	-8.1	-9.1	-5.7	-48.2
Underlying cash balance	-0.2	-0.8	-1.6	-2.4	-3.0	-3.9	-4.8	-5.7	-6.7	-7.8	-8.9	-5.0	-45.8

(a) As this table is presented as a memorandum item, these figures are not reflected in the totals above. This is consistent with the approach taken in the budget where the budget impact of most measures is presented excluding the impact on PDI. If the reader would like a complete picture of the total aggregate, then these figures would need to be added to the figures above. For further information on government borrowing and financing please refer to the PBO's online budget glossary.²

(b) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.

² [Online budget glossary – Parliamentary Budget Office \(pbo.gov.au\)](https://pbo.gov.au/online-budget-glossary)