

Barton Deakin Brief: The Rise of One Nation

19 June 2026

- One Nation's national primary vote has surged to 24–31% (median ~28%), competitive with or ahead of Labor in some polls, with gains extending into traditional Labor outer-suburban and regional seats.
- The party secured its first elected lower house seat at the May 2026 Farrer by-election (David Farley) and performed strongly in the South Australian state election.
- Senator Hanson's 17 June National Press Club address signalled professionalisation, with a broad policy platform spanning immigration, energy/resources, media, housing and social issues.
- One Nation demonstrated pragmatic industry engagement by consulting gas producers on its new oil & gas policy (unveiled at the Australian Energy Producers conference), including proposals for royalties, government equity stakes and a sovereign wealth fund.
- Internal governance is highly centralised around Pauline Hanson and chief of staff James Ashby; the party operates as an incorporated entity, giving tight control over branding, finances and candidate processes (unlike major parties).
- Support appears more structurally durable than past surges but faces risks from historical volatility, limited organisational depth and potential Coalition recovery.
- Key opportunities for stakeholders: energy/resources policy (pragmatic on gas), housing-adjacent infrastructure, and regional economic issues.
- Victorian state election (November 2026) and federal positioning (due by 2028) are critical near-term watch points.



Summary

Pauline Hanson's One Nation (PHON) has experienced a sustained increase in public support through the first half of 2026, with national primary vote polling consistently between 24–31 per cent across all major polling firms. The party now holds two seats in the House of Representatives and four in the Senate, and secured its first lower house by-election victory at the Farrer by-election in May 2026.

Senator Hanson's National Press Club address on 17 June 2026 outlined a broadened policy platform across immigration, energy, media, housing and social policy, signalling a deliberate effort to professionalise the party's offering and expand beyond its traditional base.

While these dynamics are occurring well ahead of the next federal election, consistency across multiple pollsters points to a more durable shift in voter sentiment rather than short-term volatility. On current trajectories, One Nation is evolving from a protest vehicle into a more durable third force in Australian politics, with the capacity to shape policy debate and fragment the conservative vote.

Notwithstanding this, polling at this stage of the electoral cycle remains indicative rather than predictive. One Nation has historically polled strongly between elections but underperformed at the ballot box, highlighting a persistent gap between sentiment and vote conversion.

Polling Snapshot

One Nation's primary vote has reached unprecedented levels in early 2026:

Pollster	Date	ON
Newspoll	1–4 Jun	30%
Resolve	8–13 Jun	28%
YouGov	9–16 Jun	26%
Roy Morgan	8–14 Jun	28%
RedBridge	25–28 May	28%

Preferred PM: Albanese 34% | Hanson 27% | Taylor 23%



Consistency across multiple pollsters is more significant than any single headline figure, indicating the emergence of a relatively stable support base rather than short-term volatility.

These figures should be treated with caution. The next federal election is not due until 2028, and polling at this stage of the cycle is indicative rather than predictive of electoral outcomes. One Nation has historically polled strongly between elections but underperformed at the ballot box, indicating a persistent gap between expressed sentiment and vote conversion. No standardised two-party preferred methodology incorporating One Nation has been established, and seat-level projections remain highly uncertain.

Importantly, One Nation's gains are not confined to the conservative side of politics. The party is making inroads into Labor's traditional base, particularly in outer-suburban and regional electorates concerned with immigration, housing affordability, and cost-of-living pressures. Victorian state polling has Labor trailing both the Coalition and One Nation on primaries in some surveys, highlighting the cross-aisle nature of the shift.

Strategic Assessment

- One Nation's support is primarily drawn from the Coalition voter base rather than expanding the overall conservative vote, indicating a high degree of substitutability between the two.
- Sustained primary support above ~20 per cent materially complicates the Coalition's pathway to electoral recovery, even without One Nation converting that support into a significant number of seats.
- The broadening of One Nation's policy platform reflects a deliberate effort to move beyond a protest positioning and engage more directly on cost-of-living, energy and housing concerns.



- However, structural constraints remain, including candidate depth, organisational capacity and the party's historical difficulty converting polling support into electoral outcomes.
- Importantly, One Nation does not need to materially increase its parliamentary representation to reshape the political landscape; sustained vote share at current levels is sufficient to influence preference flows and constrain Coalition recovery.
- Persistence at current levels would continue to fragment the conservative vote and reshape electoral dynamics across marginal and regional seats.

Recent Developments

Farrer By-Election (9 May 2026)

David Farley won the Farrer by-election triggered by former Liberal leader Sussan Ley's resignation with approximately 60% of the two-candidate preferred vote against independent Michelle Milthorpe. This is One Nation's first seat won at a contested election in the House of Representatives.

Notable results:

- One Nation's primary vote reached 39.53%
- The Coalition's combined primary vote was below 20%
- 69.1% of National voters' preferences flowed to One Nation
- Farley reached 50.2% with National preferences alone
- Labor did not contest the seat

The result confirms PHON can convert support into lower house seats in favourable circumstances (rural/regional electorate, no Labor candidate, fractured conservative vote). Whether this is replicable in contested three-cornered races remains to be tested at a general election.

South Australian State Election (21 March 2026)

One Nation outpolled the Liberal Party on primary votes and won 4 lower house seats (Liberals won 5). SA Labor won government in a landslide of 34 seats. One Nation featured in the final preference count in over half of SA electorates.

Victorian State Election Outlook (28 November 2026)

Recent Victorian polling places One Nation at approximately 23% behind the Coalition (~30%) but competitive. Preference flows will be critical. Plausible scenarios include a Coalition majority government reliant on One Nation preferences, or One Nation winning a small number of outer-suburban and regional seats and potentially holding balance of power.

National Press Club Address (17 June 2026)

Senator Hanson delivered her first National Press Club address, outlining positions across:

- **Immigration:** Called for Australia to be "monocultural"; restrictions on migration from countries with "extremist ideologies"; deportation of "hate preachers"
- **Media:** Abolish SBS; restructure ABC into a subscription model for metropolitan audiences
- **Social policy:** Ban abortion after 20 weeks (with health exemptions); increased homelessness spending
- **Energy:** Reiterated support for nuclear, coal and gas; opposition to renewables on agricultural land
- **Identity:** Positioned PHON as representing Australians "sick and tired of being ignored"

The speech was briefly interrupted by a GetUp! protest. Commentary has been divided; some observers see the address as marking PHON's professionalisation; others note the policy detail remains thin in several areas.

Key Policy Positions

Senator Hanson's National Press Club address sought to present One Nation as a more professionalised and broadly appealing force while remaining firmly rooted in



its core populist brand. The platform mixes long-standing Hanson signature issues with some new economic and governance proposals. Key positions include:

- **Immigration:** Strong “monocultural” framing, caps on intake, deportation targets (75,000), reintroduction of Temporary Protection Visas, and refusal of visas from nations with “extremist ideologies”. This remains central to the party’s identity and continues to resonate with voters concerned about rapid demographic change.
- **Media:** Abolish SBS and restructure the ABC into a subscription model for metropolitan audiences (with taxpayer-funded essential services retained in regional areas). Reflects ongoing grievances about perceived bias in public broadcasting.
- **Social Policy:** Ban on abortions after 20 weeks (with health exemptions), increased spending on homelessness, and opposition to vaccine mandates alongside a Royal Commission into COVID management.
- **Energy & Climate:** Repeal net-zero legislation, overturn nuclear ban, build new coal-fired stations, abolish renewable schemes, and ban offshore wind and renewables on agricultural land. Strong resource nationalism with proposals for government equity in gas projects and a sovereign wealth fund.
- **Economy & Tax:** \$90 billion in budget savings, joint family tax filing, opposition to GST increases and death duties. Housing measures include a GST moratorium on building materials, ban on foreign residential investment, and removal of disability compliance burdens on new builds.
- **Trade & Foreign Ownership:** Strict limits on foreign ownership of essential services, agriculture, and housing; support for protective tariffs; re-establishment of a government-backed rural lending fund.
- **Governance & Free Speech:** Abolish key agencies (e.g. National Indigenous Australians Agency, Climate Change Department), constitutional protection for free speech, Citizens Initiated Referenda, repeal of hate speech laws, and withdrawal from the UN and WHO.

Across these areas, a consistent thematic framework is emerging centred on economic nationalism, institutional scepticism and more interventionist policy settings. This broadens the party’s appeal by linking cultural and economic concerns directly to cost-of-living pressures and national sovereignty narratives.



While some proposals remain light on detail, the address signals an attempt to broaden appeal beyond traditional protest voters by addressing cost-of-living, housing, and energy security. The mix of hard-line cultural positions with economically interventionist ideas in resources and rural policy may help One Nation consolidate support from both disaffected Labor and Coalition voters.

Industry Engagement Example (Gas Policy): One Nation has shown willingness to consult directly with industry stakeholders on major policy development. In May 2026, Pauline Hanson unveiled the party's oil and gas policy at the Australian Energy Producers conference, explicitly noting consultation with gas producers. The policy – which includes abolishing the offshore Petroleum Resource Rent Tax for new projects in favour of royalties, taking 30% government equity in new developments, and establishing a sovereign wealth fund – was refined after industry feedback (e.g., moving away from an East Coast gas reservation). Hanson highlighted that producers were “shocked” to be consulted, positioning One Nation as more responsive than the current government on resource sector concerns.

This signals a pragmatic, partnership-oriented approach on energy security and resource development that could be relevant for stakeholders seeking to engage on housing-adjacent infrastructure, regional economies, or energy transition issues.

How Durable is One Nation's Support?

Factors suggesting sustainability:

- High voter retention and growth
- First elected federal lower house seat (Farrer)
- SA state result confirmed national trends translate in new states
- Structural voter disillusionment
- Joyce provides institutional credibility and parliamentary experience
- Consistent polling above 25% across multiple firms over several months

Factors suggesting potential volatility:

- One Nation has surged before (1998, 2016–17) and declined through campaign periods



- Limited organisational depth for a full national campaign
- Candidate quality under sustained media scrutiny remains untested at scale
- Coalition recovery under Taylor possible
- Internal dynamics between Hanson and Joyce untested under sustained pressure
- Hanson's age (72) raises succession questions
- No precedent for translating this level of support into seats under preferential voting at a general election

Current support appears more durable than previous surges, underpinned by structural factors unlikely to fully dissipate in the electorate before the next election. However, the gap between polling and election-day performance has historically been significant for One Nation.

Key People

One Nation's internal governance is highly centralised and personality-driven, with decision-making concentrated around founder Pauline Hanson and her chief of staff James Ashby. The party operates as an incorporated entity (unlike the major parties, which function primarily as unincorporated voluntary associations), enabling tighter leadership control over branding, finances, candidate selection, and operations.

- **Senator Pauline Hanson** (Queensland) is the founder, federal Leader, and National Chairperson/President. Constitutional changes in 2017 effectively made her President for as long as she wishes, with the power to choose her successor. She remains the party's public face, chief strategist on policy messaging, and ultimate authority.
- **James Ashby**, Hanson's Chief of Staff since 2016 and Queensland state branch leader, is the central operational and strategic figure. He drives digital/media campaigns (widely credited for the party's recent effectiveness), candidate vetting, branch oversight, and day-to-day management. Ashby frequently acts as a public spokesperson and enforcer of party discipline.

The federal parliamentary team currently includes:

- **House of Representatives:** David Farley (Farrer, won at the May 2026 by-election) and Barnaby Joyce (defected from the Nationals).
- **Senate:** Pauline Hanson, Malcolm Roberts, Sean Bell, Tyron Whitten

Unlike major parties, One Nation MPs do not operate with a formal shadow cabinet or allocated portfolios. Roles are more fluid and issue-driven, with public positioning and priorities directed centrally by Hanson and Ashby.

The party maintains a National Executive for administration and strategy (subject to Hanson's direction) and state executives/branches. However, the National/Federal level holds overriding authority, including intervention powers, centralised financial control, and strict rules on media and branch activities (e.g., no independent accounts, media silence policies, and vetting requirements). This structure supports agility during growth but limits distributed leadership development.

This model has enabled disciplined campaigning amid One Nation's 2026 polling surge, but it carries risks of over-reliance on key individuals and historical patterns of internal tensions when broader input is constrained.

What to watch

- Whether One Nation can sustain current polling levels following the June 2026 National Press Club address and increased policy visibility.
- The quality and breadth of candidate recruitment ahead of the next federal election, particularly in regional and outer suburban seats.
- The Coalition's strategic response, including positioning, messaging and preference strategy.
- Evidence of consolidation versus volatility in One Nation's support across successive polling cycles.
- The extent to which current polling support translates into measurable outcomes at future state and federal contests.