



I cannot think of a single example of progressive social change that, while legislated and implemented by government, was not first collectively fought for by the people, under the guiding stars of struggle and hope.”

*Dr John Falzon*

# Impact Report

Financial Year 2021-22

# Our impact.

Per Capita's research and advocacy strongly influenced the ALP's election winning policy framework. Our 2020 book *What Happens Next? Reconstructing Australia after COVID-19*, featured chapters from Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Treasurer Jim Chalmers, and Labor front-benchers Mark Butler, Clare O'Neil and Andrew Leigh.

  
**5** new reports produced


Our new government's stance on investing in the care economy, including aged, child and disability care has been adopted from research we have presented.

  
**2** government enquiry submissions

  
**2873** media mentions

Our work around full employment has directly contributed to the ALP's commitment to a full employment framework modelled on the post-WWII Curtin and Chifley Governments.

Our new government has pledged free TAFE for Australians studying in areas of skills shortage, as recommended by our report, *Coming of Age in a Crisis*.

  
**61** radio segments

  
**21** op-eds published

The ALP has adopted our language of a "national post-carbon reconstruction."

# Housing Affordability.

“ Per Capita notes that over decades we have witnessed the “financialisation of housing”: the great Australian dream of owning a home changed from being a place of essential shelter and became regarded as an asset to create and grow personal wealth. ”

ABC News, 5/5/22

In May we released our landmark report, *Housing Affordability in Australia - Tackling a wicked problem*. The report shows secure housing in Australia is increasingly out of reach for a growing proportion of the population, not only would-be home-owners, but also renters and those waiting for social housing.

The report also showed that Australia’s tax policies frequently subsidise the wealthiest segment of society e.g. nearly three quarters of capital gains tax discounts on housing go to the top 10% of earners, encouraging multiple home ownership. The figures are similar with negative gearing.

The report received significant media interest, including the following:



**12**  
online and  
print articles

**7**  
TV  
appearances

**3**  
radio  
interviews

# National Disability Insurance Scheme.

In November 2021 we released a new report entitled *False Economy: The economic benefits of the NDIS and the consequences of government cost-cutting*. The report estimated that for every dollar spend on the NDIS, the Australian economy receives a return of \$2.25.

The report has been quoted in 361 online and print articles since it was released in November. It was specifically referred to by Bill Shorten, Minister for the NDIS, on ABC Insiders, who echoed our position that government must consider the benefits of the NDIS not only the costs. The report continues to earn media mentions each week as the NDIS remains topical in the news.

Emma and Matt also presented the report findings to a Senate Committee hearing.

**361**  
online and  
print articles

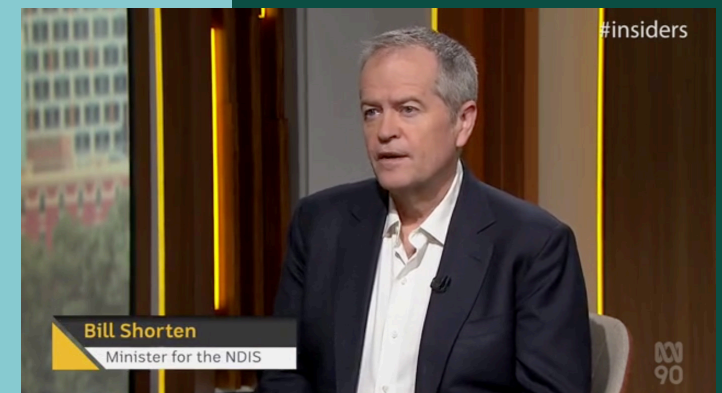
**4**  
TV  
mentions

**3**  
radio  
mentions

**1**  
Senate  
committee  
hearing

“ Every dollar that gets spent in the scheme, according to one report that was commissioned recently, generates **\$2.25 in economic outcome.** ”

Bill Shorten on ABC Insiders  
12/6/22



# Industry Policy.

Per Capita will soon be launching **The Centre for New Industry**, which will propose policy solutions that support a mission-oriented approach to industrial policy, and advocate for economic diversification, decarbonisation and democratisation.

We believe that Australia needs a vision of the future that provides greater employment opportunities for workers and their families, greater stability and security for regional communities, and better equips Australia to respond and adapt to economic and industrial change.

We believe that Australia cannot rely on top-down solutions to economic development, but must work with community, workers and industry to create long lasting, sustainable economic growth. Our unique country, with a vast land mass and low population density, requires unique economic solutions to the challenges we face as a nation. The Centre will support the development of these solutions by producing detailed yet accessible research that is grounded in the experiences of people and place to explore the skills formation and industry policy requirements for successful shift to a zero carbon, full employment economy.

## Research Pillars

### 1 Industrial Development and Diversification

Research in this space will analyse Australia's contemporary industrial profile and make the case for economic diversification. A collaborative approach to economic development will bring together government, industry and workers to set targets for industry growth, and to share and distribute the associated benefits.

### 2 Skills for Industry

Research in this space will include analysis of Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector; the school-to-work transition; active labour market policy; internships and work experience; the portability of skills; deskilling, skills fragmentation and micro credentialling.

### 3 Industrial Standards

Research in this space will explore best practice approaches to industrial relations; the use of sectoral and industrial level bargaining; industrial rights; remuneration and classification; worker voice and representation; and industrial integrity.

### 4 New Industry Models

Research in this space will include analysis of cooperative and mutual business models; worker representation; corporate social responsibility; remunicipalisation of essential services; community wealth building; and economic democracy.

# Care Economy.

In her chapter for Per Capita's 2020 collection of essays *What Happens Next?*, Emma Dawson set out the case for revaluing and investing in care and social services – known as the “foundational economy”, especially given the new awareness of the importance of these roles during the height of the pandemic.

## The Case for a Care-Led Recovery

This paper, published in October 2020, argued for a significant government investment in the care economy, to create jobs for women, to improve the pay and conditions of essential care workers already in the system, and to improve the quality, affordability and accessibility of care for all Australians. Critically, it defined this as an investment in social infrastructure.

## Impact

One of the key recommendations from Emma's Care Led Recovery paper was that the federal government should amend the Fair Work Act to allow the Fair Work Commission to make orders lifting award wages in feminised industries. **This policy was adopted by the Australian Labor Party early in 2021.**

**Two further recommendations from Emma's work on the care economy were adopted as part of Labor's commitment to fixing the residential aged care sector:**

- That taxpayer funding of residential aged care should be tied to strict regulation, which mandates staffing ratios, including the requirement for a Registered Nurse to be on site at all times and minimum food standards; and
- That all taxpayer funds assigned to the Aged Care system should be spent directly on the provision of care (including administration and overhead costs) and that rigorous reporting of expenditure should be provided annually, and made publicly available

At the state government level, we are delighted that **the Victorian State Government has adopted our recommendation to significantly lift government investment in ECEC infrastructure, and critically, to build new publicly owned and operated ECEC centres, ideally co-located with primary schools.** The recent announcement of 50 new state-run, low cost ECEC centres in areas currently underserved by the private market across Victoria is a welcome point of difference with the approach being taken in NSW, where subsidies will be paid to the private sector to delivery extra childcare places.

“Apparently, it was a revelation to many of us that the people who keep society ticking over are those we take for granted every day: those who care for our kids and our elderly, who pick our vegetables and stock our supermarket shelves, who nurse us when we are sick and clean up after us as we go about our lives. Most work in the foundational economy involves a complex mix of physical and psychological abilities, but, due to its roots in the home, it is too often dismissed as ‘unskilled labour’, and accordingly is underpaid... For too long, we have neglected the foundations upon which that economy is built; and they have become plagued by exploitation, eroded by misplaced parsimony, and destabilised by the extraction of resources.”

Emma Dawson

# Parliament and policy.

## Diversity in parliament

In May we released *The Way In*, an analysis of the 46th Australian Parliament, analysing the identity, vocational and experiential factors of its members. This report follows on from our analysis of the 45th Parliament in 2019.

Research fellow Osmond Chiu is regularly asked for comment as an expert on diversity in parliament. Over the last financial year he was quoted in 33 such articles.

Thanks to this reporting and commentary on the diversity of Australia's parliament, we now have the most diverse parliament in Australia's history. We will continue to push for a parliament that accurately represents our country's population.

43

online  
articles

16

print  
articles

2

TV  
appearances

## Government submissions

Per Capita wrote a submission to the Inquiry into Media Diversity in Australia. Our submission recommended that the policy to privatise the NBN be reversed and that the NBN be retrofitted to include a dedicated public interest content portal, as was envisaged in the original design.

We also wrote a submission to the Review of the Workplace Gender Equality Act, which highlighted gaps in the knowledge base regarding the intersecting causes of gender inequality at work and recommended strategies for improved data collection.

## Evidence-based policy

Per Capita and the Institute of Public Affairs once again completed the evidence-based policy project, now in its fourth year. The two ideologically opposed think tanks each review 20 recent federal and state policies to measure them against agreed standards for good policy-making, independent of political bias. The aim of the project is to encourage evidence-based policy decisions by all tiers of government.



# Events.

## Webinars

While in-person events have been on hold, Per Capita has run a series of free webinars to engage our audience. Speakers have included Andrew Leigh MP, Kate Fitzgibbon, Lech Blaine, Van Badham, Abul Rizvi, Saul Griffith and Jo Dyer. Topics have covered climate change, integrity in politics, violence against women and Australia's economic future.

All our webinars are recorded and uploaded to YouTube for those who are unable to attend the live session. These webinars have enabled people to participate who may not otherwise be able to attend our in-person events and have expanded our audience.

11

webinars

666

total webinar  
attendance

781

total YouTube  
views

## John Cain Memorial Oration

As part of our merger with the John Cain Foundation in 2020, Per Capita committed to continuing their legacy event, the John Cain Memorial Oration.

With in-person events now possible again, the oration was held in April at the State Library of Victoria and was delivered by Premier Daniel Andrews.

Guests were encouraging to hear the Premier speak of the social progress made by the Cain government, and how our current State government seeks to continue this tradition.





# Opinion pieces.

We published 21 op eds this financial year on a variety of topics:

<b>Avoiding the political is a luxury we can't afford</b> John Falzon, 4/6/22 The Canberra Times and 102 syndications	<b>Working people are filling Australia's leadership void</b> John Falzon, 12/1/22 The Canberra Times and 99 syndications	<b>Far right is preying on Melbourne vaccine protesters</b> John Falzon, 22/9/21 The Canberra Times
<b>It's up to us to fight if we want a government with soul</b> John Falzon, 10/5/22 The Canberra Times and 119 syndications	<b>Debt and tax: the unmentionables for both major parties vying for election</b> Emma Dawson, 3/1/22 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today	<b>Left's identity politics crisis a progressive problem</b> Emma Dawson, 20/9/21 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today
<b>One-off fixes like the ones in this budget are no fixes at all</b> John Falzon, 1/4/22 The Canberra Times and 73 syndications	<b>It's the final quarter and it's Albanese's time to kick</b> Emma Dawson, 6/12/21 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today	<b>The government's cowardly policies will never prevent disasters but women &amp; children might</b> Tanja Kovac, 7/9/21 Women's Agenda
<b>Petrol prices won't crash the housing market – it's renters who will suffer most</b> Emma Dawson, 17/3/22 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today	<b>We have a choice as to who must bear society's risks</b> John Falzon, 28/11/21 The Canberra Times	<b>Just who is being protected here?</b> John Falzon, 29/8/21 The Canberra Times
<b>Imagine if we focused on a different kind of surplus</b> John Falzon, 26/2/22 The Canberra Times and 120 syndications	<b>The case for high-speed rail is bigger than business</b> Shirley Jackson, 17/11/21 The Canberra Times and 42 syndications	<b>Cashless debit cards would be an insult to everyone</b> John Falzon, 28/7/21 The Canberra Times and 48 syndications
<b>Don't forget the small communities when transitioning to renewables</b> Shirley Jackson, 22/2/22 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today	<b>PM eschews care-led recovery for old-fashioned approach</b> Emma Dawson, 4/11/21 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today	<b>Time to roll out JobKeeper 2.0 in NSW</b> Emma Dawson, 12/7/21 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today
<b>Progressives need to think about the Senate. Their agenda depends on a working majority</b> Osmond Chiu, 4/2/22 The Canberra Times and 99 syndications	<b>It's not tokenism. Diverse political parties make better decisions</b> Osmond Chiu, 6/10/21 The Canberra Times and 103 syndications	<b>The economy is working well for some, but not for all</b> Emma Dawson, 23/6/21 The Age, SMH, Brisbane Times and WA Today

# Teamwork.

Per Capita is a small team of just 7 staff, but we punch well above our weight! We would love to be able to grow our team so we can achieve even more.

With a new federal Labor government, now is the time we can have the greatest impact in our fight against inequality. You can be part of this work by contributing to Per Capita's end-of-financial-year appeal.

Thank you for being part of our team fighting inequality together. It has been said many times before but it really is true that we could not do this work without you.

Best regards,

Emma Dawson and the Per Capita team.



*The Per Capita team, from left: Sam Ibrahim, Meredith Eldridge, Matt Lloyd-Cape, Emma Dawson, Shirley Jackson, Angela Stevens (research fellow), Michael D'Rosario. Absent: Dr John Falzon.*

Per Capita is an independent progressive think tank, dedicated to fighting inequality in Australia. We work to build a new vision for Australia based on fairness, shared prosperity, community and social justice.

Our research is rigorous, evidence-based and long-term in its outlook. We consider the national challenges of the next decade rather than the next election cycle. We ask original questions and offer fresh solutions, drawing on new thinking in social science, economics and public policy.

## Research Fellows

Osmond Chiu	Tim Lyons
Dennis Glover	Shireen Morris
Julie Connolly	Tanja Kovac
David Hetherington	Angela Stevens

## Our Board

Jacob Varghese	Gemma Pinnell
Dee Madigan	Rod Glover
David Hetherington	