

# What is a "Voice" to Parliament?

This fact sheet is designed to help you understand a First Nations "Voice" to Parliament, the upcoming referendum, and how to find more information.

## What is a "Voice"?

A First Nations Voice to Parliament (also known as a "Voice") would be a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who give advice to Australia's Federal Parliament about laws and policies that affect First Nations communities.

## How would this change things?

Having a "Voice" would mean the government has better quality information when they make laws and decisions that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## What's a "referendum" and what will I need to do?

Because Australia's government changes every four years, for a "Voice" to remain long-term it needs to be in the "Constitution". This sets-out the basic rules on how Australia is governed. The only way to change the Constitution is by having a public voting process called a "referendum". Later this year, all eligible Australian citizens will be asked to vote on whether or not they think there should be a "Voice".

## What would a "Voice" NOT do?

A "Voice" would not have decision-making power. They would not be another 'arm', 'branch' or 'cabinet' of government. The "Voice" would simply provide advice to the government.

## What do Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people think?

As with many political issues, not everyone is in agreement about the "Voice". However, according to recent polls, more than 80% of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people support a "Voice".

## Want to take action?

Share this information. Having conversations with your friends and family is a great way to help people make an informed vote. If you aren't eligible to vote (e.g. you aren't an Australian citizen) you can still share this information to help others understand the "Voice".

## Want to learn more?

Head to [reconciliationvic.org.au/voice-to-parliament](https://reconciliationvic.org.au/voice-to-parliament) to find out more about the "Voice". You can find out more about referendums at [aec.gov.au/referendums](https://aec.gov.au/referendums).



Merri Health