

The Essential Report

23 August 2016



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Prepared By: Essential Research

**Data Supplied
by:**



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Our researchers are members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society.

About this poll

This report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The survey was conducted online from the 19th to 22nd August 2016 and is based on 1,002 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party trust to handle issues, most important issues, climate change, foreign investment and same sex marriage.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 15.

Note that due to rounding, not all tables necessarily total 100% and subtotals may also vary.

Federal voting intention

Q If a Federal Election was held today to which party will you probably give your first preference vote? If not sure, which party are you currently leaning toward? If don't know - Well which party are you currently leaning to?

	Total	Last week 16/8/16	2 weeks ago 9/8/16	4 weeks ago 26/7/16	Election 7 Sep 13
Liberal	36%	36%	37%	35%	
National	3%	3%	2%	4%	
Total Liberal/National	39%	39%	40%	39%	45.6%
Labor	36%	37%	37%	37%	33.4%
Greens	10%	10%	10%	10%	8.6%
Nick Xenophon Team	4%	4%	4%	4%	-
Other/Independent	12%	11%	10%	11%	12.4%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	49%	48%	48%	49%	53.5%
Labor	51%	52%	52%	51%	46.5%

NB. Sample = 1,802. The data in the above tables comprise 2-week averages derived from the first preference/leaning to voting questions. Respondents who select 'don't know' are not included in the results. The two-party preferred estimate is calculated by distributing the votes of the other parties according to their preferences at the 2013 election.

Party trust to handle issues

Q Which party would you trust most to handle the following issues?

	Liberal	Labor	Don't know	NET	NET Jun 2016
Security and the war on terrorism	39%	21%	40%	+18	+18
Management of the economy	41%	26%	34%	+15	+12
Controlling interest rates	35%	23%	42%	+12	+12
Managing population growth	33%	23%	44%	+10	+8
Political leadership	35%	26%	39%	+9	+8
Treatment of asylum seekers	32%	26%	41%	+6	+4
Ensuring a quality water supply	28%	28%	43%	-	-1
Ensuring a fair taxation system	30%	34%	36%	-4	-5
A fair industrial relations system	30%	38%	32%	-8	-11
Protecting Australian jobs and protection of local industries	29%	37%	34%	-8	-12
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	30%	38%	32%	-8	-13
Ensuring a quality education for all children	29%	37%	34%	-8	-14
Housing affordability	25%	35%	40%	-10	-8
Addressing climate change	25%	35%	40%	-10	-10
Protecting the environment	24%	35%	40%	-11	-12

The Liberal Party is trusted more to handle security and the war on terrorism (+18), management of the economy (+15) and controlling interest rates (+12).

The Labor Party is trusted more to handle protecting the environment (-11), addressing climate change (-10) and housing affordability (-10).

Since this question was asked in June, The Liberal Party has improved its position against Labor on ensuring the quality of the health system (up 5) and ensuring a quality education for all children (up 6).



Important issues

Q Which of the following issues are the most important for the Federal Government to address over the next 12 months?

	Total	Most important	2 nd most important	3 rd most important	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other	Dec 2014	Change
Improving our health system	45%	16%	17%	12%	51%	40%	39%	47%	47%	-2
National security and terrorism	37%	15%	12%	10%	27%	50%	17%	41%	23%	+14
Reducing unemployment	31%	11%	9%	11%	34%	28%	10%	33%	37%	-6
Tax avoidance by big companies	31%	10%	11%	10%	38%	26%	28%	36%	27%	+4
Housing affordability	31%	11%	9%	11%	37%	24%	35%	25%	22%	+9
Reducing the budget deficit	30%	12%	9%	9%	23%	44%	12%	36%	32%	-2
More funds for education	20%	4%	7%	9%	23%	17%	27%	16%	23%	-3
Protecting workers wages and conditions	18%	5%	6%	7%	23%	12%	15%	21%	24%	-6
Addressing climate change	18%	6%	6%	6%	20%	10%	55%	13%	20%	-2
Investing in public transport	14%	3%	4%	7%	10%	17%	12%	16%	14%	-
Protecting the environment	14%	4%	4%	6%	15%	7%	40%	15%	13%	+1
Investing in roads	7%	2%	2%	3%	5%	10%	2%	11%	10%	-3
Free trade agreements	5%	1%	2%	2%	2%	7%	4%	4%	6%	-1



The most important issues for the Federal Government to address over the next 12 months were improving our health system (45%), national security and terrorism (37%), reducing unemployment (31%), tax avoidance by big companies (31) and housing affordability (31%).

For Labor voters the most important issues were improving our health system (51%), tax avoidance by big companies (38%) and housing affordability (37%).

For Liberal/National voters the most important issues were national security and terrorism (50%), reducing the budget deficit (44%) and improving our health system (40%).

For Greens voters the most important issues were addressing climate change (55%), protecting the environment (40%) and improving our health system (39%).

Since this question was asked in December 2014, there have been increases for national security and terrorism (up 14%) and housing affordability (up 9%) and decreases for reducing unemployment (down 6%) and protecting workers wages and conditions (down 6%).



Climate change

Q Do you believe that there is fairly conclusive evidence that climate change is happening and caused by human activity or do you believe that the evidence is still not in and we may just be witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate which happens from time to time?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Nov 2009	Dec 2010	Jun 2011	Oct 2012	Oct 2013	Dec 2014	Nov 2015	Mar 2016	Jun 2016
Climate change is happening and is caused by human activity	57%	71%	44%	90%	45%	53%	45%	50%	48%	52%	57%	56%	63%	59%
We are just witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate	26%	16%	38%	5%	36%	34%	36%	39%	39%	36%	29%	32%	27%	28%
Don't know	17%	13%	17%	5%	19%	13%	19%	12%	13%	12%	14%	12%	10%	13%

57% (down 2% since June) agree that climate change is happening and is caused by human activity and 26% (down 2%) believe that we may just be witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate.

By age groups, those aged under 35 split 70%/13% and those aged 55+ split 45%/40%. People with higher education were more likely to think climate change is happening and is caused by human activity - those with university degrees split 64%/21%.



Doing enough to address climate change

Q As far as you know, do you think Australia is doing enough, not enough or too much to address climate change?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Climate change is happening	Aug 2015	Mar 2016
Doing enough	22%	15%	36%	5%	23%	11%	24%	21%
Not doing enough	52%	66%	36%	92%	46%	76%	53%	57%
Doing too much	8%	3%	12%	3%	13%	2%	7%	8%
Don't know	18%	15%	17%	1%	17%	10%	16%	13%

52% (down 5% since March) think Australia is not doing enough to address climate change and 22% (up 1%) think Australia is doing enough.

Those most likely to think Australia is not doing enough were aged 18-34 (65%) and university educated (57%).

Of those who believe climate change is happening, 76% think Australia is not doing enough.



Foreign investment

Q Do you think the following types of foreign investment are good or bad for the Australian economy?

	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know
Foreign investment in mining	27%	28%	6%	21%	29%	17%	11%	15%
Foreign investment in ports	23%	37%	5%	18%	25%	21%	16%	16%
Foreign investment in agriculture	21%	44%	6%	15%	22%	22%	22%	14%
Foreign investment in infrastructure e.g. electricity	19%	45%	5%	14%	21%	21%	24%	14%
Foreign investment in real estate	14%	54%	3%	11%	20%	23%	31%	12%

	Total good	Total bad	Vote Labor good	Vote Labor bad	Vote LNP good	Vote LNP bad	Vote Green good	Vote Green bad	Vote other good	Vote other bad
Foreign investment in mining	27%	28%	23%	33%	37%	24%	19%	38%	23%	42%
Foreign investment in ports	23%	37%	19%	37%	31%	35%	14%	38%	18%	51%
Foreign investment in agriculture	21%	44%	19%	42%	29%	42%	11%	51%	13%	62%
Foreign investment in infrastructure e.g. electricity	19%	45%	18%	46%	25%	44%	13%	54%	14%	57%
Foreign investment in real estate	14%	54%	14%	51%	19%	56%	9%	62%	10%	65%



By a factor of more than two to one, respondents think foreign investment in real estate (54%), infrastructure (45%) and agriculture (44%) is bad for the Australian economy.

They were also more likely to think foreign investment in ports is bad for the economy (37% bad/23% good) but split on foreign investment in mining – 27% good/28% bad/ 29% neither.

While Liberal/National voters had a more positive view of foreign investment overall, they were still more likely to think it was bad for agriculture (42%), infrastructure (44%) and especially real estate (56%).



Same sex marriage

Q Do you think people of the same sex should or should not be allowed to marry?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Nov 2010	Jul 2011	Sep 2012	Oct 2013	Jun 2014	Oct 2015	Mar 2016	Jul 2016
Should be allowed to marry	62%	72%	53%	92%	48%	53%	54%	55%	57%	60%	59%	64%	58%
Should not be allowed to marry	27%	20%	35%	5%	41%	36%	35%	36%	31%	28%	30%	26%	28%
Don't know	12%	8%	12%	3%	10%	11%	11%	9%	12%	12%	11%	10%	14%

62% (up 4% since July) agreed that people of the same sex should be allowed to marry and 27% (down 1%) think they should not.

Support for same sex marriage is 56% among men and 67% among women. 71% of under 35's support same sex marriage – while those aged 65+ split 47% in favour/39% against.



Funding plebiscite campaigns

- Q As part of the national plebiscite on same-sex marriage, it has been proposed that tax-payer funding be provided for advertising for both the in favour and against campaigns.

Do you approve or disapprove of the Government providing funding for campaign costs in the lead-up to the vote?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Should be allowed to marry	Should not be allowed to marry
Total approve	25%	26%	30%	23%	16%	30%	17%
Total disapprove	62%	62%	61%	68%	72%	57%	78%
Strongly approve	7%	10%	7%	5%	4%	9%	3%
Approve	18%	16%	23%	18%	12%	21%	14%
Disapprove	23%	23%	25%	20%	21%	24%	21%
Strongly disapprove	39%	39%	36%	48%	51%	33%	57%
Don't know	13%	11%	10%	10%	12%	12%	5%

62% disapprove of the Government providing funding for campaign costs for the same-sex marriage plebiscite and 25% approve.

Those most likely to disapprove were aged 55 (73%).

78% of those opposed to same-sex marriage disapproved compared to 57% of those in favour.



Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a weekly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct research on a week-by-week basis since November 2007.

Each week, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses issues that are topical and a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated regularly (such as political preference and leadership approval), while others are unique to each week and reflect media and social issues that are present at the time.

Your Source has a self-managed consumer online panel of over 100,000 members. The majority of panel members have been recruited using off line methodologies, effectively ruling out concerns associated with online self-selection.

Your Source has validation methods in place that prevent panelist over use and ensure member authenticity. Your Source randomly selects 18+ males and females (with the aim of targeting 50/50 males/females) from its Australia wide panel. An invitation is sent out to approximately 7000 – 8000 of their panel members.

The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000+ interviews. In theory, with a sample of this size, there is 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population had been polled. However, this assumes random sampling, which, because of non-response and less than 100% population coverage cannot be achieved in practice. Furthermore, there are other possible sources of error in all polls including question wording and question order, interviewer bias (for telephone and face-to-face polls), response errors and weighting. The best guide to a poll's accuracy is to look at the record of the polling company - how have they performed at previous elections or other occasions where their estimates can be compared with known population figures. In the last poll before the 2010 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes were all within 1% of the election results.

The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points. Essential Research uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data. The data is weighted against Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

All Essential Research and senior Your Source staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour. Your Source is an Australian social and market research company specializing in recruitment, field research, data gathering and data analysis. Essential Research is a member of the Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO). Your Source holds Interviewer Quality Control Australia (IQCA) accreditation, Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO) membership and World Association of Opinion and Marketing Research Professionals (ESOMAR) membership. **Both Essential Research and Your Source are ISO accredited market research companies.** This research was conducted in compliance with AS: ISO20252 guidelines.