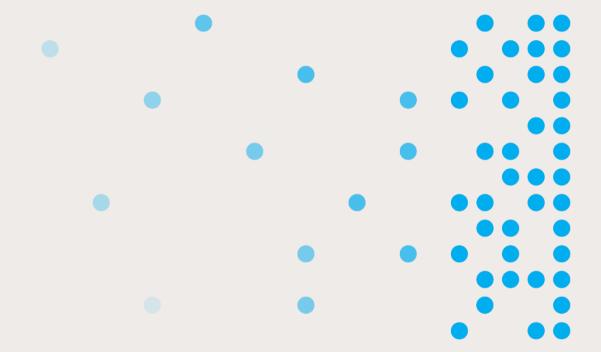# The Essential Report

2 May 2017

The Essential Report

Date: 2/5/2017

Prepared By: Essential Research

Data Supplied by:

Essential Media Communications is a member of the Association of Market and Social Research Organisations

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

Essential.
RESEARCH

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 26th to 30th April 2017 and is based on 1,007 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the economy, the federal budget, confidence in Malcolm Turnbull, and compulsory voting.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 13.

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

Essential.
RESEARCH

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 25/4/17	2 weeks ago 18/4/17	4 weeks ago 4/4/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	35%	34%	33%	35%	
National	2%	3%	3%	2%	
Total Liberal/National	**38%**	**37%**	**36%**	**37%**	**42.0%**
Labor	**37%**	**36%**	**37%**	**36%**	**34.7%**
Greens	9%	10%	10%	10%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	7%	8%	8%	8%	
Other/Independent	6%	6%	7%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	**47%**	**47%**	**46%**	**47%**	**50.4%**
Labor	**53%**	**53%**	**54%**	**43%**	**49.6%**

NB. Sample = 1,801. 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 2016 election.

Essential.
RESEARCH

Direction of economy

Q   Overall, how would you describe the current state of the Australian economy?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Dec '16
Total Good	**30%**	**28%**	**44%**	**22%**	**19%**	**23%**
Total Poor	**29%**	**30%**	**22%**	**38%**	**43%**	**36%**
Very good	3%	4%	4%	-	1%	2%
Good	27%	24%	40%	22%	18%	21%
Neither good nor poor	36%	37%	33%	35%	37%	37%
Poor	23%	24%	17%	27%	34%	28%
Very poor	6%	6%	5%	11%	9%	8%
Don't know	5%	4%	1%	5%	2%	**4%**

Overall, 30% thought that the state of the economy was good (up 7% from December). 29% thought it was bad (down 7%).

44% of Liberal/National voters thought the state of the economy was good, compared to 28% of Labor voters, 22% of Greens voters, and 19% of other/independent voters.

Essential.
RESEARCH

Direction of economy

Q   From what you have read and heard, do you think the Australian economy is heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Dec '16
The right direction	**29%**	25%	45%	18%	16%	26%
The wrong direction	**41%**	48%	31%	56%	55%	45%
Don't know	**30%**	28%	23%	26%	29%	29%

Overall, 29% thought that the economy is heading in the right direction (up 3% from December), and 41% thought it was heading in the wrong direction (down 4%).

Liberal/National voters were more likely to think the economy is heading in the right direction (45%) than Labor (25%), Greens (18%) and independent/other voters (16%).

Men were more likely to think that the economy was heading in the right direction (36%) than women (23%).

Essential.
RESEARCH

Federal budget priorities

Q The Federal Budget will be announced on Tuesday 9th May. Do you think the Government should increase, decrease or keep spending the same for –

	Increase spending	Keep spending the same	Decrease spending	Don't know
Health care	62%	26%	4%	8%
Education	54%	33%	4%	9%
Age pensions	48%	36%	5%	11%
Public transport infrastructure	47%	39%	6%	8%
Protecting Australian jobs	44%	41%	6%	8%
More affordable housing	44%	38%	9%	8%
Renewable energy	41%	37%	14%	9%
Assistance to the needy in Australia	38%	46%	8%	8%
Building highways, roads	38%	44%	9%	9%
Scientific research	37%	43%	11%	9%
Anti-terrorism	32%	49%	11%	9%
Environmental protection	30%	44%	17%	9%
Assistance to the unemployed	22%	48%	21%	9%

Essential.
RESEARCH

	Increase spending	Keep spending the same	Decrease spending	Don't know
Military/defence	20%	46%	24%	10%
Assistance to the needy in the rest of the world	11%	30%	50%	9%
Assistance to businesses	10%	48%	32%	10%

The only spending areas with majority support for increasing spending were health care (62% support) and education (54%). Only 4% thought spending should be decreased for each of these areas.

The spending areas with the highest support for decreasing spending were assistance to the needy in the rest of the world (50% support), assistance to businesses (32%) and military/defence (24%).

Essential.
RESEARCH

Federal budget impact

Q   In general, do you expect the Federal Budget, will be good or bad for the following?

	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know	Total Good (May '16)	Total Bad (May '16)
People who are well off	**44%**	**7%**	23%	31%	27%	5%	2%	13%	49%	10%
Australian business	**43%**	**8%**	7%	36%	34%	6%	2%	15%	-	-
The economy overall	**21%**	**24%**	2%	19%	41%	20%	4%	14%	28%	22%
Australian families	**14%**	**36%**	2%	12%	36%	29%	7%	14%	16%	36%
Average working people	**12%**	**35%**	1%	11%	39%	28%	7%	14%	21%	35%
Younger Australians	**11%**	**33%**	2%	9%	42%	25%	8%	15%	25%	28%
People of lower incomes	**11%**	**48%**	2%	9%	28%	32%	16%	13%	15%	46%
You personally	**10%**	**30%**	2%	8%	47%	23%	7%	13%	15%	26%
Older Australians	**10%**	**45%**	2%	8%	33%	32%	13%	13%	11%	51%

44% thought that the Federal Budget would be good for people who are well off (down 49% from last year's budget). 43% thought it would be good for Australian business, and 21% thought it would be good for the economy overall (down 7%). Less than 15% thought the budget would be good for any another group.

Only 10% thought the federal budget would be good for them personally (down 5% from last year's budget), and 30% thought it would be bad for them (up 4%).

Essential.
RESEARCH

Malcolm Turnbull

Q How confident are you that Malcolm Turnbull can deliver the following?

	Total Confident	Total Not Confident	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident	Don't know
Tougher citizenship requirements	**55%**	**31%**	12%	43%	21%	10%	13%
Tighter regulations for foreign workers	**52%**	**35%**	12%	40%	23%	12%	12%
Secure borders	**47%**	**39%**	9%	38%	26%	13%	13%
Stand up for Australia's interests internationally	**36%**	**51%**	8%	28%	32%	19%	13%
A strong economy	**31%**	**56%**	4%	27%	36%	20%	12%
Jobs and growth	**31%**	**58%**	5%	26%	39%	19%	11%
A balanced budget	**29%**	**59%**	4%	25%	36%	23%	12%
Action on climate change	**24%**	**61%**	4%	20%	36%	25%	16%

Respondents were most confident that Malcolm Turnbull could deliver tougher citizenship requirements (55% confident) and tighter regulations for foreign workers (52%).

They were least confident that Turnbull could deliver action on climate change (61% not confident), a balanced budget (59%), jobs and growth (58%), and a strong economy (56%).

Essential.
RESEARCH

Support for compulsory voting

Q   Australia has a compulsory voting system. Other nations like the US and UK have voluntary voting. Do you think voting in Federal and State elections should be compulsory or voluntary?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Voting should be compulsory	**66%**	70%	74%	72%	51%
Voting should be voluntary	**27%**	24%	24%	21%	44%
Don't know	**7%**	6%	2%	6%	5%

66% thought that voting should be compulsory. Those most likely to think that voting should be compulsory were those aged 65+ (78%) and Liberal/National voters (74%).

27% thought that voting should be voluntary. Those most likely to think that voting should be voluntary were those independent/other party voters (44%), those aged 35-44 (33%) and Queenslanders (33%).

Essential.

RESEARCH

Effect of compulsory voting

Q   If voting were voluntary, how likely would you be to vote in Federal and State elections?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aug '16
Total Likely	**80%**	**83%**	**91%**	**85%**	**78%**	**72%**
Total Unlikely	**12%**	**12%**	**8%**	**6%**	**17%**	**19%**
I would definitely vote	58%	61%	67%	66%	55%	48%
It is likely I would vote	22%	22%	24%	19%	23%	24%
It is unlikely I would vote	9%	8%	7%	5%	13%	13%
I would definitely not vote	3%	4%	1%	1%	4%	6%
Don't know	7%	5%	2%	8%	6%	8%

80% said they would be likely to vote in a federal election, even if voting were voluntary (up 8% from August 2016), and 12% said they would be unlikely to vote if voting were voluntary (down 7%).

Those who said they were most likely to vote if voting were voluntary were Liberal/National voters (91% total likely) and those earning more than $104,000 per year (89%).

Those who said they were least likely to vote if voting were voluntary were than earning less than $31,200 per year (22% total unlikely) and those who did not complete year 12 (20%).

Essential.
RESEARCH

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 2016 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes averaged less than 1% difference from the election results and the two-party preferred difference was only 0.1%.

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.

Essential.
RESEARCH