

The Essential Report

30 May 2017



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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 25th to 29th May 2017 and is based on 1,000 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on asylum seekers, government decisions, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the bank levy, Catholic schools and income tax cuts.

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 23/5/17	2 weeks ago 16/5/17	4 weeks ago 2/5/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	35%	34%	34%	35%	
National	3%	3%	3%	2%	
Total Liberal/National	38%	37%	37%	38%	42.0%
Labor	36%	37%	38%	37%	34.7%
Greens	11%	10%	10%	9%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	5%	6%	6%	7%	
Other/Independent	7%	6%	6%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	47%	46%	46%	47%	50.4%
Labor	53%	54%	54%	53%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,783. 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.

Asylum Seekers

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about asylum seekers and refugees?

	Total agree	Total disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Nov 2015	Aug 2016	Nov 2016
Asylum seekers should be deported to their country of origin if their asylum claims are unsuccessful	67%	12%	36%	31%	16%	7%	5%	6%	-	-	-
When the Manus Island detention centre is closed, those who cannot be safely relocated to another country should be brought to Australia	32%	40%	10%	22%	19%	15%	25%	8%	-	-	-
The government is too tough on asylum seekers	25%	53%	11%	14%	16%	20%	33%	5%	25%	21%	23%

67% thought that asylum seekers should be returned to their country of origin if their asylum claims were unsuccessful. Those most likely to think this were other party/independent voters (79% disagree), Liberal/National voters (79%) and those aged 65+ (78%). Those most likely to disagree were Greens voters (44% disagree), Victorians (18%) and those with a university degree (16%).

32% thought that asylum seekers and refugees who cannot be safely relocated to another country after Manus Island is closed should be brought to Australia. Those most likely to think this were Greens voters (69% agree), ALP voters (41%) and those aged 18-24 (37%). Those most likely to disagree were those aged other party/independent voters (54% disagree), Liberal/National voters (53%) and those aged 55-64 (52%).

25% thought that the government is too tough on asylum seekers, up 2% from when this question was last asked in November 2016. Those most likely to think this were Greens voters (68% agree), ALP voters (36%) and those aged 25-34 (35%). Most likely to disagree were other party/independent voters (75% disagree), those aged 65+ (71%) and Liberal/National voters (68%).



Role of Government

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about government?

	Total agree	Total disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I wish our political leaders would look for more common solutions, rather than just fighting each other	85%	2%	47%	38%	9%	1%	1%	4%
I'm sick of slogan from politicians – I want real answers on how government can operate better	82%	3%	44%	38%	11%	2%	1%	5%
Our government needs to find ways of working with the rest of the world, and not turning our backs on the world	59%	11%	19%	40%	24%	8%	3%	6%
It is harder than ever for governments to control the influence of multinational corporations	55%	14%	17%	38%	21%	11%	3%	9%
People have unrealistic expectations of the government's ability to sort everything out	45%	26%	11%	34%	23%	18%	8%	5%
Most politicians are motivated by good intentions rather than self interest	22%	47%	4%	18%	25%	26%	21%	6%



The statement most likely to be agreed with was “I wish our political leaders would look for more common solutions, rather than just fighting each other”, of which 85% agreed. Those most likely to agree with this statement were those aged 65+ (96% agree), other party/independent voters (94%) and those aged 55-64 (93%). No more than 5% of any demographic group disagreed with this statement.

The statement most likely to be disagreed with was “Most politicians are motivated by good intentions rather than self interest”, of which 47% disagreed. Those most likely to disagree with this were other party/independent voters (71% disagree), Greens voters (65%) and those aged 55-64 (57%). Those most likely to agree were Liberal/National voters (32%), those who work full time (26%) and those with a university degree (25%). This was also the only statement which a greater proportion disagreed than agreed with.



Government Decisions

Q Thinking about some of the major decisions the Federal Government has made over the years, do you think the following decisions have been good for Australia or bad for Australia?

	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know	Total Good (Oct 2016)
Compulsory superannuation	75%	5%	39%	36%	12%	3%	2%	8%	71%
Medibank (Now Medicare)	56%	14%	26%	30%	19%	9%	5%	11%	63%
Introducing the GST	43%	24%	11%	32%	24%	14%	10%	9%	46%
Free trade agreements	41%	16%	10%	31%	27%	9%	7%	17%	38%
Floating the dollar	37%	10%	10%	27%	27%	7%	3%	25%	33%
Reducing subsidies to car manufacturing	35%	25%	10%	25%	24%	17%	8%	16%	28%
Privatising Qantas	31%	29%	6%	25%	24%	19%	10%	15%	28%
Privatising Telstra	27%	39%	6%	21%	20%	23%	16%	13%	22%
Privatising the Commonwealth Bank	26%	34%	7%	19%	24%	19%	15%	16%	24%

The most popular government initiative listed was compulsory superannuation, which 75% thought was good. Those most likely to think this decision was good were those aged 65+ (86% good), Liberal/National voters (85%) and Western Australians (82%). 11% of other party/independent voters thought compulsory superannuation was bad.

The least popular government initiative was privatising Telstra, which 39% thought was bad. Those most likely to think this decision was bad were South Australians (57% bad), other party/independent voters (55%) and those aged 55-64 (53%).

The largest changes since this question was last asked in October 2016 were for Medibank/Medicare, approval for which dropped by 7%, and reducing car manufacturing subsidies, approval for which increased by 7%.



Trans Pacific Partnership

- Q It was recently announced that a number of countries, including Australia, will resume negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade agreement without the United States, who have withdrawn from the agreement. Do you think the TPP 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 (Oct 2015)
Multinational companies	48%	6%	16%	32%	19%	5%	1%	27%	57%
Mining companies	41%	8%	11%	30%	22%	6%	2%	29%	47%
Australian businesses overall	36%	16%	5%	31%	21%	11%	5%	27%	47%
Beef farmers	37%	17%	7%	30%	18%	12%	5%	29%	45%
Australia consumers	34%	18%	7%	27%	22%	12%	6%	26%	-
The Australian economy in general	34%	18%	6%	28%	20%	13%	5%	27%	44%
Sugar farmers	32%	18%	6%	26%	19%	13%	5%	31%	39%
Manufacturing companies	32%	20%	6%	26%	20%	12%	8%	27%	42%
Dairy farmers	31%	20%	6%	25%	20%	14%	6%	29%	42%
Australian workers	28%	23%	5%	23%	22%	14%	9%	27%	32%
Small businesses	27%	22%	4%	23%	23%	17%	5%	27%	21%

48% thought that the TPP would be good for multinational companies, and only 6% thought it would be bad. Those most likely to think it would be good were those aged 55-64 (60% good), and Liberal/National voters (56%).

For each group in the list, the proportion who thought the TPP would be good for it was greater than the proportion who thought it would be bad. Since this question was last asked in October 2015, the percentage who thought the TPP would be good has decreased for each group in the list except for small businesses, which has increased by 6%.



Bank Levy

- Q The recent Federal Budget contained a levy on the big banks, which is forecast to raise \$6.2bn from Australia's five largest banks over the next four years, but will not apply to smaller banks or foreign banks who operate in Australia. Who do you think the bank levy should be applied to?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Large Australian banks only	12%	16%	12%	15%	8%
Large Australian banks and foreign banks operating in Australia	48%	46%	52%	50%	59%
Small and large Australian banks and foreign banks operating in Australia	16%	16%	18%	13%	17%
The levy should not apply to any bank	10%	10%	9%	10%	9%
Don't know	14%	12%	8%	13%	8%

48% thought the bank levy should be extended to include foreign banks operating in Australia, but not smaller Australian banks. Those most likely to think this were those aged 65+ (59%) and other party/independent voters (59%).

Overall, 64% thought that the bank levy should apply to foreign banks operating in Australia.

Catholic Schools

Q The Catholic school sector is opposing the proposed changes to education funding announced in the federal budget, arguing that some Catholic schools will receive less money under this model. Do you think the new funding model will leave Catholic schools worse off?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Yes, Catholic schools will be worse off under the new funding model	20%	27%	20%	19%	15%
No, Catholic schools will not be worse off under the new funding model	38%	31%	47%	36%	43%
Don't know	42%	43%	33%	45%	42%

20% thought that Catholic school would be worse off under the proposed funding model. Those most likely to think this were those aged 18-24 (27%) and ALP voters (27%).

38% thought that Catholic schools would not be worse off under the proposed funding model. Those most likely to think this were those aged 65+ (58%) and Liberal/National voters (47%).

A plurality of 42% did not know whether Catholic schools would be worse off under the proposed new funding model.

Tax Cut or Workplace Laws

Q Do you think you would be better off with a personal income tax cut, or strengthened workplace laws that enable you to negotiate a pay rise from your employer?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
A personal income tax cut	52%	55%	54%	49%	55%
Stronger workplace laws that allow me to negotiate a pay rise from my employer	23%	24%	23%	31%	20%
Don't know	25%	21%	23%	20%	25%

52% thought they would be better off with a personal income tax cut than stronger workplace laws. Those most likely to think this were those aged 45-54 (63%), those working full time (61%) and those aged 35-44 (60%).

23% thought they would be better off with stronger workplace laws than a personal income tax cut. Those most likely to think this were South Australians (31% prefer), Greens voters (31%) and Victorians (29%).



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.

