

The Essential Report

8 August 2017



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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.



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 3rd to 7th August 2017 and is based on 1,015 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on leader approval, preferred PM, school funding, taxing family trusts, same-sex marriage and industrial laws.

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.



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 1/8/17	2 weeks ago 25/7/17	4 weeks ago 11/7/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	34%	36%	35%	33%	
National	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	37%	38%	38%	36%	42.0%
Labor	39%	36%	37%	36%	34.7%
Greens	9%	10%	10%	11%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	4%	4%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	8%	8%	7%	7%	
Other/Independent	5%	4%	5%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	46%	48%	47%	46%	50.4%
Labor	54%	52%	53%	54%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,805. 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.

Malcolm Turnbull

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing as Prime Minister?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other	July 2017	June 2017	May 2017	Apr 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	June 2016	Dec 2015
Total Approve	38%	27%	73%	12%	18%	37%	36%	37%	35%	33%	34%	38%	56%
Total Disapprove	46%	65%	19%	68%	65%	49%	45%	48%	47%	50%	46%	40%	23%
Strongly approve	4%	4%	9%	-	-	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	13%
Approve	34%	23%	64%	12%	18%	31%	31%	32%	30%	28%	29%	32%	43%
Disapprove	27%	37%	15%	43%	33%	30%	28%	29%	29%	30%	30%	24%	16%
Strongly disapprove	19%	28%	4%	25%	32%	19%	17%	19%	18%	20%	16%	16%	7%
Don't know	16%	9%	9%	20%	17%	15%	19%	15%	17%	18%	20%	21%	21%

38% approved of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing as Prime Minister (up 1% from last month), and 46% disapproved (down 3% from last month) – a change in net approval rating from -12 to -8 (his best net rating since November last year).

73% (up 2%) of Liberal/National voters approved of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing, compared to 27% of ALP voters and 12% of Greens voters.

By gender, men were 43% approve/49% disapprove and women 33% approve/42% disapprove.



Bill Shorten

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job Bill Shorten is doing as Opposition Leader?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	July 2017	June 2017	May 2017	Apr 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	Dec 2015	Dec 2014
Total Approve	35%	65%	20%	36%	13%	36%	34%	34%	33%	30%	35%	27%	35%
Total Disapprove	42%	19%	64%	37%	72%	44%	43%	45%	46%	49%	38%	47%	39%
Strongly approve	6%	15%	-	6%	1%	6%	5%	6%	5%	4%	6%	4%	7%
Approve	29%	50%	20%	30%	12%	30%	29%	28%	28%	26%	29%	23%	28%
Disapprove	24%	13%	37%	29%	29%	24%	28%	26%	26%	26%	21%	26%	23%
Strongly disapprove	18%	6%	27%	8%	43%	20%	15%	19%	20%	23%	17%	21%	16%
Don't know	22%	16%	16%	27%	15%	20%	23%	22%	22%	22%	25%	25%	26%

35% approved of the job Bill Shorten is doing as Opposition Leader (down 1% from last month), and 42% disapproved (down 2%) - a change in net approval rating from -8 to -7.

65% (down 1%) of ALP voters approved of the job Bill Shorten is doing, compared to 36% of Greens voters and 20% of Liberal/National voters.

By gender, men were 39% approve/48% disapprove and women 32% approve/38% disapprove.



Preferred Prime Minister

Q Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister out of Malcolm Turnbull and Bill Shorten?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	July 2017	June 2017	May 2017	Apr 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	Jun 2016	Dec 2015
Malcolm Turnbull	41%	20%	80%	11%	37%	41%	39%	39%	39%	38%	39%	40%	54%
Bill Shorten	27%	56%	5%	41%	13%	27%	26%	31%	28%	26%	28%	29%	15%
Don't know	32%	24%	15%	48%	50%	31%	34%	30%	32%	36%	33%	32%	31%

41% thought that Malcolm Turnbull would make a better Prime Minister (no change from last month), and 27% thought Bill Shorten would be better (no change). 32% did not know who would make a better Prime Minister.

The results were split by party, with 80% of Liberal/National voters saying that Malcolm Turnbull would be a better Prime Minister, and 56% of Labor voters saying Bill Shorten would.

Greens voters preferred Bill Shorten (41%) to Turnbull (11%), although the largest proportion did not know who would make a better Prime Minister (48%).

47% of men prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 30% prefer Bill Shorten.

36% of women prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 24% prefer Bill Shorten.



School funding

Q As far as you are aware, has the Turnbull Coalition Government increased funding to schools, decreased school funding or not changed school funding much at all?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Increased school funding	28%	21%	42%	12%	30%
Decreased school funding	22%	32%	15%	30%	19%
Not changed school funding much	22%	25%	20%	25%	27%
Don't know	28%	22%	23%	34%	24%

Views about whether the Federal Government had increased or decreased school funding were mixed. 28% thought they had increased funding, 22% thought they had decreased funding and 22% thought they had not changed the funding. Responses were partly related to voting intention – 42% of Liberal/National voters thought funding had increased while 32% of Labor voters thought it had decreased.

Family trusts

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the Labor Party’s proposal to tax the distributions of family trusts at 30%, the same level of tax paid by companies?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	41%	58%	37%	37%	34%
Total disapprove	30%	19%	41%	18%	44%
Strongly approve	15%	24%	10%	19%	12%
Approve	26%	34%	27%	18%	22%
Disapprove	19%	14%	25%	12%	26%
Strongly disapprove	11%	5%	16%	6%	18%
Don't know	29%	23%	22%	45%	21%

41% approved of the Labor Party’s proposal to tax the distributions of family trusts at 30% and 30% disapproved. 29% did not have an opinion. A majority (58%) of Labor voters approved but Liberal/National voters were split (37% approve/41% disapprove).

Of those on higher incomes (\$104,000+) 47% approved and 30% disapproved.



Same-sex marriage

Q Recently, a number of suggestions have been made for making a decision about same sex marriage. Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following suggestions?

	Total approve	Total dis-approve	Strongly approve	Approve	Dis-approve	Strongly dis-approve	Don't know
Hold a voluntary postal plebiscite followed by a vote in Parliament.	43%	38%	15%	28%	18%	20%	19%
Hold a vote in Parliament and try to persuade Liberal Party members to cross the floor and vote against their party policy	43%	31%	20%	23%	16%	15%	25%
Hold a plebiscite in conjunction with the next election	46%	34%	17%	29%	18%	16%	20%
Wait until after the next election before trying to reach a decision	22%	55%	6%	16%	24%	31%	23%

	Total approve	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Hold a voluntary postal plebiscite followed by a vote in Parliament.	43%	45%	53%	40%	35%
Hold a vote in Parliament and try to persuade Liberal Party members to cross the floor and vote against their party policy	43%	59%	37%	54%	26%
Hold a plebiscite in conjunction with the next election	46%	44%	57%	33%	52%
Wait until after the next election before trying to reach a decision	22%	23%	27%	9%	19%



Three options for addressing the issue of same sex marriage received moderate support. 46% approved holding a plebiscite with the next election, 43% approved holding a vote in Parliament and 43% supported a postal plebiscite (although 38% disapproved of this option).

A majority (55%) disapproved of waiting until after the next election before trying to reach a decision.

A majority of Labor (59%) and Greens (54%) voters approved of holding a vote in Parliament while Liberal/National voters were more likely to approve holding a plebiscite with the next election (57%) and holding a voluntary postal plebiscite (53%).

Waiting until after the next election was disapproved by 61% of Labor voters, 48% of Liberal/National voters and 70% of Greens voters.



Industrial laws

Q Do you think Australia’s industrial relations and work laws favour the interests of employers or employees or do they balance the interests of both?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Work full time	Work part time
Favour employers	39%	49%	26%	44%	51%	40%	33%
Favour employees	12%	10%	17%	5%	10%	14%	14%
Balance interests of both employers and employees	29%	27%	38%	21%	21%	30%	29%
Don't know	21%	14%	19%	30%	18%	17%	24%

39% believe that Australia’s industrial relations and work laws favour the interests of employers, 12% think they favour employees and 29% think they balance the interests of both.

Labor (49%) and Greens (44%) voters were more likely to think they favour employers while Liberal/National voters were more likely to think they were balanced (38%).

49% of those earning \$600-\$1,000 pw thought they favoured employers.



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.

