The Essential Report

10 April 2018

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The Essential Report

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Prepared By:	Essential Research
Data Supplied by:	

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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 5th to 8th April 2018 and is based on 1,033 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leaders and energy.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 17.

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

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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	2 weeks ago 27/3/18	4 weeks ago 13/3/18	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	35%	35%	33%	
National	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	**38%**	**38%**	**36%**	**42.0%**
Labor	**37%**	**36%**	**38%**	**34.7%**
Greens	10%	9%	9%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	2%	2%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	7%	8%	8%	
Other/Independent	7%	7%	7%	13.1%
2 party preferred				
Liberal National	**47%**	**48%**	**46%**	**50.4%**
Labor	**53%**	**52%**	**54%**	**49.6%**

NB. 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.

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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	Mar 2018	Dec 2017	Sep 2017	June 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	June 2016	Dec 2015
Total approve	**39%**	**24%**	**70%**	**33%**	**25%**	**41%**	**41%**	**41%**	**36%**	**33%**	**34%**	**38%**	**56%**
Total disapprove	**42%**	**62%**	**20%**	**49%**	**62%**	**43%**	**44%**	**46%**	**45%**	**50%**	**46%**	**40%**	**23%**
Strongly approve	8%	4%	17%	3%	5%	9%	8%	7%	5%	5%	5%	6%	13%
Approve	31%	20%	53%	30%	20%	32%	33%	34%	31%	28%	29%	32%	43%
Disapprove	26%	36%	17%	30%	31%	26%	27%	28%	28%	30%	30%	24%	16%
Strongly disapprove	16%	26%	3%	19%	31%	17%	17%	18%	17%	20%	16%	16%	7%
Don't know	19%	14%	10%	18%	14%	16%	15%	14%	19%	18%	20%	21%	21%

39% approved of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing as Prime Minister (down 2% from last month), and 42% disapproved (down 1%) – a change in net approval rating from -2 to -3.

70% (down 5%) of Liberal/National voters approved of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing, compared to 24% of ALP voters and 33% of Greens voters.

By gender, men were 44% approve/45% disapprove and women 35% approve/40% disapprove.

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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	Mar 2018	Dec 2017	Sep 2017	June 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	Dec 2015	Dec 2014
Total Approve	**35%**	**59%**	**23%**	**40%**	**15%**	**37%**	**36%**	**36%**	**34%**	**30%**	**35%**	**27%**	**35%**
Total Disapprove	**43%**	**21%**	**62%**	**37%**	**68%**	**44%**	**45%**	**47%**	**43%**	**49%**	**38%**	**47%**	**39%**
Strongly approve	6%	14%	2%	3%	2%	8%	7%	7%	5%	4%	6%	4%	7%
Approve	29%	45%	21%	37%	13%	29%	29%	29%	29%	26%	29%	23%	28%
Disapprove	22%	19%	22%	32%	28%	23%	23%	25%	28%	26%	21%	26%	23%
Strongly disapprove	21%	2%	40%	5%	40%	21%	22%	22%	15%	23%	17%	21%	16%
Don't know	23%	19%	14%	23%	17%	19%	19%	17%	23%	22%	25%	25%	26%

35% approved of the job Bill Shorten is doing as Opposition Leader (down 2% from last month), and 43% disapproved (down 1%) - a change in net approval rating from -7 to -8.

59% (down 7%) of ALP voters approved of the job Bill Shorten is doing, compared to 40% of Greens voters and 23% of Liberal/National voters.

By gender, men were 39% approve/45% disapprove and women 31% approve/39% disapprove.

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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	Mar 2018	Dec 2017	Sep 2017	June 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	Jun 2016	Dec 2015
Malcolm Turnbull	**41%**	18%	78%	30%	38%	41%	42%	43%	39%	38%	39%	40%	54%
Bill Shorten	**26%**	55%	8%	34%	12%	26%	28%	29%	26%	26%	28%	29%	15%
Don't know	**33%**	26%	15%	36%	50%	33%	31%	28%	34%	36%	33%	32%	31%

41% thought that Malcolm Turnbull would make the better Prime Minister (no change from last month), and 26% thought Bill Shorten would be better (no change). 33% did not know who would make a better Prime Minister.

The results were split by party, with 78% of Liberal/National voters saying that Malcolm Turnbull would be a better Prime Minister, and 55% of Labor voters saying Bill Shorten would.

Greens voters preferred Bill Shorten (34%) to Malcolm Turnbull (30%).

46% of men prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 28% prefer Bill Shorten.

35% of women prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 25% prefer Bill Shorten.

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Attributes of Malcolm Turnbull

Q   Which of the following describe your opinion of the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull?

	Total	Jun 2017	Feb 2017	Change
Intelligent	74%	72%	72%	+2
Out of touch with ordinary people	63%	65%	65%	-2
Hard-working	60%	59%	61%	+1
A capable leader	53%	50%	50%	+3
Arrogant	51%	55%	56%	-4
Superficial	51%	52%	52%	-1
Good in a crisis	47%	45%	44%	+2
Understands the problems facing Australia	45%	43%	44%	+2
Narrow-minded	44%	47%	48%	-3
Trustworthy	38%	35%	36%	+3
More honest than most politicians	36%	33%	34%	+3
Intolerant	34%	37%	39%	-3
Erratic	34%	36%	34%	-2
Visionary	34%	34%	30%	-
Aggressive	30%	34%	31%	-4

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Malcolm Turnbull's key attributes were intelligent (74%, up 2% since last June), out of touch with ordinary people (63%, down 2%), hard working (60%, up 1%) and a capable leader (53%, up 3%).

There have mostly only been small changes in perceptions since last June. The largest changes have been for arrogant (down 4%) and aggressive (down 4%).

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Leader attributes – Bill Shorten

Q   Which of the following describe your opinion of the Opposition Leader, Bill Shorten?

	Total	Jun 2017	Feb 2017	Change
Hard working	**60%**	59%	61%	**+1**
Intelligent	**59%**	58%	60%	**+1**
Out of touch with ordinary people	**50%**	47%	47%	**+3**
Understands the problems facing Australia	**47%**	48%	48%	**-1**
Superficial	**47%**	44%	46%	**+3**
A capable leader	**44%**	39%	43%	**+5**
Narrow-minded	**44%**	42%	42%	**+2**
Arrogant	**43%**	42%	44%	**+1**
Erratic	**40%**	40%	38%	**-**
Good in a crisis	**40%**	35%	37%	**+5**
Aggressive	**36%**	35%	35%	**+1**
Intolerant	**36%**	34%	36%	**+2**
Trustworthy	**33%**	31%	32%	**+2**
Visionary	**33%**	29%	29%	**+4**
More honest than most politicians	**30%**	26%	29%	**+4**

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Bill Shorten's key attributes were hard working (60%, up 1% since last June), intelligent (59%, up 1%), out of touch with ordinary people (50%, up 3%) and .understands the problems facing Australia (47%, down 1%).

There have only been small changes in perceptions since June. The main changes have been for a capable leader (up 5%) and good in a crisis (up 5%).

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Leader attributes – comparisons

	Malcolm Turnbull	Bill Shorten	Difference
Intelligent	74%	59%	**+15**
Out of touch with ordinary people	63%	50%	**+13**
A capable leader	53%	44%	**+9**
Arrogant	51%	43%	**+8**
Good in a crisis	47%	40%	**+7**
More honest than most politicians	36%	30%	**+6**
Trustworthy	38%	33%	**+5**
Superficial	51%	47%	**+4**
Visionary	34%	33%	**+1**
Narrow-minded	44%	44%	**-**
Hard-working	60%	60%	**-**
Intolerant	34%	36%	**-2**
Understands the problems facing Australia	45%	47%	**-2**
Aggressive	30%	36%	**-6**
Erratic	34%	40%	**-6**

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Compared to Bill Shorten, Malcolm Turnbull is more likely to be considered intelligent (+15), out of touch with ordinary people (+13), a capable leader (+9), arrogant (+8) and good in a crisis (+7).

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Best leader of the Liberal Party

Q   Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Liberal Party?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2014	Aug 2015	Mar 2016	Nov 2016	Mar 2017	Aug 2017	Dec 2017
Malcolm Turnbull	**24%**	17%	45%	16%	14%	31%	24%	39%	21%	20%	25%	21%
Tony Abbott	**11%**	7%	17%	2%	18%	18%	18%	9%	11%	10%	10%	10%
Julie Bishop	**17%**	24%	13%	25%	16%	4%	17%	12%	20%	17%	20%	19%
Christopher Pyne	**2%**	2%	2%	1%	1%	<1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Scott Morrison	**2%**	2%	3%	-	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Peter Dutton	**3%**	3%	4%	1%	8%					2%	3%	4%
Someone else	**14%**	19%	5%	22%	18%	19%	13%	15%	18%	18%	13%	15%
Don't know	**27%**	27%	11%	33%	22%	21%	22%	21%	25%	28%	25%	27%

24% (up 3% since December) think Malcolm Turnbull would make the best leader of the Liberal Party, 17% prefer Julie Bishop (down 2%) and 11% prefer Tony Abbott (up 1%). 14% (down 1%) prefer someone else.

Among Liberal/National voters, 45% (up 5%) prefer Malcolm Turnbull, 13% (down 7%) Julie Bishop and 17% (up 4%) prefer Tony Abbott.

Preferences of men were Malcolm Turnbull 28% (+4%), Julie Bishop 16% (-2%) and Tony Abbott 13% (-).

Preferences of women were Malcolm Turnbull 21% (+3%), Julie Bishop 17% (-3%) and Tony Abbott 9% (+1%).

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Best leader of the Liberal Party excluding Malcolm Turnbull

Q   Excluding Malcolm Turnbull, which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Liberal Party?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Tony Abbott	**16%**	12%	26%	1%	21%
Julie Bishop	**26%**	28%	30%	31%	24%
Christopher Pyne	**4%**	4%	7%	4%	3%
Scott Morrison	**5%**	5%	6%	3%	4%
Peter Dutton	**5%**	3%	8%	3%	9%
Someone else	**14%**	18%	6%	27%	18%
Don't know	**30%**	30%	17%	29%	21%

Excluding Malcolm Turnbull, 26% think Julie Bishop would make the best leader of the Liberal Party and 16% prefer Tony Abbott.

Among Liberal/National voters, 30% prefer Julie Bishop, 26% prefer Tony Abbott and 8% Peter Dutton.

Preferences of men were Julie Bishop 26% and Tony Abbott 19%.

Preferences of women were Julie Bishop 26% and Tony Abbott 14%.

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Coal vs renewables

Q   Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jul 2015
Governments should prioritise support for the coal industry over the renewable energy industry	**13%**	13%	19%	3%	15%	6%
Government should prioritise support for the renewable energy industry over the coal industry	**37%**	46%	29%	67%	26%	50%
The Government should treat both industries equally	**35%**	29%	46%	22%	48%	28%
Don't know	**15%**	12%	7%	8%	12%	15%

37% (down 13% since July 2015) of respondents agree more with the statement that the Government should prioritise support for the renewable energy industry over the coal industry and only 13% (up 7%) think they should prioritise coal over renewables. 35% (up 7%) think they should treat both industries equally.

Those most likely to think the Government should give priority to renewable energy were Greens voters (67%), Labor voters (46%) and respondents with university education (50%).

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Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a fortnightly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct opinion polling since November 2007.

Every two weeks, the team at Essential considers 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 current media and social issues.

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 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. 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.

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