

The Essential Report

26 January 2016





The Essential Report

Date: 26 January 2016

Prepared by: Essential Research

Data supplied:



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 20th to 24th January 2016 and is based on 1,028 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the economy, military involvement in Iraq and Syria, Australia Day and using smartphones.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 12.

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

Federal politics – 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?

Q. If don't know -Well which party are you currently leaning to?

Sample size = 1,783 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	6 weeks ago 15/12/15	This week 25/1/16
Liberal		42%	40%
National		3%	4%
Total Liberal/National	45.6%	45%	44%
Labor	33.4%	35%	35%
Greens	8.6%	10%	10%
Palmer United Party	5.5%	1%	1%
Other/Independent	6.9%	9%	9%

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	6 weeks ago 15/12/15	This week 25/1/16
Liberal National	53.5%	52%	52%
Labor	46.5%	48%	48%

NB. 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.

State of the economy

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

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	May 2012	Apr 2013	Sep 2013	Jan 2014	Aug 2014	Mar 2015	Sep 2015
Total good	28%	26%	38%	26%	13%	35%	45%	40%	34%	37%	27%	26%
Total poor	31%	38%	23%	36%	42%	29%	26%	25%	26%	26%	33%	32%
Very good	4%	4%	6%	2%	-	6%	8%	6%	4%	6%	3%	3%
Good	24%	22%	32%	24%	13%	29%	37%	34%	30%	31%	24%	23%
Neither good nor poor	36%	33%	37%	33%	39%	33%	28%	32%	36%	35%	36%	39%
Poor	24%	28%	18%	32%	29%	20%	17%	20%	21%	18%	24%	24%
Very poor	7%	10%	5%	4%	13%	9%	9%	5%	5%	8%	9%	8%
Don't know	4%	2%	2%	4%	5%	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%

28% described the economy as good or very good and 31% poor/very poor - 36% said it was neither. This represents no significant change since September.

Liberal National voters were more optimistic than other voters. Among Labor voters 26% (up 3%) thought it was good and 38% (up 1%) poor; for Liberal/National voters 38% (up 2%) said it was good and 23% (down 1%) poor.

Economy heading in right or wrong direction

Q. Do you think Australia's economy is heading in the right or wrong direction?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	May 2010	May 2011	Jun 2012	Apr 2013	Aug 2014	May 2015	Sep 2015
The right direction	30%	24%	48%	12%	15%	51%	45%	43%	36%	35%	35%	34%
The wrong direction	38%	49%	24%	50%	57%	25%	29%	32%	39%	41%	40%	39%
Don't know	31%	27%	28%	38%	28%	24%	25%	25%	25%	24%	25%	27%

30% (down 4% since September) of respondents think that Australia's economy is heading in the right direction and 38% (down 1% think it is heading in the wrong direction. This is the least optimistic outlook recorded over the past 5 years.

24% (no change) of Labor voters, 48% (down 6%) of Liberal/National voters and 12% (no change) of Greens voters think the economy is heading in the right direction. 49% (up 2%) of Labor voters, 24% (down 2%) of Liberal/National voters and 50% (down 9%) of Greens voters think it is heading in the wrong direction.

Trust most to handle the economy

Q. Who would you trust most to handle Australia's economy – the Treasurer Scott Morrison or the Shadow Treasurer Chris Bowen?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other/ Independent	Nov 2015
Scott Morrison	26%	9%	52%	8%	16%	27%
Chris Bowen	19%	34%	10%	29%	13%	18%
Don't know	55%	57%	38%	64%	71%	56%

26% have more trust in Scott Morrison to handle Australia's economy and 19% have more trust in Chris Bowen. 55% don't know who they would trust more. This represents little change since November.

Military involvement in Syria and Iraq

Q. Do you think Australia should increase or decrease our military involvement in Syria and Iraq against the Islamic State?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Nov 2015
Increase	18%	18%	21%	15%	18%	32%
Decrease	34%	37%	26%	54%	38%	19%
Make no change	32%	33%	39%	16%	32%	28%
Don't know	17%	13%	15%	14%	13%	21%

18% (down 14% since November) think Australia should increase our military involvement in Syria and Iraq, 34% (up 15%) think we should decrease involvement and 32% (up 4%) think we should make no change.

Liberal/National voters were most likely to favour no change (39%) while 54% of Greens voters and 37% of Labor voters wanted a decrease.

Australia Day

Q. Tuesday 26th January is Australia Day. Will you personally be doing anything to celebrate Australia Day or do you treat it as just a public holiday?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jan 2010	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	Jan 2015
Doing something to celebrate Australia Day	38%	39%	44%	25%	38%	40%	41%	37%	40%
Just a public holiday	44%	44%	38%	60%	44%	40%	43%	44%	41%
Working – don't get the Australia Day holiday	6%	7%	6%	7%	2%	6%	7%	7%	7%
Don't know	12%	10%	11%	8%	16%	14%	9%	11%	12%

38% said they will be doing something to celebrate Australia Day, 44% treat Australia Day as just a public holiday and 6% are working because they don't get the Australia Day holiday. This represents little change in the percentage of those celebrating Australia Day over the last few years.

44% of Liberal/National voters and 44% of full-time workers say they will be doing something to celebrate Australia Day. 60% of Greens voters and 47% of those aged 18-34 treat it as just another public holiday.

Feelings about Australia Day

Q. Which of the following best describes how you feel about Australia Day?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
A day of national pride	56%	60%	66%	29%	51%	47%	57%	65%
A day of reflection on the impact on indigenous people	14%	12%	11%	37%	13%	19%	12%	10%
It's irrelevant in the 21st century	8%	9%	6%	12%	8%	10%	8%	8%
None of these	16%	13%	13%	16%	24%	15%	16%	15%
Don't know	6%	6%	4%	6%	3%	9%	7%	3%

56% regard Australia Day as a day of national pride and 14% think it is a day of reflection on the impact on indigenous people. Only 8% think it is irrelevant.

Those most likely to regard it as a day of national pride were Liberal/National voters (66%) and aged 55+ (65%). 37% of Greens voters think it is a day of reflection on the impact on indigenous people.

Using smartphones

Q. Thinking about how you use your smartphone (or iPhone), do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
(Based on the 878 respondents who own smartphones)

	Total agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I check my phone while driving	20%	4%	16%	27%	51%	3%
I am anxious when I can't check messages	28%	6%	22%	36%	33%	3%
I sometimes send messages/emails before thinking them through	28%	7%	21%	38%	31%	4%
I ignore actual conversations to check my phone	18%	3%	15%	40%	38%	4%
I check my phone before I get out of bed	45%	17%	28%	23%	30%	2%

	Total agree	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
I check my phone while driving	20%	21%	19%	34%	16%	4%
I am anxious when I can't check messages	28%	27%	29%	41%	24%	12%
I sometimes send messages/emails before thinking them through	28%	30%	27%	44%	21%	11%
I ignore actual conversations to check my phone	18%	20%	16%	28%	14%	6%
I check my phone before I get out of bed	45%	41%	49%	70%	37%	16%

45% check their smartphone before they get out of bed, 28% say they are anxious when they can't check messages and 28% sometimes send messages/emails before thinking. Younger people are much more likely to do these things than older people. 70% of those aged 18-34 check their phone before they get out of bed, 44% send messages/emails without thinking and 41% say they are anxious when they can't check messages.

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 panellist 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.