

The Essential Report

23 February 2016

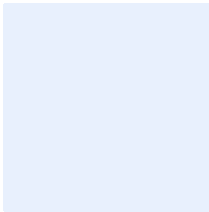


The Essential Report

Date: 23/2/2016

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.



Essential Research is ISO 20252 (Market, Opinions and Social Research) accredited.



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 17th to 21st February 2016 and is based on 1,002 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on economic issues, cost of living, negative gearing, asylum seekers and penalty rates.

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 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 16/2/16	2 weeks ago 9/2/16	4 weeks ago 26/1/16	Election 7 Sep 13
Liberal	41%	40%	39%	40%	
National	3%	3%	3%	4%	
Total Liberal/National	44%	43%	43%	44%	45.6%
Labor	35%	33%	35%	35%	33.4%
Greens	10%	11%	11%	10%	8.6%
Palmer United Party	1%	1%	1%	1%	5.5%
Other/Independent	10%	11%	10%	9%	6.9%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	52%	52%	51%	52%	53.5%
Labor	48%	48%	49%	48%	46.5%

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.

Economic issues

Q Do you think the following have become better or worse compared to 12 months ago?

	Total better	Total worse	A lot better	A little better	No change	A little worse	A lot worse	Don't know	Total better Nov 2015	Total worse Nov 2015
Company profits	30%	22%	10%	20%	31%	15%	7%	17%	37%	18%
Your personal financial situation	18%	42%	3%	15%	37%	29%	13%	3%	20%	43%
Wages	14%	35%	2%	12%	41%	24%	11%	9%	16%	38%
The economy overall	12%	55%	3%	9%	26%	35%	20%	6%	15%	53%
National debt	9%	56%	3%	6%	25%	30%	26%	10%	11%	51%
Job security	11%	53%	3%	8%	29%	31%	22%	7%	10%	56%
Unemployment	13%	53%	2%	11%	26%	31%	22%	8%	10%	59%
Electricity costs	9%	62%	2%	7%	24%	33%	29%	4%	8%	70%
Cost of living	7%	71%	2%	5%	18%	40%	31%	3%	7%	75%

A substantial majority believe that, in the last 12 months, cost of living (71%), electricity costs (62%) and national debt (56%) and the economy overall (55%) have all got worse. The only economic measure that has got better is company profits (30% better/22% worse).

Compared the last time this question was asked in November, there has been a drop in the percentage that think electricity costs (down 8% to 62%) and unemployment (down 6% to 53%) have got worse. However, those thinking the national debt has got worse have increased 5 points to 56%.

Income and cost of living

Q In the last two years, do you think your and your household's income has gone up more than the cost of living, fallen behind or stayed even with the cost of living?

	Total	Work full time	Work part time	Income less than \$600 pw	Income \$600-\$1,000 pw	Income \$1,000-\$1,600 pw	Income \$1,600+ pw	Oct 2014	Mar 2015	Nov 2015
Gone up more	13%	20%	8%	11%	13%	10%	16%	13%	15%	14%
Fallen behind	51%	45%	53%	67%	54%	57%	43%	48%	50%	54%
Stayed even	29%	31%	30%	16%	26%	25%	36%	31%	27%	26%
Don't know	7%	5%	9%	5%	7%	8%	5%	8%	7%	5%

51% believe that, in the last two years, their income has fallen behind the cost of living. 29% think it has stayed even with the cost of living and 13% think it has gone up more.

67% of those earning under \$600 pw and 57% of those earning \$1,000-1,600 pw think their income has fallen behind while 52% of those earning over \$1,600 pw think it has stayed the same or gone up.

These results suggest a slight improvement in household financial status since this question was asked in November.

Financial situation

Q Which of the following statements best describes your financial situation?

	Total	Work full time	Work part time	Income less than \$600 pw	Income \$600-\$1,000 pw	Income \$1,000-\$1,600 pw	Income \$1,600+ pw	Oct 2014	Mar 2015
I don't have enough money for basic essentials like housing food and electricity	6%	4%	6%	20%	8%	3%	1%	7%	8%
I have enough money for basic essentials but I cannot save any money	35%	28%	37%	49%	41%	44%	24%	35%	39%
I have enough money for basic essentials and I can save a little money	49%	54%	49%	26%	44%	51%	60%	47%	44%
I have enough money for basic essentials and I can save a lot of money	8%	12%	5%	3%	6%	2%	13%	8%	7%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	15	2%	4%	2%

49% say they have enough money for basic essentials and can save a little money and 35% say they have enough money for basic essentials but cannot save any money. Only 8% say they can save a lot of money.

Only 29% of those earning less than \$600 pw say they can save any money - compared to 73% of those earning over \$1,600 pw.

Overall, there has been a slight improvement in financial situations since this question was asked in March last year – 41% (down 6%) say they cannot save any money and 57% (up 6%) say they can.



Cost of living

Q Compared to two or three years ago is your household paying more or less for the following -

	Paying a lot more	Paying a little more	Paying about the same	Paying a little less	Paying a lot less	Don't know	Feb 2013 Paying a lot more	Mar 2014 Paying a lot more
Petrol	19%	28%	23%	22%	3%	4%	50%	56%
Fresh food - fruit, vegetables, meat	25%	47%	23%	3%	1%	2%	36%	36%
Packaged food	15%	45%	31%	3%	1%	4%	28%	26%
Electricity and gas	34%	40%	17%	5%	1%	3%	70%	62%
Housing - mortgage or rent	14%	27%	36%	6%	3%	14%	24%	24%
Insurance	24%	38%	28%	3%	1%	6%	43%	36%
Water	13%	32%	45%	7%	1%	3%	47%	40%
Clothing	13%	32%	45%	7%	1%	3%	21%	17%
Education	16%	21%	29%	3%	4%	28%	24%	21%
Medical, dental	23%	36%	34%	1%	1%	4%	33%	32%

Items which respondents said they were “paying a lot more” for were electricity and gas (34%), fresh food (25%) and insurance (24%).

Since this question was asked 2 years ago, for almost all items, the perceptions of paying a lot more have dropped substantially.

Negative gearing

- Q Do you approve or disapprove of the Labor Party’s policy to change negative gearing so that, for future purchases, investors can only claim tax deductions for investments in newly built homes? (Version 1)
- Q Do you approve or disapprove of changing negative gearing so that, for future purchases, investors can only claim tax deductions for investments in newly built homes? (Version 2)

	Total version 1	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Total version 2	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	38%	56%	29%	45%	34%	37%	43%	40%	48%	34%
Total disapprove	28%	19%	44%	18%	30%	32%	29%	36%	14%	36%
Strongly approve	16%	24%	11%	24%	17%	19%	26%	16%	29%	15%
Approve	22%	32%	18%	21%	17%	18%	17%	24%	19%	19%
Disapprove	14%	13%	215	4%	9%	18%	21%	18%	8%	22%
Strongly disapprove	14%	6%	235	14%	21%	14%	8%	18%	6%	14%
Don't know	32%	25%	27%	36%	37%	31%	28%	24%	38%	30%

Note – half the sample were asked Version 1 and half were asked Version 2.

When told it was a Labor policy, 38% approved changes to negative gearing and 28% disapproved. When not told that it was a Labor policy 37% approved and 32% disapproved.

For Labor voters 56% approved when told it was a Labor policy and 43% when not told.

For Liberal/National voters 29% approved when told it was a Labor policy and 40% when not told.



Trust in information about asylum seekers

Q How much trust do you have in the following for information about asylum seekers?

	A lot of trust	Some trust	Not much trust	No trust at all	Don't know
Politicians	2%	15%	31%	42%	10%
Government officials	3%	20%	38%	30%	10%
The media	2%	19%	37%	33%	9%
Churches	8%	27%	30%	23%	11%
Doctors	22%	43%	17%	7%	11%
Human rights campaigners	12%	30%	26%	21%	11%
Welfare agencies	9%	37%	26%	16%	11%
International organisations	8%	33%	30%	17%	12%

For information about asylum seekers the most trusted sources were doctors (65% a lot/some trust), welfare agencies (46%), human rights campaigners (42%) and international organisations (41%).

Only 17% trust politicians and 21% trust the media.

Politicians are trusted by 28% of Liberal/National voters and 13% of Labor voters. Government officials are trusted by 36% of Liberal/National voters and 19% of Labor voters. Human are trusted by 35% of Liberal/National voters, 49% of Labor voters and 77% of Greens voters.

Penalty rates

- Q Do you approve or disapprove of the Productivity Commission recommendation to cut Sunday penalty rates to the same level as Saturday rates for workers in hospitality, entertainment and retail?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Full time worker	Part time worker	Aug 2015
Total approve	31%	21%	48%	21%	32%	39%	22%	32%
Total disapprove	54%	68%	41%	66%	58%	48%	66%	54%
Strongly approve	10%	6%	16%	2%	14%	13%	7%	9%
Approve	21%	15%	32%	19%	18%	26%	15%	23%
Disapprove	23%	26%	24%	20%	20%	19%	29%	25%
Strongly disapprove	31%	42%	17%	46%	38%	29%	37%	29%
Don't know	14%	11%	11%	12%	10%	14%	13%	14%

31% approve of the Productivity Commission recommendation to cut Sunday penalty rates to the same level as Saturday rates for workers in hospitality, entertainment and retail and 54% disapprove. This is very similar to the results of this question when asked in August last year.

66% of part time workers and 48% of full time workers disapprove.

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.

