

# The Essential Report

1 March 2016



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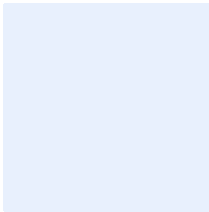
**Date:** 1/3/2016

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**Prepared By:** Essential Research

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**Data Supplied:**



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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 the 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and is based on 1,017 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on Senate reform, election issues, party trust to handle issues, party leanings and an early election.

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 23/2/16	2 weeks ago 16/2/16	4 weeks ago 2/2/16	Election 7 Sep 13
Liberal	40%	41%	40%	40%	
National	3%	3%	3%	4%	
<b>Total Liberal/National</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>45.6%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>33.4%</b>
Greens	10%	10%	11%	11%	8.6%
Palmer United Party	1%	1%	1%	1%	5.5%
Other/Independent	8%	10%	11%	9%	6.9%
<b>2 party preferred</b>					
Liberal National	<b>50%</b>	52%	52%	51%	53.5%
Labor	<b>50%</b>	48%	48%	49%	46.5%

NB. Sample = 1,751. 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.

## Senate reform

- Q The Government is proposing to change the way we vote for the Senate. Currently voters have to either vote “1” above the line or number all boxes below the line. If voting above the line, preferences are distributed (if required) according to that party’s voting ticket. The proposed change is to tell voters that they can vote above the line by numbering at least 6 boxes in the order of their choice. It will be permissible to number less than 6. However, preferences will only be distributed according to the numbered boxes, not the party ticket. Some people say this will stop minor parties from being elected by swapping preferences. Do you approve or disapprove of this change to Senate voting?

	Total	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Labor	Vote Greens	Vote other
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>29%</b>
Strongly approve	19%	32%	14%	11%	15%
Approve	34%	39%	38%	35%	27%
Disapprove	10%	7%	11%	21%	13%
Strongly disapprove	6%	2%	8%	8%	16%
Don't know	30%	21%	28%	25%	29%

53% approve of the proposed changes to Senate voting and 16% disapprove. 30% could not give an opinion. There was majority support from both Liberal/National voters (71%) and Labor voters (52%).

## Most important election issues

Q Which are the three most important issues in deciding how you would vote at a Federal election?

	Total	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Labor	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jan 2010	Jun 2011	Jul 2012	Jul 2013	Apr 2014	Nov 2015
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	43%	40%	49%	40%	46%	48%	49%	47%	42%	50%	46%
Management of the economy	37%	56%	27%	17%	25%	63%	61%	64%	45%	54%	47%
Australian jobs and protection of local industries	35%	36%	34%	21%	48%	33%	32%	41%	39%	37%	39%
Ensuring a fair taxation system	29%	30%	28%	20%	33%	14%	17%	18%	20%	20%	30%
Housing affordability	23%	13%	29%	20%	20%	14%	16%	13%	17%	17%	21%
Ensuring a quality education for all children	21%	16%	24%	19%	23%	23%	26%	26%	25%	27%	23%
Security and the war on terrorism	21%	28%	17%	6%	19%	9%	8%	5%	8%	5%	17%
Political leadership	14%	19%	11%	8%	19%	23%	17%	25%	21%	15%	9%
Protecting the environment	13%	8%	15%	40%	11%	16%	15%	11%	12%	13%	12%
Addressing climate change	12%	7%	14%	41%	7%	16%	15%	9%	11%	10%	10%
Managing population growth	10%	12%	9%	9%	13%	na	12%	8%	9%	9%	6%
A fair industrial relations system	8%	4%	10%	17%	13%	na	8%	12%	10%	12%	8%
Controlling interest rates	9%	11%	8%	4%	5%	15%	13%	9%	13%	9%	7%
Treatment of asylum seekers	7%	4%	8%	22%	10%	na	5%	10%	14%	8%	8%
Ensuring a quality water supply	5%	6%	4%	7%	4%	12%	5%	3%	3%	4%	4%



The most important election issues were ensuring the quality of Australia's health system (43%), management of the economy (37%), Australian jobs and protection of local industries (35%) and ensuring a fair taxation system (29%).

Liberal/National voters were more likely to think management of the economy (56%) was important.

Labor voters were more likely to nominate the health system (49%) while Greens voters were more likely to nominate addressing climate change (41%), protecting the environment (40%) and treatment of asylum seekers (22%).

The main change since this question was asked in November was for management of the economy (down 10%).



## Party trust to handle issues

Q Which party would you trust most to handle the following issues?

	Liberal	Labor	Don't know	Difference Liberal - Labor
Security and the war on terrorism	40%	20%	40%	<b>+20</b>
Management of the economy	41%	22%	36%	<b>+19</b>
Controlling interest rates	37%	21%	42%	<b>+16</b>
Political leadership	37%	21%	42%	<b>+16</b>
Managing population growth	33%	21%	45%	<b>+12</b>
Treatment of asylum seekers	31%	26%	42%	<b>+5</b>
Ensuring a fair taxation system	33%	29%	38%	<b>+4</b>
Ensuring a quality water supply	28%	25%	47%	<b>+3</b>
Housing affordability	28%	32%	40%	<b>-4</b>
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	29%	33%	37%	<b>-4</b>
Ensuring a quality education for all children	30%	35%	35%	<b>-5</b>
Protecting Australian jobs and protection of local industries	29%	35%	36%	<b>-6</b>
Addressing climate change	25%	33%	42%	<b>-8</b>
Protecting the environment	24%	33%	44%	<b>-9</b>
A fair industrial relations system	28%	38%	33%	<b>-10</b>





The Liberal Party is trusted more to handle security and the war on terrorism (40% to 20%), management of the economy (41%/22%), controlling interest rates (37%/21%), political leadership (37%/21%) and managing population growth (33%/21%).

The Labor Party is trusted more to handle a fair industrial relations system (38% to 28%), protecting the environment (33%/24%) and addressing climate change (33%/25%).



## Parties left/right

Q Do you think the following parties are too right wing/conservative, too left wing/progressive or about right?

	Too right wing/conservative	Too left wing/progressive	About right	Don't know	Labor voters Too right wing/conservative	Labor voters Too left wing/progressive	Labor voters About right	Labor voters Don't know	Lib/Nat voters Too right wing/conservative	Lib/Nat voters Too left wing/progressive	Lib/Nat voters About right	Lib/Nat voters Don't know
The Labor Party	16%	19%	30%	35%	15%	6%	51%	28%	17%	34%	22%	27%
The Liberal Party	26%	9%	31%	34%	41%	9%	16%	34%	11%	9%	58%	22%
The Greens	7%	31%	21%	41%	9%	25%	24%	42%	9%	45%	13%	33%

Respondents were evenly divided over whether the Labor Party was too right wing (16%) or left wing (19%) but more likely to think that the Liberal Party was too right wing (26%) and the Greens were too left wing (31%).

However, 51% of Labor voters think the Labor Party is about right and 58% of Liberal/National voters think the Liberal party is about right. Labor voters were a little more likely to think the Labor Party was too right wing (15%) than left wing (6%) whereas Liberal/National voters were more evenly divided (11% too right wing/9% too left wing).



## More or less left/right

Q Do you think over the last few years, these parties have become more right wing/conservative, more left wing/progressive or stayed about the same?

	More right wing/conservative	More left wing/progressive	About the same	Don't know	Labor voters More right wing/conservative	Labor voters More left wing/progressive	Labor voters About the same	Labor voters Don't know	Lib/Nat voters More right wing/conservative	Lib/Nat voters More left wing/progressive	Lib/Nat voters About the same	Lib/Nat voters Don't know
The Labor Party	19%	15%	33%	32%	19%	9%	42%	30%	18%	25%	34%	23%
The Liberal Party	19%	12%	36%	33%	28%	9%	29%	34%	10%	16%	52%	22%
The Greens	7%	21%	35%	37%	7%	16%	39%	37%	7%	29%	34%	30%

Respondents were fairly evenly divided over whether the Labor and Liberal Parties have become more right wing or left wing – but slightly more likely to think both the Labor Party and the Liberal Party had become more right wing.

However, Liberal voters were more inclined to think all parties had become more left wing, and Labor voters were more inclined to think both the Labor Party and especially the Liberal Party had become more right wing.



## Early election

Q Do you think the Federal election should be held later this year as scheduled or should the Government call an early election?

	Total	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Labor	Vote Greens	Vote other	Sep 2015
Hold election later this year	<b>56%</b>	62%	59%	43%	62%	63%
Call an early election	<b>23%</b>	24%	23%	35%	26%	21%
Don't know	<b>21%</b>	14%	17%	22%	13%	16%

56% favour holding the Federal election later this year as scheduled and 23% think there should be an early election. Greens voters (35%) were more likely to favour an early election than Labor voters (23%) and Liberal/National voters (24%).

Since this question was asked in September, there has been a shift toward holding an early election.

## 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.