

The Essential Report

13 September 2016



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Prepared By: Essential Research

Data Supplied by:



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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 9th to 12th September 2016 and is based on 1,019 respondents.

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

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 6/9/16	2 weeks ago 30/8/16	4 weeks ago 16/8/16	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	35%	36%	37%	36%	
National	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	38%	39%	40%	39%	42.0%
Labor	37%	37%	37%	37%	34.7%
Greens	10%	10%	10%	10%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	4%	3%	4%	4%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	5%	5%			
Other/Independent	7%	6%	10%	11%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	48%	48%	49%	48%	50.4%
Labor	52%	52%	51%	52%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,856. 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.

Approval of 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	Dec 2015	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016
Total approve	35%	16%	71%	23%	22%	56%	45%	38%	37%	38%
Total disapprove	43%	65%	17%	51%	59%	23%	35%	40%	48%	43%
Strongly approve	4%	1%	10%	3%	1%	13%	6%	6%	8%	6%
Approve	31%	15%	61%	20%	21%	43%	39%	32%	29%	32%
Disapprove	27%	37%	15%	31%	35%	16%	24%	24%	27%	26%
Strongly disapprove	16%	28%	2%	20%	24%	7%	11%	16%	21%	17%
Don't know	22%	18%	11%	26%	20%	21%	21%	21%	16%	19%

35% (down 3% from 4 weeks ago) of respondents approve of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing as Prime Minister and 43% (no change) disapprove – a change in net approval rating from -5 to -8.

71% (down 6%) of Liberal/National voters approve of Malcolm Turnbull's performance with 17% (up 3%) disapproving. 16% (up 1%) of Labor voters and 23% (up 5%) of Greens voters approve of Malcolm Turnbull's performance.

By gender, men were 42% approve/43% disapprove and women 30% approve/43% disapprove.



Approval of 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	Nov 2013	Dec 2014	Dec 2015	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016
Total approve	36%	62%	25%	33%	25%	31%	35%	27%	27%	34%	39%	37%
Total disapprove	41%	19%	61%	35%	58%	27%	39%	47%	47%	40%	41%	41%
Strongly approve	6%	14%	1%	6%	3%	5%	7%	4%	3%	7%	11%	7%
Approve	30%	48%	24%	27%	22%	26%	28%	23%	24%	27%	28%	30%
Disapprove	24%	17%	29%	33%	28%	17%	23%	26%	29%	22%	21%	23%
Strongly disapprove	17%	2%	32%	2%	30%	10%	16%	21%	18%	18%	20%	18%
Don't know	22%	19%	14%	33%	18%	43%	26%	25%	26%	25%	20%	22%

36% (down 1% in last 4 weeks) of respondents approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing as opposition leader and 41% (no change) disapprove – a change in his net rating from -4 to -5.

62% (down 5%) of Labor voters approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing and 19% (up 4%) disapprove.

39% of men and 33% of women approve of Bill Shorten. 44% of men and 39% of women disapprove.



Better 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	Sep 2015	Dec 2015	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016
Malcolm Turnbull	41%	14%	85%	24%	31%	53%	54%	48%	40%	39%	40%
Bill Shorten	26%	59%	2%	35%	16%	17%	15%	19%	29%	31%	30%
Don't know	33%	27%	13%	42%	53%	30%	31%	33%	32%	30%	31%

41% (up 1% in last 4 weeks) of respondents think Malcolm Turnbull would make the better Prime Minister and 26% (down 4%) think Bill Shorten would make the better Prime Minister.

48% of men prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 27% prefer Bill Shorten.

34% of women prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 25% prefer Bill Shorten.



Political donations

Q Should political parties be allowed to receive donations from each of the following?

	Should be allowed	Should not be allowed	Don't know	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Property developers	16%	69%	15%	12%	25%	13%	13%
Foreign companies	12%	74%	13%	9%	17%	10%	13%
Australian companies	32%	51%	17%	29%	41%	23%	36%
Mining companies	19%	68%	14%	15%	28%	12%	18%
Energy companies	18%	67%	15%	13%	28%	14%	16%
Casinos	14%	71%	15%	10%	21%	11%	16%
Unions	20%	64%	15%	25%	18%	19%	22%
Professional associations	29%	52%	18%	28%	38%	23%	31%
Individual Australian voters	50%	35%	15%	48%	57%	50%	54%

A majority of respondents were opposed to all forms of donations to political parties except for donations from individual Australian voters (50% should be allowed).

They were most strongly opposed to donations from foreign companies (74%), casinos (71%), property developers (69%), mining companies (68%) and energy companies (67%).

Liberal/National voters were more likely than Labor voters to think donations from different groups should be allowed (with the exception of unions).



Racial Discrimination Act

- Q Do you approve or disapprove of the proposal to change the Racial Discrimination Act so that it is no longer unlawful to “offend or insult” someone because of their race or ethnicity? It will still be unlawful to “humiliate or intimidate” someone because of their race or ethnicity.

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	45%	39%	56%	29%	48%
Total disapprove	35%	42%	27%	60%	32%
Strongly approve	16%	13%	19%	6%	21%
Approve	29%	26%	37%	23%	27%
Disapprove	18%	21%	15%	23%	19%
Strongly disapprove	17%	21%	12%	37%	13%
Don't know	21%	18%	17%	11%	19%

45% approve of changing the Racial Discrimination Act so that it is no longer unlawful to “offend or insult” someone because of their race or ethnicity and 35% disapprove. 56% of Liberal/National voters approve of changing the Act while 60% of Greens voters disapproved. Labor voters were split 39% approve/42% disapprove.

Forms of intolerance

Q For each of the following forms of intolerance, please indicate to what extent you think it is a problem in Australia.

	Total large/moderate	A large problem	Moderate problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	Don't know	Sep 12 Total large/moderate	Jun 13 Total large/moderate	Feb 14 Total large/moderate	Aug 15 Total large/moderate
Racism against people from other countries	62%	25%	37%	27%	7%	5%	71%	69%	64%	60%
Racism against indigenous Australians	58%	25%	33%	28%	8%	5%				54%
Sexism	57%	21%	36%	30%	8%	5%	45%	52%	51%	47%
Religious intolerance	57%	24%	34%	27%	9%	5%	65%	54%	51%	53%
Homophobia	53%	20%	33%	32%	10%	5%	50%	51%	47%	47%
Ageism	49%	17%	32%	30%	14%	8%	44%	46%	49%	48%

57% think that sexism is a major/moderate problem in Australia – up 10% since August last year – and 53% think homophobia is a major/moderate problem in Australia (up 6%).

62% (up 2%) think that racism against people from other countries is a major/moderate problem in Australia – and 58% (up 4%) think racism against indigenous Australians is a major/moderate problem.



Illegal drugs

Q Thinking about the issue of illegal drugs in Australia, please indicate which position is closer to your view:

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
We should decriminalise all illegal drugs (including production and trafficking within Australia) to reduce the unregulated black market trade in these substances.	11%	12%	11%	14%	7%
We should decriminalise small scale illegal drug use and possession, but maintain criminal prohibitions on production and trafficking.	31%	37%	24%	48%	33%
We should prohibit all activities related to illegal drugs in Australia, including production, trafficking, large and small-scale production and use.	48%	45%	55%	26%	51%
None of the above	11%	7%	10%	12%	9%

42% think that all or some drug use should be decriminalised and 48% think that all drug activities should be prohibited.

62% of Greens voters and 49% of Labor voters think at least some use of illegal drugs should be decriminalised. 46% of those aged under 35 and 47% of those with university education think that all or some drug use should be decriminalised



Decriminalisation of drugs

Q Would you support decriminalisation of any of the following illegal drugs in Australia:

	Yes	No	Don't know	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Cannabis	47%	39%	13%	52%	43%	63%	49%
Ecstasy	12%	81%	7%	12%	11%	16%	14%
Amphetamines (such as speed or ice)	10%	83%	7%	10%	8%	15%	10%
Cocaine	12%	82%	6%	10%	12%	16%	12%
Heroin	11%	82%	7%	11%	10%	14%	10%

There was strong opposition (over 80%) to decriminalising all drugs except cannabis.

47% thought that cannabis should be decriminalised. Those most in favour of decriminalising cannabis were Greens voters (63%), Labor voters (52%), and aged 18-24 (53%).

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 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.

