

The Essential Report

27 September 2016



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Prepared By: Essential Research

Data Supplied by:



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 23rd to 26th September 2016 and is based on 1,006 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leaders, voluntary euthanasia, media laws and recognition of indigenous people.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 16.

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 20/9/16	2 weeks ago 13/9/16	4 weeks ago 30/8/16	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	36%	34%	35%	37%	
National	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	39%	37%	38%	40%	42.0%
Labor	36%	37%	37%	36%	34.7%
Greens	9%	10%	10%	10%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	4%	4%	4%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	6%	6%	5%		
Other/Independent	7%	7%	7%	10%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	48%	48%	48%	49%	50.4%
Labor	52%	52%	52%	51%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,800. 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 2016 election.

Attributes of Malcolm Turnbull

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

	Total	May 2016	Difference
Intelligent	75%	76%	-1
Out of touch with ordinary people	65%	63%	+2
Hard-working	61%	60%	+1
Arrogant	56%	51%	+5
A capable leader	51%	55%	-4
Superficial	50%	48%	+2
Good in a crisis	47%	48%	-1
Understands the problems facing Australia	46%	47%	-1
Narrow-minded	45%	41%	+4
Trustworthy	39%	37%	+2
More honest than most politicians	37%	36%	+1
Intolerant	37%	34%	+3
Erratic	36%	34%	+2
Visionary	35%	40%	-5
Aggressive	31%	31%	-

Malcolm Turnbull's key attributes were intelligent (75%), out of touch with ordinary people (65%), hard working (61%) and arrogant (56%).

Since May, the main changes have been for arrogant (up 5%), visionary (down 5%), a capable leader (down 4%) and narrow-minded (up 4%).



Leader attributes – Bill Shorten

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

	Total	May 2016	Change
Hard working	61%	60%	+1
Intelligent	59%	60%	-1
Understands the problems facing Australia	49%	50%	-1
Out of touch with ordinary people	46%	42%	+4
Superficial	45%	44%	+1
A capable leader	45%	43%	+2
Arrogant	44%	40%	+4
Narrow-minded	42%	40%	+2
Erratic	39%	37%	+2
Good in a crisis	39%	37%	+2
Aggressive	36%	30%	+6
Intolerant	33%	30%	+3
Trustworthy	32%	31%	+1
Visionary	32%	28%	+4
More honest than most politicians	29%	26%	+3

Bill Shorten's key attributes were hard working (61%), intelligent (59%) and understands the problems facing Australia (49%).

Since May, the main changes have been for aggressive (up 6%), out of touch with ordinary people (up 4%), arrogant (up 4%) and visionary (up 4%).



Leader attributes – comparisons

	Malcolm Turnbull	Bill Shorten	Difference
Out of touch with ordinary people	65%	46%	+19
Intelligent	75%	59%	+16
Arrogant	56%	44%	+12
Good in a crisis	47%	39%	+8
More honest than most politicians	37%	29%	+8
Trustworthy	39%	32%	+7
A capable leader	51%	45%	+6
Superficial	50%	45%	+5
Intolerant	37%	33%	+4
Narrow-minded	45%	42%	+3
Visionary	35%	32%	+3
Hard-working	61%	61%	-
Understands the problems facing Australia	46%	49%	-3
Erratic	36%	39%	-3
Aggressive	31%	36%	-5

Compared to Bill Shorten, Malcolm Turnbull is more likely to be considered out of touch with ordinary people (+19), intelligent (+16%), arrogant (+12), good in a crisis (+8) and more honest than most politicians (+8).



Leader trust to handle issues

Q Which leader – Malcolm Turnbull or Bill Shorten - would you trust most to handle the following issues?

	Malcolm Turnbull	Bill Shorten	Don't know	Difference	Difference May 2016
Regulating the banking and finance sector	33%	29%	38%	+4	+6
Supporting Australia's manufacturing industries	30%	32%	37%	-2	-1
Addressing climate change	26%	30%	44%	-4	-8
Protecting the Great Barrier Reef	23%	29%	48%	-6	-6
Funding hospitals	29%	36%	35%	-7	-8
Making housing more affordable for first home buyers	23%	33%	44%	-10	-9
Ensuring big companies pay their share of tax	27%	37%	36%	-10	-6
Looking after the needs of pensioners	22%	38%	40%	-16	-14
Funding public schools	24%	40%	36%	-16	-16
Maintaining workers' wages and conditions	23%	44%	34%	-21	-22

Bill Shorten is trusted more for maintaining workers' wages and conditions (+21), funding public schools (+16) and looking after the needs of pensioners (+16). Since May, the main changes have been a 4% shift to Malcolm Turnbull on addressing climate change and a 4% shift to Bill Shorten on ensuring big companies pay their share of tax.



Voluntary euthanasia

Q When a person has a disease that cannot be cured and is living in severe pain, do you think doctors should or should not be allowed by law to assist the patient to commit suicide if the patient requests it?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Sep 2010	Nov 2013	Oct 2014	May 2015
Should be allowed	68%	71%	66%	82%	70%	69%	68%	66%	72%
Should not be allowed	13%	13%	15%	9%	15%	14%	19%	14%	12%
Don't know	19%	16%	19%	9%	16%	17%	13%	20%	16%

68% of respondents think that that doctors should be allowed by law to assist a patient commit suicide – down 4% since May last year but similar to results over the last 6 years. 13% think it should not be allowed.

82% of Green voters, 71% of Labor and 66% of Liberal/National voters agreed that doctors should be allowed by law to assist a patient to commit suicide.

68% of women, 67% of men and 76% of those aged 45-64 support voluntary euthanasia.



Media laws

Q Would you approve or disapprove of changing the media laws to allow a single company to own all three of a newspaper, TV network and radio station in a single market?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	18%	16%	21%	15%	21%
Total disapprove	61%	65%	59%	74%	63%
Strongly approve	4%	3%	5%	5%	5%
Approve	14%	13%	16%	10%	16%
Disapprove	28%	26%	33%	26%	26%
Strongly disapprove	33%	39%	26%	48%	37%
Don't know	22%	19%	20%	12%	14%

61% disapprove of changing the media laws to allow a single company to own all three of a newspaper, TV network and radio station in a single market and only 18% approve. There was majority disapproval across all voter and demographic groups.



Importance of issues

Q How important are the following issues for Australia?

	Total important	Total not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
Reaching a global agreement on tackling climate change	75%	19%	40%	35%	11%	8%	6%
Holding a Royal Commission into the banking and finance industry	62%	25%	27%	35%	17%	8%	12%
Having a treaty with indigenous Australians	59%	33%	25%	34%	17%	16%	8%
Having a plebiscite on same-sex marriage	36%	56%	19%	17%	19%	37%	9%
Having a referendum on becoming a republic	34%	58%	14%	20%	25%	33%	9%

	Total important	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
Reaching a global agreement on tackling climate change	75%	83%	74%	94%	64%	72%	78%	75%	72%	80%
Holding a Royal Commission into the banking and finance industry	62%	73%	59%	64%	66%	65%	60%	56%	65%	67%
Having a treaty with indigenous Australians	59%	67%	55%	75%	51%	54%	64%	63%	57%	59%
Having a plebiscite on same-sex marriage	36%	36%	41%	27%	34%	34%	37%	43%	33%	32%
Having a referendum on becoming a republic	34%	41%	31%	37%	32%	40%	27%	33%	35%	32%



Of those listed, the most important issues for Australia were considered to be reaching a global agreement on tackling climate change (75% important), a Royal Commission into the banking and finance industry (62%) and having a treaty with indigenous Australian (59%).

Only 36% thought holding a plebiscite on same-sex marriage was important and 34% thought it was important to hold a referendum on becoming a republic.

Having a treaty with indigenous Australian was most strongly supported by Greens voters (75%), Labor voters (67%), women (64%) and those aged 18-34 (63%).



Recognition referendum

- Q If a referendum was held to include recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution, would you vote for or against?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Vote for	58%	67%	52%	76%	50%
Vote against	15%	12%	20%	5%	23%
Don't know	28%	21%	28%	19%	27%

58% say they would vote for including recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution in a referendum and 15% would vote against. 28% did not know how they would vote.

Those most likely to vote for were Greens voters (76%), Labor voters (67%) and university educated (64%).

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 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 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.

