

The Essential Report

4 October 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 30th September to 3rd October 2016 and is based on 1,007 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on same-sex marriage, the NBN and immigration.

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 27/9/16	2 weeks ago 20/9/16	4 weeks ago 6/9/16	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	36%	36%	34%	36%	
National	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	40%	39%	37%	39%	42.0%
Labor	36%	36%	37%	37%	34.7%
Greens	8%	9%	10%	10%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	4%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	6%	6%	6%	5%	
Other/Independent	7%	7%	7%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	49%	48%	48%	48%	50.4%
Labor	51%	52%	52%	52%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,780. 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.

Plebiscite or vote in Parliament

Q The Liberal/National Government has proposed holding a plebiscite on same sex marriage. The Labor Party, the Greens and the Nick Xenophon Team are opposed to holding a plebiscite and want a vote in Parliament. Which of the following options would you favour to resolve this issue?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+	Vote yes	Vote no
The Liberal/National Government should agree to a vote in Parliament	53%	60%	56%	71%	47%	56%	49%	51%	55%	50%	66%	38%
The Labor Party, Greens and Xenophon Team should agree to a plebiscite	24%	25%	26%	24%	27%	25%	22%	21%	20%	33%	20%	36%
Don't know	24%	15%	18%	4%	26%	19%	28%	28%	25%	17%	14%	26%

To resolve the issue of same-sex marriage, 53% think the Liberal National Government should agree to a vote in Parliament and 24% think Labor and the other parties should agree to a plebiscite.

Those most likely to think the Government should agree to a vote in Parliament were Greens voters (71%) and those who would vote in favour of same-sex marriage in a plebiscite (66%). 56% of Liberal National voters think their party should agree to a vote in Parliament.



National vote on same-sex marriage

Q The Federal Government plans to hold a national vote on same sex marriage in February next year. If the question was "Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?" how would you vote?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+	Aug 2016
Yes	58%	71%	49%	89%	44%	55%	60%	63%	61%	45%	60%
No	28%	18%	39%	9%	42%	32%	24%	21%	25%	41%	30%
Don't know	14%	11%	11%	1%	13%	13%	16%	16%	14%	14%	10%

58% would vote “yes” in a plebiscite on same-sex marriage and 28% would vote “no”. 14% did not know how they would vote.

This represents little change since this question was asked in August.

Those most likely to vote “yes” were Greens voters (89%), Labor voters (71%) and those aged 18-24 (71%).

48% of those aged 65+ would vote “no”.



Should plebiscite be binding

Q If a plebiscite is held, should the result be binding on Parliament or should members of Parliament still have a free vote?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Vote yes	Vote no
Should be binding on Parliament	49%	56%	49%	59%	52%	60%	42%
Members of Parliament should still have a free vote	26%	23%	29%	27%	29%	22%	36%
Don't know	25%	20%	22%	14%	18%	19%	22%

49% think that a plebiscite on same-sex marriage should be binding on Parliament and 26% think parliamentarians should still have a free vote.

Those most likely to support a binding vote were Greens voters (59%), Labor voters (56%) and those who would vote yes in a plebiscite (60%).



Internet an essential service

Q Do you agree or disagree that access to the Internet is becoming an essential service – like access to water and electricity?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
Total agree	88%	91%	92%	94%	87%	89%	88%	88%	87%	90%
Total disagree	7%	6%	6%	5%	12%	7%	6%	5%	7%	8%
Strongly agree	47%	55%	45%	55%	42%	46%	48%	52%	48%	39%
Agree	41%	36%	47%	39%	45%	43%	40%	36%	39%	51%
Disagree	6%	4%	5%	5%	11%	6%	5%	4%	6%	6%
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Don't know	5%	3%	3%	1%	2%	4%	5%	6%	6%	2%

88% agree that access to the internet is becoming an essential service. Only 7% disagreed.

There was very little difference across demographic and voter groups.



Future internet requirements

Q Do you think that the National Broadband Network will adequately meet Australia's future Internet requirements?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
Yes	22%	25%	24%	15%	18%	26%	19%	29%	19%	18%
No	47%	47%	44%	65%	56%	51%	43%	40%	54%	45%
Don't know	31%	27%	33%	20%	26%	23%	38%	30%	27%	37%

22% think that the National Broadband Network will adequately meet Australia's future Internet requirements and 47% disagree.

Those most likely to think it will not meet future needs were Greens voters (65%) and aged 35-54 (54%).



Best NBN

Q The Government's national broadband network plan is to more quickly roll out fibre to local nodes and let Telstra's copper network carry internet traffic to households, compared to Labor's plan to roll out fibre to every household outside rural areas, which would cost more and have taken longer but produced higher speeds. Which plan do you believe is best for Australia?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+	
The Liberal Government's plan	27%	8%	54%	13%	22%	29%	24%	28%	18%	39%	29%
The Labor plan	42%	73%	17%	66%	42%	47%	36%	39%	48%	34%	38%
Don't know	32%	19%	29%	22%	36%	23%	40%	33%	34%	27%	33%

42% think the Labor NBN plan is best for Australia and 27% think the Government's plan is best. 32% did not give an opinion. This represents an increase in support for the Labor plan since this question was asked in September last year.

Those more likely to prefer the Labor plan were Labor voters (73%), Greens voters (66%), men (47%) and aged 35-54 (48%).



Immigration level

Q Overall, do you think the level of immigration into Australia over the last ten years has been too high, too low or about right?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
Total too high	50%	43%	58%	20%	68%	52%	48%	40%	50%	64%
Total too low	12%	16%	7%	34%	8%	9%	14%	14%	13%	9%
Much too high	28%	25%	29%	8%	48%	30%	26%	19%	29%	39%
A little too high	22%	18%	29%	12%	20%	22%	22%	21%	21%	25%
About right	28%	30%	31%	39%	19%	31%	25%	31%	28%	25%
A little too low	8%	9%	6%	19%	5%	6%	9%	8%	9%	7%
Much too low	4%	7%	1%	15%	3%	3%	5%	6%	4%	2%
Don't know	10%	11%	5%	7%	5%	7%	13%	14%	10%	3%

50% think that the level of immigration into Australia over the last ten years has been too high, 28% think it has been about right and 12% think it has been too low.

Those most likely to think it has been too high were Liberal/National voters (58%), other party voters (68%) and people aged 55+ (64%).



Refugee intake

Q Do you support or oppose the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's decision to permanently increase Australia's annual refugee intake from 13,750 to 18,750 including taking refugees from Central America?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
Total support	39%	44%	38%	74%	26%	40%	37%	46%	37%	33%
Total oppose	44%	39%	45%	20%	65%	46%	42%	32%	45%	56%
Strongly support	11%	13%	8%	32%	7%	9%	12%	15%	11%	5%
Support	28%	31%	30%	42%	19%	31%	25%	31%	26%	28%
Oppose	21%	19%	29%	13%	16%	21%	22%	15%	22%	29%
Strongly oppose	23%	20%	16%	7%	49%	25%	20%	17%	23%	27%
Don't know	17%	16%	16%	5%	9%	14%	20%	22%	18%	10%

39% support the recent decision to permanently increase Australia's annual refugee intake from 13,750 to 18,750 and 44% oppose.

Those more likely to support the decision were Greens voters (74%), aged 18-34 (46%) and university educated (51%).

Those more likely to oppose the decision were other party voters (65%), aged 55+ (56%) and those who had not completed secondary schooling (56%).

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.

