

The Essential Report

11 October 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 7th to 10th October 2016 and is based on 1,002 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leaders, immigration and renewable energy.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 15.

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 4/10/16	2 weeks ago 27/9/16	4 weeks ago 13/9/16	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	34%	36%	36%	35%	
National	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	38%	40%	39%	38%	42.0%
Labor	36%	36%	36%	37%	34.7%
Greens	10%	8%	9%	10%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	3%	4%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	6%	6%	6%	5%	
Other/Independent	7%	7%	7%	7%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	48%	49%	48%	48%	50.4%
Labor	52%	51%	52%	52%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,769. 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.

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	Sep 2016
Total approve	38%	21%	74%	28%	25%	56%	45%	38%	37%	38%	35%
Total disapprove	41%	64%	15%	57%	58%	23%	35%	40%	48%	43%	43%
Strongly approve	5%	3%	10%	5%	5%	13%	6%	6%	8%	6%	4%
Approve	33%	18%	64%	23%	20%	43%	39%	32%	29%	32%	31%
Disapprove	25%	35%	11%	38%	38%	16%	24%	24%	27%	26%	27%
Strongly disapprove	16%	29%	4%	19%	20%	7%	11%	16%	21%	17%	16%
Don't know	20%	16%	11%	15%	17%	21%	21%	21%	16%	19%	22%

38% (up 3% from 4 weeks ago) of respondents approve of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing as Prime Minister and 41% (down 2%) disapprove – a change in net approval rating from -8 to -3.

74% (up 3%) of Liberal/National voters approve of Malcolm Turnbull's performance with 15% (down 2%) disapproving. 21% (up 5%) of Labor voters and 28% (up 5%) of Greens voters approve of Malcolm Turnbull's performance.

By gender, men were 44% approve/43% disapprove and women 33% approve/40% 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	Sep 2016
Total approve	37%	65%	25%	42%	22%	31%	35%	27%	27%	34%	39%	37%	36%
Total disapprove	40%	18%	61%	35%	65%	27%	39%	47%	47%	40%	41%	41%	41%
Strongly approve	5%	13%	2%	6%	1%	5%	7%	4%	3%	7%	11%	7%	6%
Approve	32%	52%	23%	36%	21%	26%	28%	23%	24%	27%	28%	30%	30%
Disapprove	23%	15%	28%	30%	32%	17%	23%	26%	29%	22%	21%	23%	24%
Strongly disapprove	17%	3%	33%	5%	33%	10%	16%	21%	18%	18%	20%	18%	17%
Don't know	22%	18%	14%	22%	13%	43%	26%	25%	26%	25%	20%	22%	22%

37% (up 1% in last 4 weeks) of respondents approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing as opposition leader and 40% (down 1%) disapprove – a change in his net rating from -5 to -3.

65% (up 3%) of Labor voters approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing and 18% (down 1%) disapprove.

42% of men and 32% of women approve of Bill Shorten. 43% of men and 37% 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	Sep 2016
Malcolm Turnbull	41%	15%	79%	27%	41%	53%	54%	48%	40%	39%	40%	41%
Bill Shorten	28%	59%	7%	35%	15%	17%	15%	19%	29%	31%	30%	26%
Don't know	31%	26%	14%	38%	44%	30%	31%	33%	32%	30%	31%	33%

41% (no change in last 4 weeks) of respondents think Malcolm Turnbull would make the better Prime Minister and 28% (up 2%) think Bill Shorten would make the better Prime Minister.

46% of men prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 32% prefer Bill Shorten.

36% of women prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 25% prefer Bill Shorten.



Contribution of Multiculturalism

- Q Overall, has multiculturalism (that is, the acceptance of people from different countries, cultures and religions) made a positive or negative contribution to Australian society?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Feb 2011	Sep 2014	Mar 2015
Total positive	61%	66%	66%	74%	48%	57%	57%	57%
Total negative	23%	21%	22%	15%	38%	29%	30%	29%
Very positive	17%	21%	13%	35%	11%	15%	18%	18%
Positive	44%	45%	53%	39%	37%	42%	39%	39%
Negative	15%	15%	14%	9%	20%	18%	19%	18%
Very negative	8%	6%	8%	6%	18%	11%	11%	11%
Made no difference	7%	9%	5%	3%	8%	6%	6%	6%
Don't know	9%	5%	5%	7%	6%	8%	6%	9%

61% believe that multiculturalism has made a positive contribution to Australian society and 23% believe the contribution has been negative. This is the most positive view of multiculturalism since this question was asked in 2011.

Older respondents tend to have a somewhat more negative view – those aged 65+ were split 55% positive/34% negative while those aged under 35 were 67% positive and 16% negative.

Immigration and Religion

Q When a family applies to migrate to Australia, should it be possible for them to be rejected purely on the basis of their religion?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Feb 2011	Sep 2014
Should be rejected on basis of religion	24%	19%	30%	16%	41%	19%	21%
Should not be rejected on basis of religion	56%	64%	51%	73%	45%	65%	63%
Don't know	20%	17%	19%	12%	13%	15%	17%

56% believed that when a family applies to migrate to Australia, they should not be rejected purely on the basis of their religion and 24% think it should be possible to reject purely based on religion. This represents a drop in opposition to rejecting migrants purely on the basis of religion.

Liberal voters were a little more supportive of being able to reject based on religion (30%) and Greens voters were strongly opposed (73%). 64% of those aged under 35 were opposed.

Concern about Muslims (pre information)

Q Are you concerned about the number of Muslim people in Australia?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	1-2%	3-5%	6-10%	Over 10%	Don't know	Feb 2011
Total concerned	53%	49%	61%	32%	69%	38%	59%	61%	75%	43%	57%
Total not concerned	42%	47%	36%	67%	30%	60%	40%	39%	21%	36%	38%
Very Concerned	25%	24%	27%	13%	39%	13%	26%	30%	45%	22%	28%
Somewhat concerned	28%	25%	34%	19%	30%	25%	33%	31%	30%	21%	29%
Not very concerned	22%	23%	23%	24%	15%	28%	22%	24%	11%	20%	21%
Not at all concerned	20%	24%	13%	43%	15%	32%	18%	15%	10%	16%	17%
Don't know/Refused	5%	5%	2%	1%	2%	2%	-	-	3%	22%	5%

53% were very or somewhat concerned about the number of Muslim people in Australia while 42% were not very or not at all concerned. Concern is higher among Liberal/National (61%) and other party voters (69%) and lower among Greens voters (32%). 60% of people aged 55+ say they are concerned.

However, level of concern has dropped a little since this question was asked in 2011.

Level of concern is strongly related to perceptions of the number of Muslim people in Australia.

Muslims in Australia

Q What percentage of Australian residents do you think are Muslim?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Feb 2011
1%	9%	10%	10%	11%	9%	6%
2%	19%	23%	17%	21%	24%	11%
3-5%	24%	24%	26%	31%	23%	26%
6-10%	12%	11%	14%	15%	15%	20%
More than 10%	15%	18%	12%	9%	17%	19%
Don't know	19%	14%	20%	14%	13%	18%

28% think that Muslims make up 1-2% of Australia's population, 24% think they make up 3-5% and 27% think it is over 5%. The actual figure is 2.2% - meaning 51% have over-estimated the number of Muslims in Australia.

Those who think it is 1-2% were more likely to be men (33%) and aged 55+ (37%).

Concern about Muslims (post information)

- Q The most recent Census figures show that in fact only 2.2% of the Australian population identifies as Muslim. In light of this information, how concerned are you about the number of Muslim people in Australia?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Feb 2011
Total concerned	47%	42%	56%	25%	67%	50%
Total not concerned	47%	55%	39%	74%	31%	45%
Very Concerned	21%	20%	23%	9%	38%	22%
Somewhat concerned	26%	22%	33%	16%	29%	28%
Not very concerned	24%	26%	22%	32%	16%	26%
Not at all concerned	23%	29%	17%	42%	15%	19%
Don't know/Refused	6%	4%	5%	1%	3%	5%

After being given some information about the number of Muslims in Australia, 47% said they were still very/somewhat concerned and 47% said they were not very or not at all concerned. This represents a 6% fall in level of concern from the question asked before this information was given to respondents.

Reason for SA power blackout

Q Some people have said the recent power black out in South Australia was a result of too much reliance on renewable energy. Others have said that the storm damage would have shut down the power grid regardless of how the electricity was produced. Which is closest to your view?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
The power black out was a result of too much reliance on renewable energy	17%	13%	25%	13%	17%
The power black out would have occurred regardless of how the electricity was produced	60%	67%	51%	74%	60%
Don't know	24%	20%	23%	13%	23%

60% believe the SA power black out would have occurred regardless of how the electricity was produced and 17% think it was a result of too much reliance on renewable energy.

Liberal National voters were a little more likely to think it was a result of over-reliance on renewable energy (25%). There were no significant differences by age or gender. Although a small sample, 72% of South Australians thought it would have occurred regardless and 15% thought it was a result of over-reliance on renewable energy.

Renewable energy

Q Do you think renewable energy is the solution to our future energy needs or is renewable energy a threat to our future energy supply?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
The solution to our energy needs	60%	70%	52%	82%	61%
A threat to future energy supply	16%	10%	25%	10%	21%
Don't know	24%	20%	23%	8%	18%

60% agree more that renewable energy is the solution to our future energy needs and 16% think it is a threat to future energy supply.

70% of Labor voters and 82% of Greens voters think it is the solution to future energy needs.

Although a small sample, 59% of South Australians think it is the solution and 20% think it is a threat.

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.