

The Essential Report

15 November 2016



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Prepared By: Essential Research

Data Supplied by:



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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 11th to 14th November 2016 and is based on 1,014 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on racial discrimination, party leaders, environmental groups, the US election, political donations, compensation for victims of child sex abuse and health priorities.

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 8/11/16	2 weeks ago 1/11/16	4 weeks ago 18/10/16	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	34%	35%	36%	34%	
National	3%	3%	2%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	37%	38%	38%	37%	42.0%
Labor	37%	37%	37%	37%	34.7%
Greens	11%	10%	10%	11%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	2%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	6%	6%	6%	5%	
Other/Independent	6%	6%	7%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	47%	47%	48%	47%	50.4%
Labor	53%	53%	52%	53%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,786 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.

Racial discrimination laws

Q Overall, do you think that laws governing racial discrimination in Australia are too strict, too weak or about right?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Too strict	17%	11%	22%	7%	32%
Too weak	26%	31%	21%	45%	22%
About right	40%	43%	44%	35%	36%
Don't know	17%	15%	13%	14%	11%

40% think Australia current laws governing racial discrimination are about right, 26% think they are too weak and 17% think they are too strict.

Those most likely to think they are too weak were Greens voters (45%), Labor voters (31%) and women (31%)

Those most likely to think they are too strict were Liberal/National voters (22%), other voters (32%) and men (22%)

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	Sep 2016
Total approve	44%	37%	58%	26%	51%	45%
Total disapprove	33%	40%	23%	62%	31%	35%
Strongly approve	15%	11%	22%	7%	18%	16%
Approve	29%	26%	36%	19%	33%	29%
Disapprove	18%	22%	13%	26%	22%	18%
Strongly disapprove	15%	18%	10%	36%	9%	17%
Don't know	23%	23%	19%	12%	17%	21%

44% 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 33% disapprove. 58% of Liberal/National voters approve of changing the Act while 62% of Greens voters disapproved. Labor voters were split 37% approve/40% disapprove.

These results are very similar to those when this question was asked in September.



Best leader of the Liberal Party

Q Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Liberal Party?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2014	Feb 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015	Dec 2015	Mar 2016	Jul 2016
Malcolm Turnbull	21%	19%	36%	12%	10%	31%	24%	24%	37%	42%	39%	30%
Tony Abbott	11%	6%	19%	4%	13%	18%	11%	18%	9%	9%	9%	9%
Julie Bishop	20%	20%	20%	33%	22%	4%	21%	17%	14%	13%	12%	16%
Christopher Pyne	2%	2%	2%	5%	3%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%
Scott Morrison	3%	2%	4%	1%	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%
Someone else	18%	23%	7%	17%	36%	19%	13%	13%	10%	9%	15%	19%
Don't know	25%	29%	12%	28%	14%	21%	24%	22%	21%	22%	21%	21%

21% (down 9% since July) think Malcolm Turnbull would make the best leader of the Liberal Party, 20% prefer Julie Bishop (up 4%) and 11% prefer Tony Abbott (up 2%). 18% (down 1%) prefer someone else.

Among Liberal/National voters, 36% (down 14%) prefer Malcolm Turnbull, 20% (up 3%) Julie Bishop and 19% (up 6%) prefer Tony Abbott.

Preferences of men were Malcolm Turnbull 25% (-6%), Julie Bishop 19% (+2%) and Tony Abbott 13% (+4%).

Preferences of women were Julie Bishop 22% (+7%), Malcolm Turnbull 17% (-11%) and Tony Abbott 9% (+1%).



Best leader of the Labor Party

Q Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Labor Party?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aug 2015	Dec 2015	Mar 2016	Jul 2016
Bill Shorten	17%	37%	8%	15%	9%	16%	13%	15%	27%
Anthony Albanese	12%	14%	12%	13%	16%	12%	14%	14%	11%
Tanya Plibersek	14%	16%	12%	22%	14%	13%	14%	14%	12%
Chris Bowen	4%	2%	5%	1%	7%	5%	3%	7%	3%
Tony Burke	2%	1%	4%	6%	2%	-	-	-	-
Someone else	18%	10%	26%	11%	29%	18%	17%	18%	17%
Don't know	32%	21%	34%	32%	22%	36%	38%	32%	30%

17% (down 10% since July) think Bill Shorten would make the best leader of the Labor Party, 14% (up 2%) prefer Tanya Plibersek and 12% (up 1%) Anthony Albanese. 18% prefer someone else and 32% don't know.

Among Labor voters, 37% (down 14%) prefer Bill Shorten, 16% (up 4%) Tanya Plibersek and 14% (up 3%) Anthony Albanese.

Preferences of men were Bill Shorten 19% (-10%), Anthony Albanese 16% (+3%) and Tanya Plibersek 13% (-1%).

Preferences of women were Bill Shorten 16% (-9%), Tanya Plibersek 14% (+3%) and Anthony Albanese 9% (no change).

Environmental groups

Q Currently, donations to charities, including environmental protection, social welfare and religious organisations, are tax deductible. Donations to political parties are also tax deductible. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Total agree	Total disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Environmental groups should be able to publicly criticise the government if it makes decisions that cause environmental destruction.	74%	11%	34%	40%	7%	4%	15%
I should be able to make a tax deduction for donations I make to environmental groups such as WWF and ACF	70%	13%	30%	40%	8%	5%	17%
Environmental groups play an important role to play in holding the government to account for environmentally destructive decisions.	69%	14%	28%	41%	9%	5%	16%
Environmental groups should be able to take the government to court if the government makes a decision that does not comply with environmental law	67%	16%	32%	35%	10%	6%	17%

More than two-thirds agreed with each statement.

70% agree that donations to environmental groups should be tax deductible and 74% agree that environmental groups should be able to publicly criticise the Government.

82% of Greens voters, 73% of Labor voters and 69% of Liberal/National voters agree donations should be tax deductible.



Interest in US election

Q Thinking about elections, have you taken more or less interest in the US election than the July election in Australia?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Taken more interest in the US election	33%	32%	37%	31%	36%
Taken less interest in the US election	22%	22%	24%	25%	22%
About the same interest	38%	40%	37%	41%	38%
Don't know	6%	6%	3%	3%	4%

33% say they took more interest in the US election than the Australian election, 22% took less interest and 38% about the same interest.

Those more likely to take more interest in the US election than the Australian election were aged 18-24 (45%), full-time workers (38%) and incomes over \$1,500pw (39%).

Political donations

Q Would you support or oppose introducing the following requirement concerning political donation?

	Total support	Total oppose	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know
All politicians to publicly disclose meetings with representatives of companies, donors or unions	77%	6%	41%	36%	4%	2%	17%
Political donations to be reported immediately by political parties, compared to annual reports at the moment	73%	6%	37%	36%	5%	1%	21%
A ban on foreign donations	66%	12%	40%	26%	9%	3%	23%
A cap on donations of \$5000	61%	13%	27%	34%	10%	3%	26%
A ban on political donations by companies and unions	59%	16%	29%	30%	14%	2%	26%
All donations banned and all political party spending to be taxpayer funded	25%	49%	11%	14%	24%	25%	26%



Support by party preference	Total support	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
All politicians to publicly disclose meetings with representatives of companies, donors or unions	77%	77%	80%	84%	88%
Political donations to be reported immediately by political parties, compared to annual reports at the moment	73%	72%	73%	84%	88%
A ban on foreign donations	66%	61%	70%	70%	83%
A cap on donations of \$5000	61%	59%	64%	69%	73%
A ban on political donations by companies and unions	59%	53%	64%	64%	75%
All donations banned and all political party spending to be taxpayer funded	25%	25%	31%	27%	26%

There was majority support for all listed reforms except taxpayer funding for political parties (25% support/49% oppose).

There was particularly strong support for public disclosure of meetings (77%) and immediate reporting of donations (73%).

64% of Liberal/National voters supported a ban on donations from companies and unions compared to 53% of Labor voters. Labor voters were a little less supportive than Liberal/National voters of all reforms listed.

Compensation for victims

- Q Do you support the Government's proposal to pay compensation to victims of child sex abuse or do you think the institutions like the churches should pay the compensation?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Support Government paying compensation	14%	18%	15%	13%	9%
Institutions should pay the compensation	63%	59%	65%	76%	74%
Neither should pay compensation	7%	6%	9%	5%	8%
Don't know	16%	18%	12%	5%	10%

63% think that institutions should pay compensation to victims of child abuse and 14% support the Government's proposal to pay compensation. Those most likely to think the institutions should pay compensation were Greens voters (76%), other party voters (74%) and aged 55+ (80%).

Government health priorities

Q Thinking about the Health System where do you think the government's top 3 funding priorities should lie?

	Total	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Reducing emergency waiting lists	57%	27%	18%	12%	55%	60%	52%	56%
Building new public hospitals	32%	11%	10%	11%	38%	32%	20%	33%
Expanding access to free dental care	32%	10%	11%	11%	34%	29%	35%	31%
Subsidising more medicines under the PBS	32%	10%	11%	11%	31%	32%	23%	38%
Increasing the Medicare rebate	30%	10%	11%	9%	30%	34%	22%	22%
More resources for mental health	27%	9%	9%	9%	30%	22%	38%	29%
More investment in aged care facilities	27%	7%	9%	11%	27%	30%	21%	29%
Training more specialists	20%	3%	8%	9%	19%	20%	14%	21%
More public health campaigns to reduce demand	13%	3%	4%	6%	9%	14%	26%	12%
More resources for indigenous health	12%	4%	3%	5%	10%	10%	28%	6%
Expanding out of hours Medicare services (eg home visits)	11%	2%	5%	4%	11%	11%	11%	8%
Investing in capacity to deliver health services online	8%	3%	2%	3%	6%	7%	10%	12%



Top health priorities for the Government were reducing emergency waiting lists (57%), building new public hospitals (32%), expanding access to free dental care (32%) and subsidising more medicines under the PBS (32%).

Labor voters were more likely to prioritise building new public hospitals (38%).

Greens voters were more likely to prioritise more resources for mental health (38%), more resources for indigenous health (28%) and more public health campaigns to reduce demand (26%).

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.