

The Essential Report

6 December 2016



The Essential Report

Date: 6/12/2016

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 2nd to 5th November 2016 and is based on 1,018 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party best at issues, approval of Government Ministers, euthanasia, education funding, climate change, what happens after death and types of violence.

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 29/11/16	2 weeks ago 22/11/16	4 weeks ago 8/11/16	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	35%	36%	36%	35%	
National	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	38%	39%	38%	38%	42.0%
Labor	36%	36%	37%	37%	34.7%
Greens	9%	9%	10%	10%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	8%	7%	6%	6%	
Other/Independent	6%	6%	6%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	48%	49%	48%	47%	50.4%
Labor	52%	51%	52%	53%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,833 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.

Party trust to handle issues

Q Which party would you trust most to handle the following issues?

	Liberal	Labor	Don't know	NET	NET Aug 2016
Security and the war on terrorism	39%	22%	39%	+17	+18
Management of the economy	41%	27%	32%	+14	+15
Controlling interest rates	33%	26%	41%	+7	+12
Managing population growth	32%	25%	42%	+7	+10
Treatment of asylum seekers	34%	28%	39%	+6	+6
Political leadership	33%	27%	40%	+6	+9
Ensuring a fair taxation system	32%	33%	35%	-1	-4
Ensuring a quality water supply	27%	30%	43%	-3	-
A fair industrial relations system	30%	37%	33%	-7	-8
Protecting Australian jobs and protection of local industries	28%	37%	35%	-9	-8
Housing affordability	25%	34%	40%	-9	-10
Ensuring a quality education for all children	28%	39%	33%	-11	-8
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	28%	40%	32%	-12	-8
Addressing climate change	23%	37%	40%	-14	-10
Protecting the environment	23%	37%	40%	-14	-11



The Liberal Party is trusted more to handle security and the war on terrorism (+17) and management of the economy (+14).

The Labor Party is trusted more to handle protecting the environment (-14), addressing climate change (-14), the health system (-12) and education (-11).

Since this question was asked in August, the Labor Party has improved its position against the Liberal Party on controlling interest rates (up 5), climate change (up 4) and the health system (up 4).



Party best at looking after the economy

Q Which party – Labor or Liberal – do you think is best when it comes to:

	Liberal	Labor	No Diff- erence	Don't Know	Diff- erence Liberal - Labor	Mar 2016 diff- erence
Representing the interests of the large corporate and financial interests	48%	15%	22%	15%	+33	+37
Handling the economy overall	35%	24%	25%	16%	+11	+13
Handling the economy in a way that best helps small business	33%	24%	25%	18%	+9	+13
Handling the economy in a way that best helps the middle class	30%	30%	24%	15%	-	+3
Handling the economy in a way that helps you and people like you the most.	28%	30%	25%	17%	-2	-4
Representing the interests of you and people like you	27%	35%	23%	15%	-8	-6
Standing up for the middle class in Australia	26%	34%	24%	15%	-8	-7
Handling the economy in a way that tries to take the interests of working families into consideration as much as it takes the interests of the large corporate and financial groups	24%	33%	25%	17%	-9	-7
Representing the interests of Australian working families	20%	42%	23%	14%	-22	-21
Being more concerned about the interests of working families in Australia than the rich and large business and financial interests	18%	43%	24%	14%	-25	-22



Labor was more likely to be selected as the party best at all of the items, except for 'Representing the interests of the large corporate and financial interests' (48% Liberal, 15% Labor), 'Handling the economy overall' (35% Liberal, 24% Labor), 'Handling the economy in a way that best helps small business' (33% Liberal, 24% Labor) and 'Handling the economy in a way that best helps the middle class' (30% Liberal, 30% Labor).

Since this question was asked in March, the main shifts have been for 'Handling the economy in a way that best helps small business' (4% to Labor) and "Representing the interests of the large corporate and financial interests" (4% to Labor).



Approval of Government Ministers

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job the following people are doing as Government Ministers?

	Total approve	Total dis-approve	Strongly approve	Approve	Dis-approve	Strongly dis-approve	Don't know	Net score	Net LNP voters
Julie Bishop - Foreign Affairs	52%	23%	18%	34%	12%	11%	25%	+29	+66
Christopher Pyne – Defence Industry	35%	34%	7%	28%	16%	18%	32%	+1	+55
Barnaby Joyce – Deputy Prime Minister	34%	33%	7%	27%	18%	15%	33%	+1	+48
Greg Hunt – Industry, Innovation and Science	28%	27%	5%	23%	14%	13%	46%	+1	+43
Peter Dutton – Immigration and Border Protection	33%	35%	11%	21%	15%	20%	32%	-2	+47
Scott Morrison - Treasurer	33%	36%	6%	27%	18%	18%	31%	-3	+50
George Brandis - Attorney General	26%	34%	4%	22%	14%	20%	40%	-8	+32

Of the Government Ministers listed, Julie Bishop has the best approval rating by a considerable margin (52% approve/23% disapprove). Opinions are almost evenly divided on all other ministers except George Brandis with 26% approve/34% disapprove.

Among Liberal/National voters, approval ranges from 75% for Julie Bishop to 49% for George Brandis.

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	Sep 2016
Should be allowed	69%	75%	66%	86%	68%	69%	68%	66%	72%	68%
Should not be allowed	14%	12%	18%	5%	16%	14%	19%	14%	12%	13%
Don't know	18%	13%	16%	9%	16%	17%	13%	20%	16%	19%

69% of respondents think that that doctors should be allowed by law to assist a patient commit suicide – similar to results over the last 6 years. 14% think it should not be allowed.

86% of Green voters, 75% of Labor and 66% of Liberal/National voters agreed that doctors should be allowed by law to assist a patient to commit suicide.

70% of women, 68% of men and 74% of those aged 45-64 support voluntary euthanasia.

Gonski education funding

- Q The Federal Government is proposing to end Gonski needs-based funding after 2017 and introduce a new funding system which would leave schools \$3.8 billion worse off in 2018 and 2019 alone. Do you approve or disapprove of this decision?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	18%	11%	33%	11%	15%
Total disapprove	54%	73%	35%	70%	60%
Strongly approve	7%	6%	11%	3%	6%
Approve	11%	5%	22%	8%	9%
Disapprove	23%	25%	23%	28%	23%
Strongly disapprove	31%	48%	12%	42%	37%
Don't know	28%	16%	33%	20%	26%

54% disapprove of replacing the Gonski need-based funding after 2017 and 18% approve. Liberal/National voters were split (33% approve/35% disapprove) while 73% of Labor voters and 70% of Greens voters disapprove.

59% of women and 50% of men disapprove. 59% of those aged 45-64 disapprove.

Climate change

Q Do you believe that there is fairly conclusive evidence that climate change is happening and caused by human activity or do you believe that the evidence is still not in and we may just be witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth’s climate which happens from time to time?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Nov 2009	Dec 2010	Jun 2011	Oct 2012	Oct 2013	Dec 2014	Nov 2015	Aug 2016
Climate change is happening and is caused by human activity	54%	70%	39%	82%	47%	53%	45%	50%	48%	52%	57%	56%	57%
We are just witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth’s climate	27%	18%	40%	7%	40%	34%	36%	39%	39%	36%	29%	32%	26%
Don't know	18%	12%	20%	12%	13%	13%	19%	12%	13%	12%	14%	12%	17%

54% (down 3% since August) agree that climate change is happening and is caused by human activity and 27% (up 1%) believe that we may just be witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth’s climate.

By age groups, those aged under 35 split 60%/19% and those aged 55+ split 47%/42%. People with higher education were more likely to think climate change is happening and is caused by human activity - those with university degrees split 61%/22%.



Doing enough to address climate change

Q As far as you know, do you think Australia is doing enough, not enough or too much to address climate change?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Climate change is happening	Aug 2015	Mar 2016	Aug 2016
Doing enough	22%	16%	35%	4%	26%	15%	24%	21%	22%
Not doing enough	49%	62%	30%	88%	45%	76%	53%	57%	52%
Doing too much	11%	8%	16%	2%	17%	2%	7%	8%	8%
Don't know	18%	14%	19%	6%	12%	7%	16%	13%	18%

49% (down 3% since August) think Australia is not doing enough to address climate change and 22% (no change) think Australia is doing enough.

Those most likely to think Australia is not doing enough were aged 18-34 (54%) and university educated (54%).

Of those who believe climate change is happening, 76% think Australia is not doing enough.



After death

Q Where do you believe you go after you die?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Nowhere	32%	32%	32%	40%	31%
To an afterlife	27%	30%	30%	11%	30%
You are reincarnated	9%	10%	8%	11%	11%
Somewhere else	7%	6%	8%	11%	10%
Don't know	25%	22%	23%	28%	19%

27% think people go to an afterlife when they die, 9% think they are reincarnated and 7% think they go somewhere else. 32% think they go nowhere and 25% don't know.

There were no major differences by voting intention except for Greens voters who were less likely to believe in an afterlife (11%) and more likely to think people go nowhere (40%).

38% of men think people go nowhere compared to 26% of women.

34% of those aged 35-54 believe in an afterlife and 40% of those aged 55+ think people go nowhere.



Abuse and violence

Q Do you think the following types of abuse and violence have increased or decreased in Australia over the last few years?

	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know
Racial abuse or violence	52%	12%	27%	9%
Homophobic abuse or violence	33%	29%	25%	13%
Abuse or violence of people because of their religion	59%	9%	21%	10%

59% think that religious abuse/violence in Australia has increased and 52% think racial abuse/violence has increased. Opinion was more divided over homophobic abuse/violence – 33% think it has increased and 29% decreased.

The main differences were between Labor and Liberal/National voters.

64% of Labor voters and 45% of LNP voters think racial abuse/violence has increased.

41% of Labor voters and 28% of LNP voters think homophobic abuse/violence has increased.

68% of Labor voters and 50% of LNP voters think religious abuse/violence has increased.

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.

