

# The Essential Report

24 January 2017



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**Prepared By:** Essential Research

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**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 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 and is based on 1,015 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on Australia Day, the republic, Centrelink, politicians' expenses and trust in institutions..

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	5 weeks ago 20/12/16	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	33%	34%	
National	3%	2%	
<b>Total Liberal/National</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34.7%</b>
Greens	10%	10%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	9%	8%	
Other/Independent	6%	6%	13.1%
<b>2 party preferred</b>			
Liberal National	<b>46%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>50.4%</b>
Labor	<b>54%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>49.6%</b>

NB. Sample = 1,813. 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.

## Australia Day

Q Thursday 26th January is Australia Day. Will you personally be doing anything to celebrate Australia Day or do you treat it as just a public holiday?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jan 2010	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016
Doing something to celebrate Australia Day	<b>34%</b>	35%	38%	26%	33%	40%	41%	37%	40%	38%
Just a public holiday	<b>46%</b>	46%	47%	59%	44%	40%	43%	44%	41%	44%
Working – don't get the Australia Day holiday	<b>5%</b>	5%	2%	55	8%	6%	7%	7%	7%	6%
Don't know	<b>15%</b>	14%	13%	11%	16%	14%	9%	11%	12%	12%

34% said they will be doing something to celebrate Australia Day, 46% treat Australia Day as just a public holiday and 5% are working because they don't get the Australia Day holiday. This is the lowest proportion celebrating Australia Day over the last 7 years.

38% of Liberal/National voters and 41% of those with children say they will be doing something to celebrate Australia Day. 59% of Greens treat it as just another public holiday.

## Feelings about Australia Day

Q Which of the following best describes how you feel about Australia Day?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+	Jan 2016
A day of national pride	<b>60%</b>	61%	73%	26%	65%	55%	60%	65%	56%
A day of reflection on the impact on indigenous people	<b>12%</b>	12%	4%	46%	9%	15%	14%	8%	14%
It's irrelevant in the 21st century	<b>7%</b>	5%	85	6%	12%	6%	7%	9%	8%
None of these	<b>15%</b>	16%	11%	17%	13%	14%	14%	16%	16%
Don't know	<b>6%</b>	5%	4%	5%	2%	10%	5%	2%	6%

60% regard Australia Day as a day of national pride and 12% think it is a day of reflection on the impact on indigenous people. Only 7% think it is irrelevant.

Those most likely to regard it as a day of national pride were Liberal/National voters (73%) and aged 55+ (65%). 46% of Greens voters think it is a day of reflection on the impact on indigenous people.



## Republic

Q Would you support or oppose Australia becoming a republic with an Australian head of state?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
<b>Total support</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Total oppose</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>38%</b>
Strongly support	21%	29%	14%	30%	23%
Support	23%	21%	27%	22%	20%
Oppose	18%	14%	27%	12%	20%
Strongly oppose	12%	10%	14%	6%	18%
No opinion	26%	26%	18%	31%	19%

44% support Australia becoming a republic with an Australian head of state and 30% oppose. 26% have no opinion.

Those most likely to support were Labor voters (50%), Greens voters (52%), men (53%) and university educated (52%).

Those most likely to oppose were Liberal/National voters (41%) and aged 65+ (44%).



## Trust in Institutions

Q How much trust do you have in the following institutions and organisations?

	Total trust	A lot of trust	Some trust	A little trust	No trust	Don't know	% change	Total trust Jun 12	Total trust Mar 13	Total trust Jul 14	Total trust Oct 15	Total trust Sep 16
Federal police	<b>69%</b>	29%	40%	19%	7%	5%	<b>+6</b>	-	-	-	67%	63%
State police	<b>67%</b>	25%	42%	23%	6%	4%	<b>+4</b>	-	-	-	68%	63%
The High Court	<b>62%</b>	23%	39%	23%	8%	6%	<b>+5</b>	60%	74%	57%	60%	57%
The ABC	<b>53%</b>	15%	38%	26%	12%	9%	-	54%	70%	54%	55%	53%
The Reserve Bank	<b>51%</b>	15%	36%	31%	10%	8%	<b>+4</b>	49%	64%	52%	51%	47%
Charitable organisations	<b>45%</b>	8%	37%	36%	14%	5%	<b>+2</b>	50%	52%	45%	49%	43%
Environment groups	<b>39%</b>	8%	31%	34%	21%	7%	-	32%	41%	31%	42%	39%
Your local council	<b>38%</b>	5%	33%	37%	19%	5%	<b>+2</b>	-	34%	33%	40%	36%
The Commonwealth Public Service	<b>36%</b>	5%	31%	37%	16%	10%	-	30%	36%	31%	38%	36%
State Parliament	<b>31%</b>	5%	26%	32%	31%	6%	<b>+5</b>	-	30%	24%	32%	26%
Federal Parliament	<b>30%</b>	5%	25%	32%	33%	6%	<b>+4</b>	22%	34%	25%	32%	26%
Religious organisations	<b>28%</b>	5%	23%	27%	38%	6%	<b>+2</b>	27%	27%	26%	30%	26%
Trade unions	<b>27%</b>	5%	22%	30%	34%	9%	<b>+2</b>	22%	25%	22%	27%	25%





Business groups	<b>27%</b>	3%	24%	44%	23%	7%	-	22%	26%	22%	30%	27%
Political parties	<b>17%</b>	3%	14%	34%	44%	6%	<b>+3</b>	12%	12%	13%	16%	14%

*Note: 'Total Trust' is an aggregate figure achieved by adding 'A lot of trust' and 'Some trust'*

Overall, trust in institutions has increased a little since this question was asked last September.

Respondents had most trust in the Federal police (69%), State police (67%), the High Court (62%), the ABC (53%) and the Reserve Bank (51%). They had least trust in political parties (17%), business groups (27%), trade unions (27%) and religious organisations (28%).

The main changes since the last poll were for Federal Police (up 6%), the High Courts (up 5%) and State Parliament (up 5%).



## Centrelink debt recovery

- Q Centrelink is currently conducting a debt recovery program in which welfare recipients are being automatically sent notifications regarding possible over payments. From what you have read or heard do you approve of disapprove of the way this program has been conducted?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>58%</b>
Strongly approve	13%	11%	20%	8%	13%
Approve	23%	23%	29%	16%	17%
Disapprove	19%	17%	19%	16%	24%
Strongly disapprove	29%	36%	19%	47%	34%
No opinion	16%	13%	13%	12%	12%

36% approve of the way the Centrelink debt recovery program has been conducted and 48% disapprove.

Those most likely to approve were Liberal/National voters (49%), men (43%), full-time workers (45%) and those earning over \$2,000 a week (45%).

Those most likely to disapprove were Greens voters (63%), aged 65+ (61%), people not working (58%) and those earning less than \$600 a week (60%).

## Centrelink debt recovery vs politicians' entitlements

Q Which of the following issues are you more concerned about - over payments to welfare recipients or how politicians use their travel expenses?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Over payments to welfare recipients	8%	5%	14%	10%	7%
Politicians travel expenses	46%	52%	35%	60%	50%
Both equally	40%	38%	48%	29%	40%
Neither	2%	3%	1%	-	1%
Don't know	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%

46% are more concerned about how politicians use their travel expenses than over payments to welfare recipients and 40% are equally concerned about both. Only 8% are more concerned about over payments to welfare recipients.

Those most concerned about how politicians use their travel expenses were Labor voters (52%), Greens voters (60%) and aged 18-34 (51%).

## Politicians' expenses

Q Which of the following political expenses should politicians be reimbursed for?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aug 2015
Travel for events directly related to their electoral or parliamentary work (unlimited if work related)	<b>68%</b>	68%	78%	69%	67%	64%
Printing of materials to inform their electorate	<b>54%</b>	57%	60%	51%	50%	62%
Overseas study trips (a limited number per year)	<b>35%</b>	35%	45%	36%	32%	34%
Publications allowance (for books and magazines)	<b>34%</b>	35%	37%	36%	33%	38%
Free use of a taxpayer funded car	<b>22%</b>	21%	31%	19%	19%	29%
An electorate allowance that covers the cost of serving the electorate, which MP's can keep if it is not spent	<b>20%</b>	19%	23%	19%	24%	21%
An allowance for nights spent in Canberra, regardless of where the MP stays	<b>19%</b>	19%	23%	17%	22%	26%
Social events for networking purposes	<b>18%</b>	20%	21%	11%	16%	17%
Travel for politicians families to visit them in Canberra or interstate when they are on Government business	<b>15%</b>	15%	18%	14%	15%	16%
Travel for politicians spouses to accompany them on overseas trips	<b>13%</b>	13%	20%	13%	6%	15%



More than half approve of reimbursing politicians for travel for events directly related to their electoral or parliamentary work (68%) and printing of materials to inform their electorate (54%). A substantial minority also approve a publications allowance (34%) and limited overseas study trips (35%).

Very few supported funding for travel for spouses to accompany them on overseas trips (13%) or family travel within Australia (15%).

Since this question was asked in August 2015, support has fallen for printing of materials (down 8%), taxpayer funded car (down 7%) and allowance for spending nights in Canberra (down 7%).



## 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.