

# The Essential Report

14 March 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 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and is based on 1,022 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leaders, taxation and trust in media.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 14.

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 7/3/17	2 weeks ago 28/2/17	4 weeks ago 14/2/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	32%	34%	34%	34%	
National	3%	3%	3%	3%	
<b>Total Liberal/National</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>34.7%</b>
Greens	9%	9%	9%	9%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	11%	9%	9%	10%	
Other/Independent	6%	5%	6%	6%	13.1%
<b>2 party preferred</b>					
Liberal National	<b>47%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>50.4%</b>
Labor	<b>53%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>49.6%</b>

NB. Sample = 1,792. 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	Sep 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2107
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Strongly approve	5%	4%	12%	2%	1%	13%	6%	6%	4%	5%	6%	5%
Approve	28%	20%	55%	15%	16%	43%	39%	32%	31%	29%	31%	29%
Disapprove	30%	37%	19%	42%	36%	16%	24%	24%	27%	30%	30%	28%
Strongly disapprove	20%	29%	2%	28%	30%	7%	11%	16%	16%	16%	18%	21%
Don't know	18%	10%	12%	14%	17%	21%	21%	21%	22%	20%	16%	16%

33% (down 1% from 4 weeks ago) of respondents approve of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing as Prime Minister and 50% (up 1%) disapprove – a change in net approval rating from -15 to -17. This is Malcolm Turnbull’s worst net rating as Prime Minister.

67% (down 3%) of Liberal/National voters approve of Malcolm Turnbull’s performance with 21% (up 2%) disapproving. 24% (up 9%) of Labor voters and 17% (down 2%) of Greens voters approve of Malcolm Turnbull’s performance.

By gender, men were 36% approve/52% disapprove and women 30% approve/47% 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	Sep 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>47%</b>
Strongly approve	4%	11%	1%	2%	1%	5%	7%	4%	3%	7%	6%	6%	7%	5%
Approve	26%	49%	16%	27%	12%	26%	28%	23%	24%	27%	30%	29%	30%	25%
Disapprove	26%	18%	31%	37%	27%	17%	23%	26%	29%	22%	24%	21%	25%	27%
Strongly disapprove	23%	5%	40%	8%	41%	10%	16%	21%	18%	18%	17%	17%	19%	20%
Don't know	22%	18%	12%	26%	18%	43%	26%	25%	26%	25%	22%	25%	20%	22%

30% (no change in last 4 weeks) of respondents approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing as opposition leader and 49% (up 2%) disapprove – a change in his net rating from -17 to -19. This is Bill Shorten’s worst net rating since March 2016.

60% (down 3%) of Labor voters approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing and 23% (up 7%) disapprove.

35% of men and 25% of women approve of Bill Shorten. 50% of men and 46% 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	Sep 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017
Malcolm Turnbull	<b>38%</b>	16%	84%	12%	32%	53%	54%	48%	40%	41%	39%	39%	39%
Bill Shorten	<b>26%</b>	54%	6%	41%	15%	17%	15%	19%	29%	26%	28%	28%	25%
Don't know	<b>36%</b>	30%	10%	47%	53%	30%	31%	33%	32%	33%	33%	33%	36%

38% (down 1% in last 4weeks) of respondents think Malcolm Turnbull would make the better Prime Minister and 26% (up 1%) think Bill Shorten would make the better Prime Minister.

41% of men prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 31% prefer Bill Shorten.

34% of women prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 22% prefer Bill Shorten.



## Support for tax reforms

Q Would you support or oppose the following tax reforms to pay off debt and raise more funds for Government services and infrastructure?

	Total support	Total oppose	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know	Support Jul 2015	Support Apr 2016
Stop companies and wealthy people using legal loopholes in minimise tax payments by sending funds offshore	85%	6%	62%	23%	3%	3%	8%	na	86%
Force multinational companies to pay a minimum tax rate on Australian earnings	79%	8%	50%	29%	5%	3%	13%	79%	80%
Introduce the "Buffett Rule" – which means that very high earners cannot reduce their income tax rate below 30%.	71%	11%	40%	31%	8%	3%	18%	na	na
Increase income tax rate for high earners	64%	21%	31%	33%	14%	7%	15%	63%	65%
Remove superannuation tax concessions for high earners	58%	27%	29%	29%	15%	12%	16%	59%	62%
Remove negative gearing	41%	30%	18%	23%	19%	11%	28%	37%	39%
Remove GST exemptions (e.g. on food, education)	39%	48%	13%	26%	24%	24%	12%	33%	37%
Replace stamp duty with land tax	27%	31%	8%	19%	18%	13%	42%	26%	33%
Increase the GST	26%	63%	6%	20%	29%	34%	11%	24%	27%





There was strong majority support for stopping companies and wealthy people using legal loopholes in minimise tax payments by sending funds offshore (85%), forcing multinational companies to pay a minimum tax rate on Australian earnings (79%), introducing the “Buffett Rule” (71%) and increasing income tax rate for high earners (64%).

There was strong majority opposition to increasing the GST (63%).

There has been little change in these figures since this question was previously asked in April last year.



## Tax cuts for business

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the \$50 billion in tax cuts for medium and large businesses announced in the Federal budget?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2016
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>
Strongly approve	5%	3%	10%	1%	2%	6%
Approve	19%	16%	31%	11%	18%	22%
Disapprove	26%	30%	21%	38%	27%	23%
Strongly disapprove	20%	29%	6%	25%	28%	22%
Don't know	30%	22%	32%	25%	25%	27%

24% approve of the tax cuts for medium and large business announced in the Federal budget and 46% disapprove. This represents a 4% drop in approval since this question was previously asked in June last year.

Those most likely to disapprove were Greens voters (63%), Labor voters (59%) and aged 65+ (61%).



## Statements about tax cuts for business

Q Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Cutting the company tax rate will bring Australia's tax base into line with other nations and attract the investment we need to create more jobs.	25%	21%	44%	5%	20%
Cutting the company tax rate will simply deliver business \$50 billion more in profits - money that should be invested in schools, hospitals and other vital services.	43%	57%	25%	65%	49%
Not sure	31%	22%	31%	30%	31%

43% agree more with the statement that cutting the company tax rate will simply deliver businesses more in profits while 25% agree more that cutting the company tax rate will attract investment and deliver jobs.

Those most likely to think it will simply deliver business profits were Greens voters (65%), Labor voters (57%) and aged 65+ (50%).



## Trust in media

Q How much trust do you have in what you read or hear in the following media?

	Total a lot /some trust	A lot of trust	Some trust	Not much trust	No trust at all	Don't know	Don't use	Total a lot /some Nov 14	Total a lot /some Jun 15	Total a lot /some Feb 16
ABC TV news and current affairs	59%	17%	42%	17%	10%	4%	11%	69%	63%	66%
SBS TV news and current affairs	59%	15%	44%	17%	8%	4%	14%	66%	61%	63%
ABC radio news and current affairs	56%	15%	41%	17%	9%	3%	15%	62%	58%	62%
ABC radio talkback programs	45%	9%	36%	22%	12%	5%	18%	48%	46%	49%
News and opinion in local newspapers	45%	3%	42%	31%	12%	4%	9%	53%	50%	49%
News and opinion in daily newspapers	42%	4%	38%	31%	14%	5%	9%	50%	45%	49%
Commercial TV news and current affairs	42%	5%	37%	31%	17%	4%	5%	48%	46%	48%
Commercial radio news and current affairs	40%	4%	36%	30%	15%	4%	10%	45%	44%	46%
News and opinion websites	36%	4%	32%	34%	15%	4%	11%	42%	39%	44%
Commercial radio talkback programs	34%	4%	30%	26%	20%	4%	15%	33%	34%	34%
Internet blogs	19%	3%	16%	34%	27%	5%	16%	22%	20%	23%



Overall, trust in media has declined since this question was asked last year – however rankings remain much the same.

The most trusted media were ABC TV news and current affairs (59% a lot/some trust), SBS TV news and current affairs (59%) and ABC radio news and current affairs (56%).

The least trusted were internet blogs (19%) and commercial radio talkback programs (34%).

The main changes since February last year have been for news and opinion websites (down 8%), ABC TV news and current affairs (down 7%) and news and opinion in daily newspapers (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.

