

The Essential Report

4 April 2017



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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 31st March to 3rd April 2017 and is based on 1,005 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the Racial Discrimination Act, carbon emissions, tax deductibility of donations, donations to political parties and activist groups, interests represented by parties and breaking the law.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 13.

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 28/3/17	2 weeks ago 21/3/17	4 weeks ago 7/3/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	35%	32%	31%	34%	
National	2%	3%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	37%	35%	34%	37%	42.0%
Labor	36%	37%	37%	37%	34.7%
Greens	10%	10%	9%	9%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	4%	3%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	8%	8%	10%	9%	
Other/Independent	6%	7%	6%	5%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	47%	46%	45%	47%	50.4%
Labor	53%	54%	55%	53%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,797. 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 Act

Q The Racial Discrimination Act makes it an offence to “intimidate, humiliate, offend or insult” someone because of their race or ethnicity. It has been proposed to replace the words “humiliate, offend or insult” with “harass”. This means it will be unlawful to “harass or intimidate” someone because of their race or ethnicity but not unlawful to “humiliate, offend or insult”. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
I strongly support this change to the Racial Discrimination Act	28%	27%	35%	24%	32%
I strongly oppose this change to the Racial Discrimination Act	27%	31%	20%	55%	25%
I don't have strong opinion on whether the Racial Discrimination Act should be changed or not	28%	27%	31%	13%	30%
Not sure	17%	15%	13%	8%	13%

55% say they have a strong opinion on changes to the Racial Discrimination Act. 28% strongly support the changes and 27% strongly oppose the changes. 28% don't have strong opinion either way and 17% are not sure.

Those most likely to strongly support changes are Liberal/National voters (35%) and aged 65+ (37%).

Those most likely to strongly oppose changes are Greens voters (55%) and university educated (34%)



Carbon emissions trading scheme

- Q Do you support or oppose introducing a carbon emissions trading scheme in the electricity sector to provide more incentive for investing in renewable energy and low-carbon electricity?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total support	51%	61%	46%	85%	41%
Total oppose	20%	13%	27%	4%	38%
Strongly support	21%	27%	14%	64%	12%
Support	30%	34%	32%	21%	29%
Oppose	12%	9%	18%	3%	16%
Strongly oppose	8%	4%	9%	1%	22%
Don't know	29%	27%	28%	11%	20%

51% support introducing a carbon emissions trading scheme in the electricity sector and 20% oppose.

Those most likely to support a carbon emissions trading scheme were Labor voters (61%), Greens voters (85%) and university educated (59%).

Those most likely to oppose were Liberal/National voters (27%) and aged 55+ (31%).

Tax deductibility of donations

Q Do you think donations to the following groups should be tax deductible or not tax deductible?

	Should be tax deductible	Should not be tax deductible	Don't know	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Medical research organisations	76%	12%	12%	78%	80%	72%	82%
Social welfare organisations	66%	19%	15%	72%	67%	73%	63%
Animal welfare organisations	66%	21%	13%	68%	66%	71%	70%
Public libraries, museums and art galleries	60%	26%	14%	62%	60%	64%	63%
Human rights groups	55%	29%	17%	63%	51%	70%	47%
Environment groups	53%	31%	16%	61%	48%	69%	50%
Overseas aid organisations	52%	32%	16%	56%	56%	58%	44%
Churches and religious groups	36%	51%	13%	37%	41%	20%	33%
Groups that campaign on social issues	34%	44%	22%	45%	23%	47%	28%

A majority favour tax deductibility of donations to all listed groups except for churches and religious groups (36%) and groups that campaign on social issues (34%).

Those most favoured for tax deductibility of donations were medical research organisations (76%), social welfare organisations (66%) and animal welfare organisations (66%).

Labor and Greens voters were more likely to approve of tax deductibility for social welfare groups, human rights groups, environment groups and groups that campaign on social issues.

Donations to political parties

Q Should political parties be allowed to receive donations from each of the following?

	Should be allowed	Should not be allowed	Don't know	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Individual Australian voters	47%	39%	15%	44%	54%	49%	51%
Australian companies	30%	55%	15%	26%	42%	24%	27%
Professional associations	27%	57%	16%	24%	34%	25%	25%
Unions	21%	64%	15%	24%	20%	27%	19%
Energy companies	20%	66%	14%	17%	30%	15%	14%
Mining companies	18%	67%	15%	16%	27%	9%	15%
Property developers	16%	70%	14%	15%	23%	10%	13%
Casinos	15%	73%	12%	12%	22%	10%	12%
Foreign companies	13%	74%	13%	12%	17%	13%	11%

A majority are opposed to all donations to political parties with the exception of donations from individual Australian voters (47% allow/39% not allow).

At least 7 in 10 were opposed to donations from foreign companies (74% not allow), casinos (73%) and property developers (70%).

Liberal/National voters were more likely to support all forms of donations except those from unions.

Donations to activist groups

Q Do you think activist groups – such as GetUp, which campaigns on social issues - should be allowed or not allowed to accept donations from foreign organisations or individuals?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Should be allowed to accept foreign donations	31%	39%	28%	41%	26%
Should not be allowed to accept foreign donations	41%	42%	44%	29%	47%
Don't know	28%	20%	28%	30%	27%

31% think that activist groups should be allowed to accept donations from foreign organisations or individuals and 41% think they should not be allowed.

Those most likely to think they should be allowed were Labor voters (39%, Greens voters (41%) and aged under 35 (44%).

Those most likely to think they should not be allowed were aged 65+ (68%) and “other” voters (47%).



Interests Represented by Parties

Q Which political party do you think best represents the interests of –

	Labor	Liberal	Greens	Don't know	Net (Liberal – Labor)	Net Sep 2015
Big business	10%	63%	2%	24%	+53	+52
Working people on high incomes	12%	62%	2%	24%	+50	+48
Small businesses and self-employed	28%	40%	4%	28%	+12	+15
Rural and regional Australians	25%	30%	13%	33%	+5	+8
The next generation of Australians	24%	26%	14%	36%	+2	+5
Indigenous people	26%	17%	16%	42%	-9	-1
Ethnic communities	27%	17%	17%	39%	-10	-2
Families with young children	39%	25%	6%	30%	-14	-13
Students	33%	19%	12%	36%	-14	-16
Working people on average incomes	42%	27%	5%	26%	-15	-16
Pensioners	40%	20%	6%	34%	-20	-15
People on welfare	42%	17%	9%	31%	-25	-23
Working people on low incomes	49%	16%	7%	28%	-33	-23

The Labor Party is considered the party which best represents the interests of families with young children, students, working people on low and average incomes, people on welfare and pensioners. The Liberal Party is considered substantially better at representing the interests of people on high incomes, big business and small business and self-employed.

Since this question was asked in September 2015, the Labor Party has improved its position against the Liberal Party on representing the interests of indigenous people (up 8%), ethnic communities (up 8%), pensioners (up 5%) and working people on low incomes (up 10%).



Breaking the law

Q Do you believe it is ever justified to break the law?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Sometimes justified to break the law	37%	38%	34%	44%	45%
Never justified to break the law	50%	51%	56%	47%	44%
Don't know	13%	11%	10%	10%	11%

37% believe it is sometimes justified to break the law and 50% think it is never justified to break the law.

Those more likely to think it is sometimes justified to break the law were Greens voters (44%), other party voters (45%) and aged under 35 (42%),

Those more likely to think it is never justified to break the law were Liberal/National voters (56%) and aged 55+ (62%).



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.