

The Essential Report

12 September 2017



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Prepared By: Essential Research

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AMSRS 

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 8th to 11th September 2017 and is based on 1,026 respondents.

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

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 12.

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 5/9/17	2 weeks ago 29/8/17	4 weeks ago 15/8/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	33%	33%	34%	34%	
National	3%	4%	3%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	36%	36%	37%	37%	42.0%
Labor	37%	37%	36%	39%	34.7%
Greens	10%	10%	10%	9%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	2%	2%	3%	2%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	9%	8%	8%	8%	
Other/Independent	6%	6%	6%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	46%	47%	47%	46%	50.4%
Labor	54%	53%	53%	54%	49.6%

NB. Sample = 1,826. 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.

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	Aug 2017	July 2017	June 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	June 2016	Dec 2015
Total Approve	41%	21%	75%	23%	28%	38%	37%	36%	33%	34%	38%	56%
Total Disapprove	46%	68%	16%	62%	65%	46%	49%	45%	50%	46%	40%	23%
Strongly approve	7%	4%	16%	1%	1%	4%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%	13%
Approve	34%	17%	59%	22%	27%	34%	31%	31%	28%	29%	32%	43%
Disapprove	28%	36%	14%	36%	41%	27%	30%	28%	30%	30%	24%	16%
Strongly disapprove	18%	32%	2%	26%	24%	19%	19%	17%	20%	16%	16%	7%
Don't know	14%	11%	10%	15%	7%	16%	15%	19%	18%	20%	21%	21%

41% approved of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing as Prime Minister (up 3% from last month), and 46% disapproved (no change) – a change in net approval rating from -8 to -5 (his best net rating since October last year).

75% (up 2%) of Liberal/National voters approved of the job Malcolm Turnbull is doing, compared to 21% of ALP voters and 23% of Greens voters.

By gender, men were 45% approve/45% disapprove and women 36% approve/46% disapprove.



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	Aug 2017	July 2017	June 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	Dec 2015	Dec 2014
Total Approve	36%	65%	23%	40%	17%	35%	36%	34%	30%	35%	27%	35%
Total Disapprove	47%	21%	65%	37%	71%	42%	44%	43%	49%	38%	47%	39%
Strongly approve	7%	15%	3%	9%	1%	6%	6%	5%	4%	6%	4%	7%
Approve	29%	50%	20%	31%	16%	29%	30%	29%	26%	29%	23%	28%
Disapprove	25%	17%	31%	28%	32%	24%	24%	28%	26%	21%	26%	23%
Strongly disapprove	22%	4%	34%	9%	39%	18%	20%	15%	23%	17%	21%	16%
Don't know	17%	14%	11%	23%	13%	22%	20%	23%	22%	25%	25%	26%

36% approved of the job Bill Shorten is doing as Opposition Leader (up 1% from last month), and 47% disapproved (down 5%) - a change in net approval rating from -7 to -11.

65% (no change) of ALP voters approved of the job Bill Shorten is doing, compared to 40% of Greens voters and 23% of Liberal/National voters.

By gender, men were 39% approve/50% disapprove and women 34% approve/43% disapprove.



Preferred 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	Aug 2017	July 2017	June 2017	Mar 2017	Dec 2016	Jun 2016	Dec 2015
Malcolm Turnbull	43%	18%	79%	25%	39%	41%	41%	39%	38%	39%	40%	54%
Bill Shorten	29%	62%	7%	42%	14%	27%	27%	26%	26%	28%	29%	15%
Don't know	28%	21%	14%	33%	47%	32%	31%	34%	36%	33%	32%	31%

43% thought that Malcolm Turnbull would make a better Prime Minister (up 2% from last month), and 29% thought Bill Shorten would be better (up 2%). 28% did not know who would make a better Prime Minister.

The results were split by party, with 79% of Liberal/National voters saying that Malcolm Turnbull would be a better Prime Minister, and 62% of Labor voters saying Bill Shorten would.

Greens voters preferred Bill Shorten (42%) to Turnbull (25%).

47% of men prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 30% prefer Bill Shorten.

39% of women prefer Malcolm Turnbull and 28% prefer Bill Shorten.



Actions on energy

Q Would you approve or disapprove of the Government taking the following actions to ensure affordable, reliable and clean energy for Australian households and businesses?

	Total approve	Total dis-approve	Strongly approve	Approve	Dis-approve	Strongly dis-approve	Don't know
Regulate electricity and gas prices	86%	5%	39%	47%	3%	2%	8%
Increase investment in renewable energy and smart solutions like energy storage	81%	10%	40%	41%	6%	4%	10%
Restrict gas exports to make more gas available in Australia	77%	9%	34%	43%	7%	2%	14%
Clean up existing coal power stations	77%	10%	29%	48%	7%	3%	13%
Force energy companies to help their customers to use less power	65%	21%	25%	40%	16%	5%	15%
Buy back ownership of coal-fired power stations from private companies	56%	22%	21%	35%	14%	8%	23%
Stop coal-fired power stations from closing down	51%	30%	19%	32%	18%	12%	20%
Allow more onshore gas exploration	48%	26%	15%	33%	17%	9%	25%
Build or subsidise new coal-fired power stations	48%	34%	19%	29%	17%	17%	18%



There was substantial support for all listed actions to ensure affordable, reliable and clean energy.

The ones with highest approvals were to regulate electricity and gas prices (86%), increase investment in renewable energy and smart solutions like energy storage (81%), restrict gas exports to make more gas available in Australia (77%) and clean up existing coal power stations (77%).

Although slightly less than majority approval, allowing more onshore gas exploration (48%) and building/subsidizing new coal-fired power stations (48%) were much more likely to be approved than disapproved.



Renewables vs fossil fuels

Q As far as you know, which energy source - renewable energy like solar and wind OR fossil fuels like coal and gas - is better for each of the following?

	Renewable energy better	Fossil fuels better	No difference	Don't know	May 2015 Renewable	May 2015 Fossil fuels
The environment	73%	8%	10%	10%	69%	5%
Electricity costs	41%	27%	14%	18%	47%	18%
The economy	40%	28%	14%	18%	42%	20%
Jobs	34%	26%	20%	20%	37%	20%

Overall, respondents think that renewable energy is better for the environment (73%), electricity costs (41%), the economy (40%) and jobs (34%). Since this question was asked in May 2015, main changes are an increase for renewables being better for the environment (from 69% to 73%) and a decline for renewables being better for electricity costs (from 47% to 41%).

There were few substantial differences across demographic groups – other than for men who were more likely to believe fossil fuels were better for the economy (36%), jobs (32%) and electricity costs (33%).

Liberal/National voters were more likely to think fossil fuels are better for the economy (39%), jobs (37%) and electricity costs (35%).



Lower energy prices

Q Which party do you think would be more likely to deliver lower energy prices?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
A Coalition Government	19%	5%	43%	7%	11%
A Labor Government	28%	60%	10%	32%	10%
No difference	35%	23%	35%	34%	64%
Don't know	18%	12%	12%	27%	15%

28% think that a Labor Government would be more likely to deliver lower energy prices and 19% think a Coalition Government would deliver lower prices. However, more than half either thought there would be no difference (35%) or could not give an opinion (18%).

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.

