

The Essential Report

27 June 2019



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Prepared By: Essential Research

Data Supplied by:



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 Qualtrics. The survey was conducted online from 19th June 2019 to 23rd June 2019 and is based on 1,079 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the Government's tax policy, trust in media sources, issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and awareness of NAIDOC Week.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix at the end of the report.

Note that due to rounding, not all tables necessarily total 100% and subtotals may also vary.

Preferred Prime Minister

Q Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister out of Scott Morrison and Anthony Albanese?

	Jun'19	May'19	Jul'16	Oct'13	Sep'10
Prime Minister	43% (Morrison)	39% (Morrison)	39% (Turnbull)	41% (Abbott)	47% (Gillard)
Opposition	25% (Albanese)	32% (Shorten)	31% (Shorten)	22% (Shorten)	35% (Abbott)
Don't know	32%	28%	30%	37%	18%

- Support for Scott Morrison as PM has risen since before the Federal Election, from 39% to 43% while Albanese has slightly lower support than Bill Shorten did before the Federal Election (25% to 32%).
- However, it may be too soon to judge Albanese's performance, as the number who replied 'Don't know' has also crept up (from 28% to 32%).
- Morrison received strong support (80%) from Coalition voters, while Labor voters were less sure of Albanese as PM (with 34% selecting 'Don't know', double the number compared to Coalition voters – 17%). 40% of Other voters did not know who they would prefer.

Performance of Scott Morrison

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job Scott Morrison is doing as Prime Minister?

	Total	May'19	Jul'16 (Turnbull)	Sep'13 (Abbott)	Sep'10 (Abbott)
NET: Approve	48%	43%	37%	41%	43%
NET: Disapprove	36%	39%	48%	36%	37%
Don't know	16%	18%	16%	23%	19%

	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	4%	31%	0%	9%
Approve	20%	54%	23%	33%
Disapprove	35%	5%	31%	27%
Strongly disapprove	29%	1%	29%	19%
Not sure	13%	8%	16%	14%
NET: Approve	24%	86%	23%	41%
NET: Disapprove	64%	6%	61%	45%

- The proportion who strongly approve Scott Morrison's performance has increased since before the election from 43% to 48%, while the proportion who disapprove has decreased from 39% to 36%.
- Very few Greens voters and Labor voters strongly approve of his performance (0% and 4%). Overall approval for Morrison is over three times as strong among Coalition voters as it is for Greens or Labor voters (86% to 24% and 23% respectively).



Performance of Anthony Albanese

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job Anthony Albanese is doing as Opposition Leader?

	Total	May'19 (Shorten)	Jul'16 (Shorten)	Nov'13 (Shorten)	Sep'10 (Gillard)
NET: Approve	35%	38%	39%	31%	45%
NET: Disapprove	25%	44%	41%	27%	37%
Don't know	39%	18%	20%	43%	19%

	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	15%	4%	2%	3%
Approve	35%	27%	39%	17%
Disapprove	12%	22%	13%	23%
Strongly disapprove	3%	11%	2%	21%
Not sure	34%	36%	44%	36%
NET: Approve	50%	31%	41%	20%
NET: Disapprove	16%	33%	15%	44%

- Albanese faces a similar approval rate (35% to 38%) but lower disapproval (25% to 44%) than Bill Shorten received in May 2019.
- However, the difference has mostly gone towards an increase in those selecting 'Don't know' (39% to 18%), suggesting he hasn't been Opposition Leader long enough for voters to decide.
- More than a third of Labor, Coalition and Other voters were not sure if they approved or disapproved of his performance (the number reached 44% for Greens voters).



Attitudes to Proposed Stage 3 Tax Cuts.

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	NET: Strongly agree/somewhat agree	NET: Strongly disagree/somewhat disagree	Don't know
Maintaining funding for education and health is more important than cutting taxes for people earning more than \$200,000	78%	12%	10%
I think people earning over \$150,000 should pay a higher rate of tax than those earning \$40,000	74%	17%	8%
A \$95 billion tax cut for high income earners will make it impossible for government to deliver essential services	57%	25%	18%
I support reducing taxes by \$11,000 per year for people earning over \$200,000	32%	55%	13%

- Over three-quarters of voters favour funding for education and health over tax cuts for high earners.
- Those most likely to say they supported reducing taxes for high income earners were also younger (40% of 18-34 year olds strongly agreeing) and wealthier (41% of high income earners strongly agreeing). Retirees were less likely to support the policy (66% net disagreeing).



Attitudes to Proposed Stage 3 Tax Cuts

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? NET: Agree

	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Maintaining funding for education and health is more important than cutting taxes for people earning more than \$200,000	78%	85%	74%	89%	76%
I think people earning over \$150,000 should pay a higher rate of tax than those earning \$40,000	74%	83%	68%	85%	74%
A \$95 billion tax cut for high income earners will make it impossible for government to deliver essential services	57%	65%	52%	63%	60%
I support reducing taxes by \$11,000 per year for people earning over \$200,000	32%	27%	43%	23%	25%
Base (n)	1,097	352	392	97	163

- Labor and Greens voters were more likely to agree with statement ‘Maintaining funding for education and health is more important than cutting taxes for those earning more than \$200,000’.
- They were also more likely to agree that ‘People earning over \$150,000 should pay a higher rate of tax than those earning \$40,000’, and that ‘A \$95 billion tax cut for high income earners will make it impossible for government to deliver essential services’.
- Coalition voters were more likely to agree with ‘I support reducing taxes by \$11,000 per year for people earning over \$200,000’, with 43% strongly agreeing compared to 27% of Labor voters, 23% of Greens voters and 25% of Other voters.



Trust in Media Outlets

Q How much trust do you have in what you read or hear in the following media? NET: A lot of trust/Some trust

	June 2019	Oct'18
SBS TV news and current affairs	60%	61%
ABC radio news and current affairs	58%	57%
Commercial TV news and current affairs	47%	48%
News and opinion in daily newspapers	46%	44%
News and opinion in local newspapers	46%	47%
ABC radio talkback programs	45%	44%
Commercial radio news and current affairs	44%	44%
News and opinion websites	37%	39%
Commercial radio talkback programs	34%	35%
Internet blogs	19%	17%

- A majority of people had at least some trust in SBS TV news (60%) and ABC radio news (57%), while none of the other sources gained above 50%.
- There was little change from last year in the levels of trust recorded for each media source.
- There were few significant differences by age, gender, income or highest level of education attained.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues

Q What is your view about the following issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and whether they should be a priority for the Government to address?

	Support, and should be a priority	Support, but not a high priority	Don't support	Not sure	NET: Support	NET: Support (Feb'18)
Meet the 'Close the Gap' indigenous health, education and employment targets	36%	38%	15%	12%	74%	75%
Include aboriginal recognition in the constitution	33%	37%	18%	12%	70%	70%
Establish an indigenous 'voice' to advise the Parliament	29%	37%	21%	13%	66%	68%
Agree a treaty with indigenous Australia	26%	33%	25%	16%	59%	59%
Australia to become a republic	17%	26%	38%	19%	43%	46%
Change the date of Australia Day	12%	18%	58%	12%	30%	27%
Change the words of the National Anthem	11%	22%	53%	14%	33%	N/A

- Voters supported meeting the 'Close the Gap' targets (74%), inclusion of aboriginal recognition in the constitution (70%), and establishment of an Indigenous 'voice' to advise Parliament (66%), with around three in ten voters saying each should be a high priority for the Government to address.
- Coalition voters were less likely than other voters to say they supported all of these issues and they should be a priority, whereas Greens voters were more likely to say so.
- Changing the date of Australia Day and the words of the National Anthem were opposed by a majority of voters.
- Net support for all of the issues varied little from when the same question was asked in February 2018.

Perceptions of change in the standard of living for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Q In your opinion, over the past 10 years, have things got better or worse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia, or have things stayed much the same?

	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
A lot better	18%	14%	24%	3%	23%
A little better	28%	26%	35%	23%	28%
Stayed much the same	36%	42%	31%	51%	25%
A little worse	5%	6%	3%	9%	7%
A lot worse	3%	3%	1%	4%	6%
Don't know	10%	10%	6%	10%	11%
Base (n)	1,097	352	392	97	163

- Nearly half (46%) believed that things had got at least a little better for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples over the last 10 years.
- Over a third stated that in their opinion, conditions had stayed much the same for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders over the past 10 years, while only 8% believed conditions had got worse.

Indigenous Recognition Referendum

- Q If a referendum was held to include recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution, would you vote for or against?

	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other	Sep'16	Jul'15	Aug'14
Vote for	57%	68%	52%	75%	50%	58%	61%	58%
Vote against	18%	15%	23%	6%	26%	15%	16%	10%
Don't know	25%	18%	26%	19%	25%	28%	23%	32%
Base (n)	1,097	352	392	97	163	1,005	1,006	1,008

- Over half (57%) of voters said they would vote for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution. This is three times as many that said they would vote against.
- A quarter said they did not know how they would vote in such a referendum.
- Support and opposition to this issue has remained relatively constant since 2014.

Awareness of NAIDOC Week

Q NAIDOC Week is a national observance starting from the first Sunday in July. NAIDOC Week celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Before today, were you aware of NAIDOC Week?

	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Yes	58%	62%	57%	71%	62%
No	34%	32%	38%	21%	35%
Don't know	8%	7%	5%	8%	3%
Base (n)	1,097	352	392	97	163

Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a fortnightly online omnibus conducted by Qualtrics.

Every two weeks, the team at Essential considers 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 current media and social issues.

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 online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants. 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 staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour.