

# The Essential Report

16 September 2019



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**Prepared By:** Essential Research

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**Data Supplied by:**



**AMSRS** 

Our researchers are members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society.



## About this poll

This report summarises the results of a fortnightly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The survey was conducted online from 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and is based on 1,093 respondents.

This week's report includes questions about the performance of Scott Morrison and Anthony Albanese in their respective roles, preferred Prime Minister, the government's policy of indefinite offshore detention for asylum seekers and refugees, awareness of and attitudes to the Climate Strikes, perception of the Medivac legislation and support for relaxing the lockout laws (NSW only).

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.

## Performance of Scott Morrison

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

	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19	Jun'19	Mar'19
NET: Approve	<b>49%</b>	48%	48%	48%	43%
NET: Disapprove	<b>36%</b>	37%	34%	36%	39%
Don't know	<b>15%</b>	16%	18%	18%	18%
Base (n)	<b>1,093</b>	1,096	1,091	1,099	1,090

	TOTAL	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	<b>14%</b>	6%	28%	5%	9%
Approve	<b>36%</b>	25%	55%	17%	27%
Disapprove	<b>20%</b>	27%	8%	30%	31%
Strong disapprove	<b>16%</b>	29%	1%	32%	22%
Don't know	<b>15%</b>	13%	8%	16%	10%
<b>NET: Approve</b>	<b>49%</b>	31%	83%	23%	36%
<b>NET: Disapprove</b>	<b>36%</b>	56%	9%	61%	54%
Base (n)	<b>1,093</b>	327	392	98	161

- Just under half of Australians (49%) approve of the job Scott Morrison is doing as PM. This is consistent with the results over the last three months (Aug'19, Jul'19 and Jun'19, all 48%) and 5pts higher than before the start of the Federal election campaign in March (43%).
- Morrison retains his high approval among Coalition voters (83%). Approval was also high among male (53%), university educated (57%), high income (57%) participants, and those with dependent children (57%).



## Performance of Anthony Albanese

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

	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19	Jun'19	Mar'19 (Shorten)
NET: Approve	<b>36%</b>	38%	39%	35%	38%
NET: Disapprove	<b>31%</b>	29%	24%	25%	44%
Don't know	<b>33%</b>	33%	37%	39%	18%
Base (n)	<b>1,093</b>	1,096	1,091	1,099	1,090

	TOTAL	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	<b>6%</b>	11%	3%	8%	8%
Approve	<b>30%</b>	45%	25%	26%	28%
Disapprove	<b>22%</b>	11%	32%	21%	24%
Strong disapprove	<b>9%</b>	2%	15%	4%	16%
Don't know	<b>33%</b>	30%	25%	41%	25%
<b>NET: Approve</b>	<b>36%</b>	56%	28%	34%	35%
<b>NET: Disapprove</b>	<b>31%</b>	14%	47%	25%	39%
Base (n)	<b>1,093</b>	327	392	98	161

- Approval for Anthony Albanese remains steady in September at 36% but a high proportion of participants continue to be unsure about Albanese's performance with 33% saying don't know (down 6pts from June).
- This uncertainty is also evident among Labor supporters, with 30% still selecting Don't know.



## Preferred Prime Minister

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

	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19	Jun'19	May'19	Mar'19
Scott Morrison	<b>46%</b>	44%	44%	43%	39%	44%
Anthony Albanese	<b>25%</b>	28%	26%	25%	32% (Shorten)	31% (Shorten)
Don't know	<b>29%</b>	28%	31%	32%	28%	26%
Base (n)	<b>1,093</b>	1,096	1,091	1,099	1,210	1,090

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Scott Morrison	<b>46%</b>	48%	44%	41%	44%	52%
Anthony Albanese	<b>25%</b>	32%	19%	29%	23%	24%
Don't know	<b>29%</b>	20%	37%	29%	33%	24%
Base (n)	<b>1,093</b>	545	548	348	360	385

- 46% of the public believe Scott Morrison makes the better PM out of the two major party leaders. This is consistent with previous months (August to June), when 44% and 43% considered the current PM to be the better choice.
- One quarter (25%) believe Albanese would make the better PM, a 3 percentage point drop from last month (28% in July).



## Policy of indefinite offshore detention of asylum seekers and refugees

Q To what extent do you support or oppose the Australian Government's policy of indefinite offshore detention of asylum seekers and refugees?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly support	<b>25%</b>	30%	20%	13%	23%	36%
Somewhat support	<b>27%</b>	29%	25%	33%	27%	22%
Somewhat oppose	<b>15%</b>	15%	15%	18%	13%	14%
Strongly oppose	<b>17%</b>	16%	17%	18%	16%	15%
Unsure	<b>17%</b>	10%	23%	18%	20%	13%
NET: Support	<b>52%</b>	59%	45%	46%	51%	58%
NET: Oppose	<b>31%</b>	31%	32%	36%	30%	29%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	545	548	348	360	385



	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Independent / Other
Strongly support	<b>25%</b>	14%	35%	8%	39%
Somewhat support	<b>27%</b>	27%	32%	24%	25%
Somewhat oppose	<b>15%</b>	20%	12%	17%	11%
Strongly oppose	<b>17%</b>	25%	7%	39%	14%
Unsure	<b>17%</b>	15%	14%	13%	10%
NET: Support	<b>52%</b>	40%	67%	32%	64%
NET: Oppose	<b>31%</b>	44%	19%	55%	26%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	327	392	98	161

- Half of participants (52%) support the government’s policy of indefinite offshore detention of asylum seekers and refugees, with a quarter (25%) strongly supporting this policy.
- Roughly two-thirds of Coalition (67%) or independent/other (64%) voters support this policy – along with three-fifths of participants on high income (61%).
- Labor (44%) and Greens (55%) voters are more likely to oppose this policy.





## Medivac Bill

Q Earlier this year, the Federal Parliament passed legislation to allow doctors, not politicians, to determine the appropriate medical treatment offered to people in offshore detention. This may include medical evacuation (Medivac) transfer to Australia if necessary.

Which of the following statements most closely aligns with your views of this legislation?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
This legislation does not go far enough to provide humane treatment for people in offshore detention	<b>23%</b>	22%	23%	31%	18%	21%
This legislation strikes a balance between strong borders and humane treatment for people in offshore detention	<b>41%</b>	45%	37%	43%	42%	39%
This legislation will weaken our borders and result in boats arriving in Australia as they have in the past	<b>21%</b>	20%	21%	10%	19%	31%
Unsure	<b>16%</b>	13%	19%	17%	21%	9%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	545	548	348	360	385



	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Independent / Other
This legislation does not go far enough to provide humane treatment for people in offshore detention	<b>23%</b>	32%	12%	50%	21%
This legislation strikes a balance between strong borders and humane treatment for people in offshore detention	<b>41%</b>	42%	49%	32%	38%
This legislation will weaken our borders and result in boats arriving in Australia as they have in the past	<b>21%</b>	13%	27%	7%	33%
Unsure	<b>16%</b>	13%	12%	11%	9%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	327	392	98	161

	Sep'19	Feb'19
This legislation does not go far enough to provide humane treatment for people in offshore detention	<b>23%</b>	15%
This legislation strikes a balance between strong borders and humane treatment for people in offshore detention	<b>41%</b>	38%
This legislation will weaken our borders and result in boats arriving in Australia as they have in the past	<b>21%</b>	30%
Unsure	<b>16%</b>	16%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	1,085



- Two-fifths of participants (41%) believe that the Medivac legislation strikes a balance between strong borders and humane treatment for people in offshore detention – the same level as in Feb'19 (38%).
- The perception that the legislation will weaken our borders and result in boats arriving in Australia as they have in the past has decreased since Feb'19 to now one-fifth (now 21%, was 30%) of participants. At the same time the belief that this legislation does not go far enough to provide humane treatment for people in offshore detention has increased from 15% in Feb'19 to 23%.
- More Coalition voters (49%), men (45%) and participants living in capital cities (44%) believe that this legislation strikes a balance between strong borders and humane treatment for people in offshore detention.
- Whereas, Labor (32%) and Greens (50%) voters, younger (18-34, 31%) and university educated participants (31%) believe this does not go far enough to provide humane treatment for people in offshore detention.



## Awareness of Climate Strikes

- Q On Friday 20th September, Student-led strikes are planned to take place across Australia and internationally, to push for governments to act on climate change and move towards renewable energy.

People of all ages will refuse to attend school and/or work to participate in these peaceful protests.

Before today, were you aware these protests were happening?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes	<b>35%</b>	41%	30%	35%	29%	42%
No	<b>54%</b>	49%	58%	52%	58%	51%
Unsure	<b>11%</b>	10%	12%	13%	14%	7%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	545	548	348	360	385



	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Independent / Other
Yes	<b>35%</b>	38%	36%	45%	39%
No	<b>54%</b>	55%	55%	44%	50%
Unsure	<b>11%</b>	8%	9%	11%	11%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	327	392	98	161

- More than half (54%) of participants were not aware that Climate Strikes would be occurring on 20<sup>th</sup> September.
- Participants over 55 years old are more likely to be aware of the Climate Strikes (42%), as are university educated participants (42%).



## Intended Involvement with the Climate Strikes

Q Which of the following best describes your intended involvement with the protests?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Aware of protests & intend to participate in the protest	<b>6%</b>	7%	4%	9%	6%	2%
Aware of protests & intend to support the protest in some other way (e.g. donating, posting on social media)	<b>11%</b>	13%	9%	19%	8%	6%
Aware of protests & have children or other family members who intend to participate in the protest	<b>4%</b>	5%	4%	5%	5%	3%
Aware of protests & will not be involved	<b>18%</b>	21%	16%	7%	15%	31%
Unaware of protests / Unaware	<b>65%</b>	59%	70%	65%	71%	58%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	545	548	348	360	385



	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Independent / Other
Aware of protests & intend to participate in the protest	<b>6%</b>	7%	3%	18%	6%
Aware of protests & intend to support the protest in some other way (e.g. donating, posting on social media)	<b>11%</b>	14%	7%	20%	14%
Aware of protests & have children or other family members who intend to participate in the protest	<b>4%</b>	5%	2%	8%	7%
Aware of protests & will not be involved	<b>18%</b>	15%	26%	8%	20%
Unaware of protests / Unaware	<b>65%</b>	62%	64%	55%	16%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	327	392	98	161

- 5% of participants surveyed will be participating in the Climate Strikes on 20<sup>th</sup> September, another 11% will be supporting the strikes in some other way.
- 18-34 year olds were more likely to participate in the protest (9%) or support it in some other way (19%).
- Greens voters are most likely to protest themselves (18%) or support the protesters in some other way (20%) as are high income earners (11% and 18% respectively).
- Those with a university education or in paid employment are also most likely to attend the protest (12% and 8% respectively), support the protesters (17% and 16%) or have family members/children who intend to participate (7% and 6%).
- 31% of participants over 55s and 26% of Coalition voters do not intend to support the Climate Strikes in any way.



## Support for Climate Strikes

Q Regardless of your intentions to participate, to what extent do you support or oppose these strikes to push for governments to act on climate change and move towards renewable energy?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly support	<b>26%</b>	29%	22%	37%	22%	19%
Somewhat support	<b>30%</b>	27%	33%	37%	31%	24%
Somewhat oppose	<b>15%</b>	16%	15%	9%	17%	18%
Strongly oppose	<b>15%</b>	19%	11%	3%	11%	29%
Unsure	<b>14%</b>	10%	18%	14%	19%	10%
NET: Support	<b>55%</b>	56%	55%	74%	53%	43%
NET: Oppose	<b>30%</b>	34%	26%	13%	28%	47%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	545	548	348	360	385





	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Independent / Other
Strongly support	<b>26%</b>	36%	11%	62%	26%
Somewhat support	<b>30%</b>	32%	31%	29%	26%
Somewhat oppose	<b>15%</b>	10%	23%	2%	17%
Strongly oppose	<b>15%</b>	7%	25%	1%	21%
Unsure	<b>14%</b>	15%	10%	6%	9%
NET: Support	<b>55%</b>	68%	41%	91%	52%
NET: Oppose	<b>30%</b>	17%	49%	3%	38%
Base	<b>1,093</b>	327	392	98	161

- 55% of participants support using strike action to push for governments to act on climate change and move towards renewable energy.
- Greens voters (91%), 18-34 year olds (74%), Labor voters (68%), with a university education (67%) and those in paid employment (69%) were more likely to agree with this statement.
- Almost half (48%) of those with a secondary school education disagreed with this statement, along with 43% of participants over 55 years of age and 41% of Coalition voters.



## Lockout Law – NSW only

Q NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian has announced her government is looking at relaxing or repealing the lockout laws in the Sydney CBD. The current laws mean that people must be in venues before 1.30am and last drinks are served at 3am.

Do you support or oppose relaxing the lockout laws in the Sydney CBD?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly support	<b>25%</b>	24%	26%	30%	24%	22%
Somewhat support	<b>33%</b>	39%	27%	37%	29%	32%
Somewhat oppose	<b>13%</b>	9%	16%	11%	16%	12%
Strongly oppose	<b>17%</b>	18%	16%	6%	18%	25%
Unsure	<b>12%</b>	10%	15%	16%	13%	9%
NET: Support	<b>58%</b>	63%	53%	67%	53%	54%
NET: Oppose	<b>30%</b>	28%	32%	18%	34%	37%
Base	<b>352</b>	178	174	98	135	119



	Total	Federal Voting Intention				Location	
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Independent / Other	Capital City	Non-Capital City
Strongly support	<b>25%</b>	26%	25%	36%	26%	25%	24%
Somewhat support	<b>33%</b>	30%	34%	32%	37%	33%	32%
Somewhat oppose	<b>13%</b>	13%	13%	11%	14%	12%	14%
Strongly oppose	<b>17%</b>	17%	21%	11%	17%	16%	19%
Unsure	<b>12%</b>	13%	6%	10%	6%	13%	10%
NET: Support	<b>58%</b>	57%	60%	68%	63%	58%	56%
NET: Oppose	<b>30%</b>	30%	34%	22%	31%	28%	33%
Base	<b>352</b>	97	120	35	60	226	126

- Three-fifths of participants in New South Wales (58%) support relaxing the lockout laws in the Sydney CBD; with more support from those in paid employment (68%).



## Appendix: Household income definitions\*

NET: Lower Income	Up to \$51,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
NET: Mid Income	\$52,000 to \$103,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
NET: High Income	More than \$104,000 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)

## 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 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.

