

The Essential Report

4 November 2014





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Prepared by: Essential Research

Data supplied:



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 October to 3rd November 2014 and is based on 1,002 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on climate change, deregulation of university fees, the NDIS and increasing the GST.

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 politics – 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?

Q. If don't know -Well which party are you currently leaning to?

Sample size = 1,776 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 7/10/14	2 weeks ago 21/10/14	Last week 28/10/14	This week 4/11/14
Liberal		38%	37%	36%	37%
National		2%	3%	3%	3%
Total Liberal/National	45.6%	40%	40%	39%	40%
Labor	33.4%	39%	39%	39%	38%
Greens	8.6%	10%	10%	9%	10%
Palmer United Party	5.5%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Other/Independent	6.9%	7%	8%	8%	8%

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 7/10/14	2 weeks ago 21/10/14	Last week 28/10/14	This week 4/11/14
Liberal National	53.5%	48%	47%	47%	48%
Labor	46.5%	52%	53%	53%	52%

NB. 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 2013 election.

Likelihood of extreme events

Q. Do you think that, over the next few years, Australia will be more or less likely to experience severe bushfires and extreme weather events like floods and cyclones?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total more likely	63%	72%	49%	86%	65%
Total less likely	1%	1%	*	2%	3%
A lot more likely	33%	41%	19%	61%	31%
A little more likely	30%	31%	30%	25%	34%
About the same	33%	26%	47%	11%	29%
A little less likely	1%	1%	-	2%	2%
A lot less likely	*	-	*	-	1%
Don't know	4%	1%	4%	1%	4%

63% think that severe bushfires and extreme weather events will be more likely over the next few years.

86% of Greens voters and 63% of Labor voters think they will be more likely. However, 47% of Liberal/National voters think they will be neither more likely nor less likely.

68% of women think they will be more likely compared to 56% of men.

Extreme events linked to climate change

Q. And do you think that these extreme events - bushfires, floods, cyclones, etc - are likely or unlikely to be linked to climate change?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Likely to be linked to climate change	76%	83%	63%	96%	63%
Unlikely to be linked to climate change	16%	10%	26%	2%	24%
Don't know	9%	6%	11%	3%	14%

(Based on the 63% - 625 respondents - who think extreme event are more likely.)

Of those who think extreme events are more likely, 76% think they are likely to be linked to climate change and 16% think they are unlikely to be linked to climate change.

83% of Labor voters and 96% of Greens voters think they are likely to be linked to climate change.

Deregulation of university fees

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the Federal Government's proposal to deregulate university fees?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	22%	12%	43%	7%	17%
Total disapprove	53%	73%	30%	81%	59%
Strongly approve	6%	6%	10%	2%	5%
Approve	16%	6%	33%	5%	12%
Disapprove	23%	27%	21%	22%	25%
Strongly disapprove	30%	46%	9%	59%	34%
Don't know	24%	14%	27%	12%	24%

22% approve of the Federal Government's proposal to deregulate university fees and 53% disapprove.

60% of those aged 18-24 and 59% of those with a university degree disapprove.

Access to university education

Q. It has been claimed that deregulation of university fees will enable universities to create more scholarships for financially disadvantaged students. Overall, do you think deregulating university fees will increase or decrease access to a university education?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total increase	22%	21%	29%	9%	19%
Total decrease	44%	54%	29%	74%	43%
Increase a lot	9%	12%	8%	3%	11%
Increase a little	13%	9%	21%	6%	8%
Make no difference	18%	14%	27%	8%	18%
Decrease a little	15%	13%	18%	15%	13%
Decrease a lot	29%	41%	11%	59%	30%
Don't know	16%	11%	15%	10%	19%

44% think that deregulating university fees will decrease access to a university education and 22% think it will increase access. 18% think it will make no difference.

Those most likely to think access will decrease were aged 18-24 (57%) and those with a university degree (53%).

Awareness of NDIS

Q. Have you heard or read a lot, a fair amount, just a little or almost nothing about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
A lot	4%	6%	4%	4%	1%
A fair amount	15%	14%	16%	17%	19%
A little	37%	36%	43%	27%	35%
Almost nothing	35%	36%	30%	38%	40%
Can't say	10%	8%	8%	14%	5%

19% have heard a lot or a fair amount about the NDIS - 72% say they have heard little or nothing.

This most likely to have heard about the NDIS were aged 65+ (27%).

Approval of NDIS

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the Government's decision to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme to be funded by increasing the Medicare levy from 1.5% to 2%?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	44%	46%	51%	52%	34%
Total disapprove	34%	37%	32%	23%	44%
Strongly approve	8%	11%	8%	12%	5%
Approve	36%	35%	43%	40%	29%
Disapprove	20%	21%	22%	12%	22%
Strongly disapprove	14%	16%	10%	11%	22%
Don't know	21%	16%	18%	24%	22%

44% approve of an NDIS funded by an increase in the Medicare levy and 34% disapprove.

Those most likely to approve were men (51%) and aged 65+ (61%).

Increase in GST

Q. Would you support an increase in the GST if it was :

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Directly invested in hospitals and health services	56%	57%	63%	66%	46%
Invested in aged pensions	44%	47%	52%	34%	37%
Directly invested in vital infrastructure like roads and railways	39%	40%	50%	32%	24%
Used to pay off our national debt	28%	21%	45%	18%	18%

A majority (56%) would support an increase in the GST if it was directly invested in hospitals and health services. There was also substantial support for increasing the GST if invested in aged pensions (44%) or directly invested in vital infrastructure like roads and railways (39%). Only 28% support increasing the GST to pay off the national debt.

Liberal/National voters were more likely to favour increasing the GST for all purposes. Increasing the GST to invest in hospitals and health services was supported by 66% of Greens voters and 57% of Labor voters.

There were few differences by income - except that 53% of those earning less than \$1,000 pw supported raising the GST to invest in aged pensions.

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 panellist 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 2010 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes were all within 1% of the election results.

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. Both Essential Research and Your Source are ISO accredited market research companies. This research was conducted in compliance with AS: ISO20252 guidelines.