

The Essential Report

10 March 2015





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Prepared by: Essential Research

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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 6th to 9th March and is based on 1,045 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leadership, sending troops to Iraq, taxation and Government support.

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 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 = 1,797 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 10/2/15	2 weeks ago 24/2/15	Last week 3/3/15	This week 10/3/15
Liberal		36%	38%	37%	37%
National		3%	3%	3%	3%
Total Liberal/National	45.6%	39%	40%	40%	40%
Labor	33.4%	41%	41%	41%	40%
Greens	8.6%	10%	9%	9%	9%
Palmer United Party	5.5%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Other/Independent	6.9%	8%	8%	9%	9%

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 10/2/15	2 weeks ago 24/2/15	Last week 3/3/15	This week 10/3/15
Liberal National	53.5%	46%	47%	47%	47%
Labor	46.5%	54%	53%	53%	53%

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.

Approval of Tony Abbott

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Prime Minister?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other	Sep 2013	Mar 2014	June 2014	Sep 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015
Total approve	31%	5%	72%	5%	20%	41%	40%	35%	35%	32%	37%	29%
Total disapprove	56%	89%	20%	86%	68%	36%	47%	58%	52%	55%	53%	62%
Strongly approve	7%	1%	18%	-	4%	14%	11%	10%	9%	8%	9%	7%
Approve	24%	4%	54%	5%	16%	27%	29%	25%	26%	24%	28%	22%
Disapprove	22%	24%	16%	31%	32%	13%	20%	18%	22%	22%	23%	26%
Strongly disapprove	34%	65%	4%	55%	34%	23%	27%	40%	30%	33%	30%	36%
Don't know	12%	6%	7%	9%	15%	23%	12%	7%	13%	12%	10%	9%

56% of respondents disapprove of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Prime Minister – down 6% since the last time this question was asked in February - and 31% approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing (up 2%). This represents a change in net rating from -33 to -25.

72% (up 7%) of Liberal/National voters approve of Tony Abbott's performance, with 20% (down 9%) disapproving. 89% of Labor voters and 86% of Greens voters disapprove of Tony Abbott's performance.

By gender men were 35% approve/54% disapprove and women 28% approve/59% disapprove.

Approval of 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	Nov 2013	Mar 2014	June 2014	Sep 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015
Total approve	34%	61%	20%	26%	22%	31%	32%	38%	35%	35%	39%	33%
Total disapprove	39%	18%	65%	35%	50%	27%	39%	40%	36%	39%	33%	38%
Strongly approve	5%	14%	*	1%	1%	5%	4%	7%	5%	7%	7%	8%
Approve	29%	47%	20%	25%	21%	26%	28%	31%	30%	28%	32%	25%
Disapprove	21%	14%	29%	25%	27%	17%	24%	22%	22%	23%	19%	21%
Strongly disapprove	18%	4%	36%	10%	23%	10%	15%	18%	14%	16%	14%	17%
Don't know	27%	22%	15%	38%	28%	43%	29%	22%	29%	26%	28%	29%

34% (up 1% since February) of respondents approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing as opposition leader and 39% (up 1%) disapprove - for a net rating of -5 (no change).

61% (down 3%) of Labor voters approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing and 18% (up 6%) disapprove.

36% of men and 31% of women approve of Bill Shorten. 44% of men and 35% of women disapprove.

Better Prime Minister

Q. Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister out of Tony Abbott and Bill Shorten?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other	Oct 2013	Mar 2014	June 2014	Sep 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015
Tony Abbott	33%	4%	77%	4%	22%	41%	39%	36%	35%	31%	35%	31%
Bill Shorten	37%	77%	8%	56%	26%	22%	33%	40%	36%	36%	37%	39%
Don't know	30%	19%	15%	41%	52%	37%	28%	24%	30%	33%	28%	30%

33% (up 2% since February) of respondents think Tony Abbott would make the better Prime Minister and 37% (down 2%) think Bill Shorten would make the better Prime Minister.

36% of men prefer Tony Abbott and 37% prefer Bill Shorten - and women prefer Bill Shorten 38% to 29%.

Level of tax

Q. Do you think the following pay too much tax, not enough tax or about the right amount?

	Total				Labor voters				Lib/Nat voters			
	Pay too much	Don't pay enough	Pay about right amount	Don't know	Pay too much	Don't pay enough	Pay about right amount	Don't know	Pay too much	Don't pay enough	Pay about right amount	Don't know
Large businesses	3%	64%	14%	19%	3%	72%	8%	17%	3%	60%	21%	16%
Small businesses	41%	6%	34%	19%	39%	8%	40%	14%	43%	6%	36%	15%
People on low incomes	47%	5%	36%	13%	57%	4%	30%	9%	34%	6%	48%	12%
People on average incomes	43%	5%	41%	11%	52%	4%	36%	8%	33%	7%	50%	10%
People on high incomes	10%	59%	19%	12%	9%	66%	17%	8%	9%	56%	25%	11%
You personally	36%	4%	47%	13%	40%	4%	45%	11%	29%	5%	53%	13%
Mining companies	4%	67%	12%	17%	3%	75%	9%	13%	4%	63%	18%	15%
Retirees on large incomes	15%	29%	30%	26%	15%	33%	29%	22%	14%	26%	38%	23%
Large international companies (such as Google and Apple)	2%	73%	8%	18%	2%	74%	8%	16%	2%	73%	10%	15%
Religious organisations	5%	53%	16%	26%	4%	54%	15%	27%	5%	53%	21%	21%

From the groups listed, people on low income (47%), small businesses (41%) and people on average incomes (43%) were the groups respondents were most likely to think pay too much tax.

More than half of respondents believe that 'large international companies' (73%), 'large businesses' (64%), 'mining companies' (67%), and 'religious organisations' (53%) do not pay enough tax.

Overall, Labor voters were more likely than Liberal voters to think the following groups pay too much tax – low incomes (Labor 57%/LNP34%), average incomes (52%/33%) and 'you personally' (40%/29%). Labor voters were also more likely to think the following don't pay enough tax – large businesses (72%/60%), people on high incomes (66%/56%) and mining companies (75%/63%).

Impact of higher tax on multinational corporations

Q. Do you think that making big multinational corporations pay more tax would be good for the economy because it would increase Government revenue or bad for the economy because these companies would stop investing in Australia?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Good for the economy	60%	65%	61%	66%	62%
Bad for the economy	13%	12%	14%	8%	12%
Don't know	27%	23%	25%	26%	26%

60% think that making big multinational corporations pay more tax would be good for the economy because it would increase Government revenue and 13% think it would be bad for the economy because these companies would stop investing in Australia.

More than 60% of all voter groups believe it would be good for the economy. 66% of men and 72% of respondents aged 55+ think it would be good for the economy.

Sending troops to Iraq

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of sending more Australian troops to Iraq to help train Iraqi forces fighting Islamic State militants?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Total approve	36%	28%	54%	15%	35%
Total disapprove	50%	60%	35%	72%	56%
Strongly approve	7%	5%	10%	2%	6%
Approve	29%	23%	44%	13%	29%
Disapprove	29%	31%	25%	36%	31%
Strongly disapprove	21%	29%	10%	36%	25%
Don't know	14%	12%	11%	13%	10%

36% approve of sending more Australian troops to Iraq to help train Iraqi forces fighting Islamic State militants and 50% disapprove.

A majority of Liberal/National voters (54%) approve but other voter groups strongly disapprove – 60% of Labor voters and 72% of Greens voters.

Men are divided (45% approve/45% disapprove) while women strongly disapprove (27% approve/55% disapprove).

Impact of sending troops to Iraq

Q. Do you think sending troops to Iraq will make Australia more safe or less safe from terrorism?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
More safe	12%	8%	20%	5%	8%
Less safe	30%	33%	22%	44%	34%
Make no difference	47%	51%	47%	37%	53%
Don't know	10%	7%	10%	13%	5%

30% think sending more troops to Iraq will make Australia less safe from terrorism and 12% think it will make Australia more safe. 47% think it will make no difference.

Government support

Q. Thinking about Government welfare and services, do you think the following groups of people receive enough support, too much support or about the right support from the Government?

	Too much support	Not enough support	About the right support	Don't know
Children	11%	38%	38%	13%
Young adults	15%	41%	32%	11%
Families with school-aged children	14%	36%	38%	11%
Middle aged	8%	33%	44%	15%
Retirees	6%	56%	27%	11%

A majority (56%) think that retirees don't get enough Government support and 41% don't think young adults get enough support. 44% think middle aged people get about the right support.

By age group, those most likely to think each group does not get enough support were –

Children – aged 35-54 43%

Young adults – aged 18-24 54%

Families with school-aged children – aged 25-44 41%

Middle aged – aged 45-54 45%

Retirees – aged 45-64 66%

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.