

The Essential Report

14 July 2015





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Prepared by: Essential Research

Data supplied:



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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 9th to 12^h July and is based on 1,006 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leaders, the Australian Constitution, climate change and the next election.

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 = 1,771 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 16/6/15	2 weeks ago 30/6/15	Last week 7/7/15	This week 14/7/15
Liberal		39%	38%	38%	38%
National		3%	3%	3%	3%
Total Liberal/National	45.6%	42%	41%	41%	41%
Labor	33.4%	39%	39%	39%	38%
Greens	8.6%	10%	11%	10%	11%
Palmer United Party	5.5%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Other/Independent	6.9%	8%	8%	9%	9%

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 16/6/15	2 weeks ago 30/6/15	Last week 7/7/15	This week 14/7/15
Liberal National	53.5%	48%	47%	48%	48%
Labor	46.5%	52%	53%	52%	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.

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	Mar 2015	Apr 2015	May 2015	Jun 2015
Total approve	37%	12%	81%	1%	26%	41%	40%	35%	35%	32%	31%	33%	36%	39%
Total disapprove	53%	83%	13%	93%	63%	36%	47%	58%	52%	55%	56%	58%	54%	50%
Strongly approve	11%	2%	26%	1%	5%	14%	11%	10%	9%	8%	7%	7%	10%	11%
Approve	26%	10%	55%	-	21%	27%	29%	25%	26%	24%	24%	26%	26%	28%
Disapprove	24%	32%	11%	28%	36%	13%	20%	18%	22%	22%	22%	28%	25%	23%
Strongly disapprove	29%	51%	2%	65%	27%	23%	27%	40%	30%	33%	34%	30%	29%	27%
Don't know	10%	5%	5%	6%	11%	23%	12%	7%	13%	12%	12%	9%	11%	12%

37% of respondents approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Prime Minister – down 2% since the last time this question was asked in June - and 53% disapprove of the job Tony Abbott is doing (up 3%). This represents a 5-point change in his net rating from -11 to -16.

81% (no change) of Liberal/National voters approve of Tony Abbott's performance, with 13% (up 2%) disapproving. 83% of Labor voters and 93% of Greens voters disapprove of Tony Abbott's performance.

By gender men were 38% approve/56% disapprove and women 35% approve/51% 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	Mar 2015	Apr 2015	May 2015	Jun 2015
Total approve	27%	50%	16%	20%	19%	31%	32%	38%	35%	35%	34%	33%	32%	32%
Total disapprove	52%	29%	70%	62%	68%	27%	39%	40%	36%	39%	39%	42%	41%	45%
Strongly approve	5%	12%	1%	2%	1%	5%	4%	7%	5%	7%	5%	6%	4%	6%
Approve	22%	38%	15%	18%	18%	26%	28%	31%	30%	28%	29%	27%	28%	26%
Disapprove	28%	22%	28%	48%	30%	17%	24%	22%	22%	23%	21%	25%	23%	27%
Strongly disapprove	24%	7%	42%	14%	38%	10%	15%	18%	14%	16%	18%	17%	18%	18%
Don't know	21%	21%	14%	19%	13%	43%	29%	22%	29%	26%	27%	25%	27%	22%

27% (down 5%) of respondents approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing as opposition leader and 52% (up 7%) disapprove - a change in his net rating from -13 to -25, his lowest since becoming leader.

50% (down 8%) of Labor voters approve of the job Bill Shorten is doing and 29% (up 6%) disapprove.

28% of men and 26% of women approve of Bill Shorten. 57% of men and 47% 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	Mar 2015	Apr 2015	May 2015	Jun 2015
Tony Abbott	37%	9%	83%	1%	33%	41%	39%	36%	35%	31%	33%	32%	35%	38%
Bill Shorten	30%	61%	3%	54%	23%	22%	33%	40%	36%	36%	37%	35%	32%	33%
Don't know	33%	30%	14%	45%	44%	37%	28%	24%	30%	33%	30%	33%	33%	29%

37% (down 1% since June) of respondents think Tony Abbott would make the better Prime Minister and 30% (down 3%) think Bill Shorten would make the better Prime Minister. This is Tony Abbott's best result since April last year.

38% of men prefer Tony Abbott and 31% prefer Bill Shorten - and women prefer Tony Abbott 36% to 29%.

Australian Constitution

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

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aug 2014
Vote for	61%	70%	54%	88%	48%	58%
Vote against	16%	13%	21%	3%	27%	10%
Not sure	23%	17%	25%	9%	24%	32%

61% would vote in a referendum to include recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution and only 16% would vote against. 23% were not sure how they would vote.

This represents an increase since last August for both the yes vote (+3%) and the no vote (+6%) with “not sure” dropping from 32% to 23%.

88% of Greens voters and 70% of Labor voters would vote for the change compared to 54% of Liberal/National voters.

Climate change

Q. Do you believe that there is fairly conclusive evidence that climate change is happening and caused by human activity or do you believe that the evidence is still not in and we may just be witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate which happens from time to time?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Nov 2009	Dec 2010	Jun 2011	Oct 2012	Oct 2013	Dec 2014	Mar 2015
Climate change is happening and is caused by human activity	56%	70%	40%	95%	43%	53%	45%	50%	48%	52%	57%	54%
We are just witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate	31%	20%	50%	5%	42%	34%	36%	39%	39%	36%	29%	31%
Don't know	12%	10%	10%	-	15%	13%	19%	12%	13%	12%	14%	15%

56% (up 2% since March) agree that climate change is happening and is caused by human activity and 31% (no change) believe that we may just be witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate. This is the second highest belief in climate change recorded over the last 6 years.

By age groups, those aged under 35 split 63%/21% and those aged 55+ split 47%/45%. People with higher education were more likely to think climate change is happening and is caused by human activity - those with university degrees split 68%/22%.

Countries doing enough on climate change

Q. As far as you know, do you think the following countries are doing enough, not enough or too much to address climate change?

	Doing enough	Not doing enough	Doing too much	Don't know	Doing enough Dec 2014	Not doing enough Dec 2014
Australia	28%	53%	6%	14%	26%	51%
USA	18%	57%	3%	23%	17%	53%
China	11%	69%	1%	19%	9%	63%

53% of respondents think Australia is not doing enough to address climate change - while 57% think the USA is not doing enough and 69% think China is not doing enough. Only 28% think that Australia is doing enough.

Those most likely to think Australia is not doing enough were aged 18-34 (60%), Greens voters (95%), Labor voters (69%) and people with university education (65%).

Carbon emissions

Q. Australia's current target to reduce its carbon emissions is a 5% reduction on our 2000 level of emissions by 2020. The Climate Change Authority recently recommended that, because of commitments by other countries, Australia's target should be 30% below our 2000 level of emissions by 2025. Should Australia:

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Retain its current target of 5%	18%	10%	34%	3%	16%
Move to a higher target, such as 10%	25%	24%	28%	18%	30%
Move to the recommended target of 30%	34%	43%	17%	72%	30%
Not have any target	7%	6%	10%	2%	9%
Don't know	16%	17%	11%	4%	15%

Only 18% think that Australia should retain its current target of 5% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020. 34% think that Australia should move to the recommended target of 30% and 25% think we should move to a higher target such as 10%.

43% of Labor voters and 72% of Greens voters think Australia should move to the 30% target. 34% of Liberal/National voters think Australia should keep the current 5% target while 45% think it should be higher.

Next election

Q. Which party do you think is most likely to win the next Federal election due in 2016?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Dec 2014	Feb 2015
Labor Party	32%	68%	6%	41%	26%	46%	49%
Liberal/National Party	37%	12%	80%	12%	24%	27%	23%
Can't say	30%	20%	14%	47%	49%	27%	28%

32% think the Labor Party is most likely to win the next election and 37% think the Liberal/National Party is most likely to win. 30% could not give an opinion. This represents a substantial shift toward the Coalition since this question was asked in February.

68% (down 19%) of Labor voters think the Labor Party is most likely to win and 80% (up 23%) of Liberal/National voters think the Liberal/National Party will win.

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.