

# The Essential Report

27 October 2015





## The Essential Report

---

**Date:** 27 October 2015

---

**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 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> October and is based on 1,012 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on trade unions, posting sexual images online, same sex marriage, environmental problems and economic management.

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 = 1,792 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 29/09/15	2 weeks ago 13/10/15	Last week 20/10/15	This week 27/10/15
Liberal		40%	40%	41%	41%
National		4%	4%	4%	4%
<b>Total Liberal/National</b>	<b>45.6%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>33.4%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Greens	8.6%	11%	10%	11%	11%
Palmer United Party	5.5%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Other/Independent	6.9%	9%	9%	8%	8%

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 29/09/15	2 weeks ago 13/10/15	Last week 20/10/15	This week 27/10/15
<b>Liberal National</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	52%	51%	51%	52%
<b>Labor</b>	<b>46.5%</b>	48%	49%	49%	48%

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.

## Importance of unions

Q. How important are unions for Australian working people today?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Work full time	Work part time	Mar 2012	Sep 2012	May 2013	Dec 2013	Feb 2014
<b>Total important</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Total not Important</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>30%</b>
Very important	26%	46%	11%	41%	19%	26%	26%	19%	16%	21%	22%	27%
Quite important	36%	37%	36%	33%	41%	33%	45%	37%	36%	35%	35%	34%
Not very important	21%	8%	37%	14%	14%	22%	14%	27%	28%	24%	22%	21%
Not at all important	7%	2%	12%	2%	11%	10%	3%	8%	10%	12%	12%	9%
Don't know	11%	7%	5%	10%	16%	8%	12%	9%	10%	8%	9%	8%

The majority of respondents regarded unions to be important for Australian working people today (62%), whilst 28% believe that they were not important. These results represent an increase in importance of unions since this question was asked in February last year - from net +31 to +34, the most positive result for unions over the past 4 years.

83% of Labor voters and 74% of Greens voters believed that unions were important for Australian working people today, while Coalition voters were the most likely to regard unions as not important (49%).

The majority of full time workers (59%) and part time workers (71%) regarded unions as important for Australian working people today.

## Better or worse off with stronger unions

Q. Overall, would workers be better off or worse off if unions in Australia were stronger?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Work full time	Work part time	Sep 2012	May 2013	Feb 2014
<b>Total better off</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Total worse off</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>27%</b>
A lot better off	17%	30%	6%	31%	9%	16%	18%	13%	14%	21%
A little better off	28%	38%	22%	27%	27%	29%	33%	26%	29%	24%
A little worse off	12%	8%	18%	5%	12%	14%	10%	15%	14%	11%
A lot worse off	14%	5%	23%	7%	16%	17%	6%	15%	15%	16%
Make no difference	15%	8%	19%	13%	19%	12%	15%	15%	12%	13%
Don't know	15%	11%	11%	17%	18%	11%	17%	15%	14%	15%

The perception that workers would be better off with stronger unions has changed very little since this question was asked in February last year. 45% (no change) felt that workers would be better off if unions in Australia were stronger and 26% (down 1%) that believed workers would be worse off.

By voting intention, 68% of Labor voters and 58% of Greens voters believed that workers would be better off while Coalition voters were by far the most likely to believe that workers would be worse off (41%).

## Royal Commission into trade unions

*Q. Do you think the Royal Commission into Trade Unions is a legitimate investigation into union practices or is it a political attack on unions and the Labor Party?*

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aug 2015
A political attack on Labor and the unions	<b>27%</b>	48%	12%	41%	29%	27%
A legitimate investigation of union practices	<b>42%</b>	22%	69%	27%	41%	39%
Don't know	<b>31%</b>	31%	19%	31%	30%	34%

42% think that the Trade Union Royal Commission is a legitimate investigation of union practices and 27% think that it is a political attack on Labor and the unions. 31% did not know. These results are similar to those from August.

Views were related to voting intention – 69% of Liberal/National voters think it is a legitimate investigation of union practices while 48% of Labor voters think it is a political attack on Labor and the unions.

45% of full-time workers and 37% of part-time workers think it is a legitimate investigation of union practices.

## Posting sexual images

Q. Do you think it should be a criminal offence to post sexual images of ex-partners online without their consent?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
Yes, should be a criminal offence	<b>89%</b>	92%	90%	86%	91%	84%	93%	84%	89%	93%
No, should not be a criminal offence	<b>5%</b>	4%	6%	6%	6%	9%	1%	9%	5%	2%
Don't know	<b>6%</b>	3%	4%	9%	3%	6%	6%	7%	6%	5%

89% think that it should be a criminal offence to post sexual images of ex-partners online without their consent and 5% think it should not be a criminal offence.

93% of women and 84% of men think it should be a criminal offence.

## Same sex marriage

Q. Do you think people of the same sex should or should not be allowed to marry?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Nov 2010	Jul 2011	Sep 2012	Oct 2013	Jun 2014	Feb 2015	Jun 2015	Aug 2015
Should be allowed to marry	<b>59%</b>	67%	50%	84%	55%	53%	54%	55%	57%	60%	59%	59%	60%
Should not be allowed to marry	<b>30%</b>	22%	41%	11%	35%	36%	35%	36%	31%	28%	28%	28%	31%
Don't know	<b>11%</b>	11%	10%	5%	10%	11%	11%	9%	12%	12%	13%	14%	10%

	Total	Men	Women	Aged 18-34	Aged 35-54	Aged 55+
Should be allowed to marry	<b>59%</b>	54%	64%	69%	57%	51%
Should not be allowed to marry	<b>30%</b>	35%	24%	22%	29%	38%
Don't know	<b>11%</b>	11%	12%	9%	14%	11%

59% agreed that people of the same sex should be allowed to marry and 30% think they should not. This represents little change since this question was last asked in August.

Support for same sex marriage is 54% among men and 64% among women. 69% of under 35's support same sex marriage – while those aged 65+ split 43% in favour/44% against.

## Vote on same sex marriage

*Q. Considering that a national vote on same-sex marriage would cost around \$150 million, do you think that the issue of same-sex marriage should be decided by a national vote or a vote in parliament?*

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Should be allowed to marry	Should not be allowed to marry
A national vote	<b>43%</b>	44%	44%	36%	55%	44%	48%
A vote in Parliament	<b>41%</b>	43%	45%	47%	28%	45%	37%
Don't know	<b>17%</b>	14%	11%	17%	17%	11%	15%

When asked to consider that a national vote would cost around \$150 million, 43% favoured a national vote on same-sex marriage and 41% favoured a vote in Parliament. When this question was asked without the cost information in September, 67% favoured a national vote and 21% thought it should be decided by Parliament.

Those opposed to same-sex marriage were more likely to favour a national vote (48% to 37%).

## Most important environmental problems

Q. Which of these do you think is the most important environmental problem facing Australia today? And which would you say is the second most important?

	Total 2 most important	Most important	Second most important	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Climate change	<b>49%</b>	32%	17%	58%	42%	69%	39%
Water supply	<b>38%</b>	20%	18%	35%	45%	26%	31%
The impact of mining	<b>25%</b>	12%	13%	26%	22%	36%	20%
Loss of native habitat	<b>23%</b>	9%	14%	21%	27%	21%	28%
The health of the Great Barrier Reef	<b>20%</b>	9%	11%	18%	22%	12%	28%
Air pollution	<b>17%</b>	7%	10%	20%	16%	13%	17%
The Murray-Darling Basin	<b>11%</b>	3%	8%	9%	14%	6%	21%
Don't know	<b>9%</b>	9%	1%	6%	6%	6%	8%

The most important environmental problems were thought to be climate change (49%) and water supply (38%).

58% of Labor voters and 69% of Greens voters thought climate change was the most important problem – compared to 42% of Liberal/National voters. 36% of Greens voters thought the impact of mining was one of the two most important problems.

## Economic management

*Q. Compared to Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey, do you think the new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Treasurer Scott Morrison will be better or worse managers of Australia's economy or will they be much the same?*

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
<b>Total better</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Total worse</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>16%</b>
A lot better economic managers	19%	13%	30%	16%	10%
A little better economic managers	31%	34%	37%	27%	24%
A little worse economic managers	5%	3%	6%	8%	6%
A lot worse economic managers	5%	5%	3%	1%	10%
Much the same	25%	32%	17%	34%	32%
Don't know	14%	13%	7%	14%	18%

50% believe that the new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Treasurer Scott Morrison will be better managers of Australia's economy than Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey. 10% think they will be worse and 25% much the same.

56% of those on income over \$1,600 pw think they will be better economic managers compared to 39% of those earning less than \$600 pw. 46% of those earning less than \$600 pw think they will be worse or much the same.

## 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.