The Essential Report

23 May 2017

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your source

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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 18th to 22nd May 2017 and is based on 1,007 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party attributes and trust, Labor's budget response, the bank levy and the deficit levy.

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.

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

	Total	Last week 16/5/17	2 weeks ago 9/5/17	4 weeks ago 25/4/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	34%	34%	35%	34%	
National	3%	3%	2%	3%	
Total Liberal/National	**37%**	**37%**	**37%**	**38%**	**42.0%**
Labor	**37%**	**38%**	**38%**	**37%**	**34.7%**
Greens	10%	10%	10%	9%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	3%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	6%	6%	6%	7%	
Other/Independent	6%	6%	6%	6%	13.1%
2 party preferred					
Liberal National	**46%**	**46%**	**46%**	**47%**	**50.4%**
Labor	**54%**	**54%**	**54%**	**53%**	**49.6%**

NB. Sample = 1,804. 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 2016 election.

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Attributes of the Labor Party

Q   Here is a list of things both favourable and unfavourable that have been said about various political parties. Which statements do you feel fit the Labor Party?

	Total	Change	Jul 2009	April 2011	Aug 2013	Nov 2015	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	Mar 2017
Will promise to do anything to win votes	**61%**	-2	57%	72%	65%	64%	62%	64%	63%
Looks after the interests of working people	**57%**	-4		39%	53%	55%	50%	56%	61%
Moderate	**56%**	-2	65%	51%	48%	56%	47%	54%	58%
Has policies that lead to a fairer Australia	**51%**	-							
Understands the problems facing Australia	**51%**	-1	62%	40%	50%	48%	43%	49%	52%
Divided	**50%**	+1	30%	66%	66%	58%	54%	49%	49%
Have a vision for the future	**49%**	-3		43%	49%	42%	40%	48%	52%
Out of touch with ordinary people	**47%**	-3	44%	61%	51%	52%	53%	46%	50%
Have good policies	**45%**	-5			46%	42%	38%	46%	50%
Clear about what they stand for	**42%**	-5		28%	38%	37%	35%	43%	47%
Has a good team of leaders	**38%**	-3	60%	34%	36%	33%	30%	39%	41%
Too close to the big corporate and financial interests	**35%**	-5		46%	31%	37%	35%	35%	40%
Trustworthy	**34%**	-1			30%	34%	29%	33%	35%
Keeps its promises	**32%**	-2	44%	20%	27%	29%	28%	31%	34%
Extreme	**28%**	-	25%	38%	34%	30%	35%	30%	28%

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The attributes most commonly associated with the Labor party were "will promise to do anything to win votes" (61%), "looks after the interests of working people" (57%), and "moderate" (56%). Those least commonly associated were "extreme" (28%), "keeps its promises" (32%) and "trustworthy" (34%).

The biggest changes since this question was last asked in March were "have good policies", "clear about what they stand for" and "too close to the big corporate and financial interests", all of which dropped by 5%.

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Attributes of the Liberal Party

Q   And which statements do you feel fit the Liberal Party?

	Total	Change	Jul 2009	April 2011	Aug 2013	Nov 2015	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	Mar 2017
Too close to the big corporate and financial interests	**69%**	-2		60%	60%	67%	62%	66%	71%
Will promise to do anything to win votes	**69%**	-2	67%	65%	65%	68%	63%	65%	71%
Out of touch with ordinary people	**68%**	-	62%	54%	58%	62%	58%	63%	68%
Divided	**64%**	-4	74%	49%	31%	56%	61%	52%	68%
Moderate	**48%**	-1	50%	55%	48%	51%	47%	47%	49%
Have a vision for the future	**48%**	+3		48%	51%	54%	46%	51%	45%
Clear about what they stand for	**41%**	-		44%	45%	46%	39%	46%	41%
Understands the problems facing Australia	**39%**	-2	44%	51%	48%	46%	41%	44%	41%
Extreme	**38%**	+2	36%	36%	39%	39%	36%	38%	36%
Have good policies	**36%**	-			38%	43%	39%	41%	36%
Has policies that lead to a fairer Australia	**34%**	-							
Has a good team of leaders	**32%**	-1	29%	40%	36%	48%	41%	42%	33%
Looks after the interests of working people	**28%**	-2		38%	36%	32%	31%	31%	30%
Trustworthy	**25%**	-3			30%	29%	28%	30%	28%
Keeps its promises	**25%**	-	28%	33%	32%	25%	27%	30%	25%

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The attributes most commonly associated with the Liberal party were "too close to the big corporate and financial interests" (69%), "will promise to do anything to win votes" (69%), and "out of touch with ordinary people" (68%). Those least commonly associated were "keeps its promises" (25%), "trustworthy" (25%) and "looks after the interests of working people" (28%).

The biggest changes since this question was last asked in March were "divided", which dropped by 4%, "trustworthy", which dropped by 3%, and "have a vision for the future", which rose by 3%.

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Trust in Parties

Q   Which party do you most trust to properly fund the following:

	Labor	Coalition	Don't know
Medicare	**44%**	26%	29%
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)	**36%**	28%	**36%**
Universities	**41%**	25%	34%
The age pension	**45%**	22%	33%
Public schools	**45%**	25%	30%
Independent/private schools	20%	**44%**	36%

Labor was more trusted to fund Medicare (44% trust), the NDIS (36%), universities (41%), the age pension (45%) and public schools (45%). The Coalition was more trusted to fund independent/private schools (44%).

36% did not know who they would trust more to properly fund the NDIS.

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Budget Response

Q   ALP leader Bill Shorten announced a number of policy measures in response to last week's federal budget. Do you approve or disapprove of these measures?

	Total approve	Total disapprove	Strongly approve	Approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't know
Create a $100m fund to invest in TAFE campuses	**57%**	**10%**	19%	38%	24%	6%	4%	10%
Restrict the Medicare levy increase to taxpayers earning more than $87k per year, rather than all taxpayers	**55%**	**21%**	22%	33%	15%	12%	9%	10%
Require at least one in ten people employed on every government infrastructure project to be an apprentice	**55%**	**9%**	17%	38%	24%	6%	3%	12%
Continue the 'deficit levy' on earnings above $180k per year	**54%**	**10%**	21%	33%	18%	6%	4%	18%
Oppose a cut to the company tax rate, which is expected to cost $65bn over ten years.	**41%**	**23%**	20%	21%	21%	14%	9%	16%

The most popular measure was the $100m TAFE fund, which was supported by 57%. Support for this proposal was strongest amongst Labor voters (69% approve) and those aged 45-64 (63%).

The least popular measure was opposing the Coalition's company tax cut, thought this still received 41% approval, and only 23% disapproval. Liberal/National voters were the only group in which more people disapproved (36%) than approved (25%) of this measure.

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Bank Levy

Q   Last week's Federal Budget contained a levy on the big banks, which is forecast to raise $6.2bn from Australia's five largest banks over the next four years. What do you think is most likely to happen as a result of this levy?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Banks will pass on the cost of the levy to customers through higher fees, charges and interest rates	**78%**	85%	72%	83%	90%
Banks will not increase fees, charges and interest rate, and will pay the cost of the levy out of their own profits	**7%**	4%	12%	6%	3%
Don't know	**15%**	11%	16%	11%	7%

78% thought that the banks would pass the cost of the levy onto their customers. The most likely to think this were other party/independent voters (90%), those aged 65+ (89%) and Labor voters (85%).

Only 7% thought that the banks would not increase their fees, and would pay the levy from their own profits. The most likely to think that this would happen were Liberal/National voters (12%) and those aged 25-34 (10%).

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Deficit Levy

Q   Last week's Federal Budget contained the removal of the "deficit levy" of 2% of earnings above $180k per year. This would lower the top tax bracket from 49% to 47%. Do you approve of this measure?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	**24%**	**19%**	**36%**	**13%**	**24%**
Total disapprove	**39%**	**46%**	**26%**	**53%**	**47%**
Strongly approve	6%	3%	10%	5%	10%
Approve	18%	16%	26%	8%	14%
Neither approve nor disapprove	21%	21%	26%	12%	17%
Disapprove	21%	22%	19%	26%	21%
Strongly disapprove	18%	24%	7%	27%	26%
Don't know	17%	14%	12%	23%	12%

39% disapprove of the measure to remove the deficit levy, and only 24% approved. Those most likely to disapprove of the measure were Greens voters (53% disapprove), those aged 65+ (49%), and West Australians (48%). Those most likely to approve were Liberal/National voters (37% approve) and those earning over $104k per year (29%).

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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 panelist 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 2016 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes averaged less than 1% difference from the election results and the two-party preferred difference was only 0.1%.

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.

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