

The Essential Report

22 September 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 17th to 21st September and is based on 1,000 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on Australia becoming a republic, party leaders, the election of Malcolm Turnbull, the next election, climate change and same sex marriage.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 17.

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 = 1,754 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 25/08/15	2 weeks ago 08/09/15	Last week 15/9/15	This week 22/9/15	One week total 22/9/15
Liberal		38%	36%	36%	37%	38%
National		3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Total Liberal/National	45.6%	41%	40%	40%	41%	43%
Labor	33.4%	37%	38%	38%	37%	37%
Greens	8.6%	10%	11%	11%	11%	11%
Palmer United Party	5.5%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Other/Independent	6.9%	10%	9%	10%	9%	8%

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 25/08/15	2 weeks ago 08/09/15	Last week 15/9/15	This week 22/9/15	One week total 22/9/15
Liberal National	53.5%	49%	48%	48%	49%	50%
Labor	46.5%	51%	52%	52%	51%	50%

NB. Except for the last column (which shows the results for the last week's interviewing only) 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.

Republic

Q. Are you in favour or against Australia becoming a republic?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jan 2010	March 2011	Jun 2012	Apr 2014	Oct 2014	Feb 2015	Shift since Feb 2015
In favour	39%	52%	36%	48%	24%	41%	39%	39%	33%	31%	34%	+5
Against	29%	21%	39%	18%	35%	32%	34%	35%	42%	31%	34%	-5
No opinion	32%	26%	25%	34%	41%	27%	27%	27%	25%	38%	32%	-

39% (up 5% since February) of respondents were in favour of Australian becoming a republic and 29% (down 5%) were against. 32% could not give an opinion.

Greens (48%) and Labor (52%) voters were more likely to be in favour of a republic. Liberal/National voters (36%) were less likely – but up 14% since February.

Attributes of Malcolm Turnbull

Q. Which of the following describe your opinion of the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull?

	Total	Feb 2015	Difference
Intelligent	81%	74%	+7
Hard-working	71%	66%	+5
A capable leader	70%	60%	+10
Understands the problems facing Australia	63%	55%	+8
Good in a crisis	59%	56%	+3
Visionary	51%	44%	+7
Arrogant	47%	48%	-1
Out of touch with ordinary people	46%	48%	-2
Trustworthy	44%	44%	-
More honest than most politicians	39%	40%	-1
Aggressive	38%	35%	+3
Superficial	37%	41%	-4
Narrow-minded	30%	36%	-6
Intolerant	28%	31%	-3
Erratic	23%	24%	-1

Malcolm Turnbull's key attributes were intelligent (81%), hard working (71%), a capable leader (70%) and understands the problems facing Australia (63%).

Since February, there have been major increases for a capable leader (+10%), understands the problems facing Australia (+8%), intelligent (+7%) and visionary (+7%).

Leader attributes – Bill Shorten

Q. Which of the following describe your opinion of the Opposition Leader, Bill Shorten?

	Oct 2013	May 2014	Dec 2014	Feb 2015	Jun 2015	Total 22 Sep 2015	Change
Hard working	65%	66%	64%	61%	60%	61%	+1
Intelligent	69%	66%	66%	62%	61%	58%	-3
Understands the problems facing Australia	50%	53%	53%	52%	49%	48%	-1
Out of touch with ordinary people	42%	39%	40%	45%	42%	46%	+4
Superficial	37%	42%	41%	41%	44%	43%	-1
Arrogant	35%	36%	35%	39%	39%	41%	+2
Narrow-minded	31%	35%	36%	38%	34%	41%	+7
Erratic	30%	32%	30%	31%	33%	39%	+6
A capable leader	49%	51%	46%	47%	43%	36%	-7
Aggressive	31%	32%	29%	28%	28%	36%	+8
Intolerant	30%	29%	27%	30%	27%	33%	+6
Good in a crisis	40%	40%	38%	37%	38%	33%	-5
Trustworthy	34%	36%	34%	33%	33%	30%	-3
Visionary	33%	30%	30%	30%	29%	26%	-3
More honest than most politicians	27%	32%	29%	29%	29%	23%	-6

Bill Shorten's key attributes were hard working (61%), intelligent (58%), understands the problems facing Australia (48%) and out of touch with ordinary people (46%).

Since June, the major changes have been for aggressive (+8%), narrow minded (+7%), a capable leader (-7%), erratic (+6%), more honest than most politicians (-6%) and intolerant (+6%).

Leader attributes – comparisons

	Malcolm Turnbull	Bill Shorten	Difference
A capable leader	70%	36%	+34
Good in a crisis	59%	33%	+26
Visionary	51%	26%	+25
Intelligent	81%	58%	+23
More honest than most politicians	39%	23%	+16
Understands the problems facing Australia	63%	48%	+15
Trustworthy	44%	30%	+14
Hard-working	71%	61%	+10
Arrogant	47%	41%	+6
Aggressive	38%	36%	+2
Out of touch with ordinary people	46%	46%	-
Intolerant	28%	33%	-5
Superficial	37%	43%	-6
Narrow-minded	30%	41%	-11
Erratic	23%	39%	-16

Compared to Bill Shorten, Malcolm Turnbull is much more likely to be considered a capable leader (+34%), good in a crisis (+26%), visionary (+25%) and intelligent (+23%).

Bill Shorten is regarded by more respondents to be erratic (-16%) and narrow-minded (-11%).

Best leader of the Liberal Party

Q. Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Liberal Party?

	Total	Male	Female	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2014	Feb 2015	Aug 2015
Malcolm Turnbull	37%	44%	30%	38%	47%	41%	20%	31%	24%	24%
Tony Abbott	9%	10%	8%	7%	14%	1%	12%	18%	11%	18%
Joe Hockey	2%	2%	3%	2%	4%	1%	1%	6%	5%	3%
Julie Bishop	14%	11%	17%	19%	10%	18%	17%	4%	21%	17%
Christopher Pyne	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	-	<1%	<1%	1%
Scott Morrison	4%	5%	4%	2%	8%	1%	3%	1%	2%	3%
Someone else	10%	9%	11%	11%	4%	16%	29%	19%	13%	13%
Don't know	21%	17%	26%	20%	12%	21%	19%	21%	24%	22%

37% (up 13% since August) think Malcolm Turnbull would make the best leader of the Liberal Party, 14% prefer Julie Bishop (down 3%) and 9% prefer Tony Abbott (down 9%).

Among Liberal/National voters, 47% (up 26%) prefer Malcolm Turnbull, 14% (down 27%) prefer Tony Abbott and 10% (down 7%) Julie Bishop.

Preferences of men were Malcolm Turnbull 44% (+14%), Tony Abbott 10% (-11%) and Julie Bishop 11% (no change).

Preferences of women were Malcolm Turnbull 30% (+12%), Julie Bishop 17% (-5%) and Tony Abbott 8% (-7%).

Better Prime Minister

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

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Malcolm Turnbull	53%	35%	84%	41%	37%
Bill Shorten	17%	38%	2%	23%	14%
Don't know	30%	27%	14%	37%	49%

53% of respondents think Malcolm Turnbull would make the better Prime Minister and 17% think Bill Shorten would make the better Prime Minister.

Two weeks ago Bill Shorten was preferred over Tony Abbott 35% to 32%.

Approval of Malcolm Turnbull replacing Tony Abbott

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of Malcolm Turnbull replacing Tony Abbott as leader of the Liberal Party?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
Total approve	58%	71%	59%	63%	48%
Total disapprove	24%	20%	27%	19%	34%
Strongly approve	25%	32%	26%	32%	17%
Approve	33%	39%	33%	31%	31%
Disapprove	14%	12%	17%	13%	10%
Strongly disapprove	10%	8%	10%	6%	24%
Don't know	18%	9%	14%	18%	17%

58% approve of Malcolm Turnbull replacing Tony Abbott as leader of the Liberal Party and 24% disapprove.

59% of Liberal/National voters approve and 27% disapprove.

Election of Malcolm Turnbull

Q. Has the re-election of Malcolm Turnbull as leader of the Liberal Party made you more or less likely to support the Liberal National Coalition at the next federal election?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Total more likely	34%	29%	48%	23%	16%
Total less likely	14%	16%	7%	11%	30%
Much more likely	15%	7%	29%	4%	3%
A little more likely	19%	22%	19%	19%	13%
A little less likely	5%	5%	4%	5%	8%
Much less likely	9%	11%	3%	6%	22%
Makes no difference	43%	50%	36%	59%	42%
Don't know	11%	5%	8%	6%	11%

34% say that the re-election of Malcolm Turnbull as leader of the Liberal Party made them more likely to support the Liberal National Coalition at the next federal election and 14% say it has made them less likely. 43% say it makes no difference.

29% of Labor voters say it has made them more likely and 16% less likely.

Early election

Q. Do you expect the Coalition Government will run its full term until later in 2016 when the next Federal election is due or will they call an early election?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other	July 2015
Will run full term	46%	43%	60%	44%	42%	48%
Will call early election	26%	32%	22%	20%	33%	25%
Don't know	28%	24%	18%	36%	25%	27%

46% think the Government will run its full term and 26% think the Government will call an early election.

A majority of 60% of Liberal/National voters think the Government will run its full term.

These results have changed little since this question was asked in July.

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	Jul 2015
Labor Party	27%	61%	7%	30%	18%	46%	49%	32%
Liberal/National Party	40%	17%	75%	27%	31%	27%	23%	37%
Can't say	33%	22%	19%	43%	51%	27%	28%	30%

27% think the Labor Party is most likely to win the next election and 40% think the Liberal/National Party is most likely to win. 33% could not give an opinion. This represents a shift toward the Coalition since this question was asked in July.

61% (down 7%) of Labor voters think the Labor Party is most likely to win and 75% (down 5%) of Liberal/National voters think the Liberal/National Party will win.

Action on climate change

Q. Which of the following actions on climate change would you most support?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Sep 2014	Jul 2015
Incentives for renewable energy	45%	47%	41%	60%	58%	50%	45%
An emissions trading scheme	11%	18%	7%	23%	2%	12%	14%
The Government's direct action policy	10%	9%	12%	6%	8%	10%	10%
No action required	12%	7%	19%	1%	15%	11%	11%
Don't know	22%	18%	21%	10%	16%	17%	20%

In taking action on climate change, 45% most support incentives for renewable energy, 11% most support an emissions trading scheme and 10% most support the Government's direct action policy - while 12% say no action is required. This represents little change since this question was asked in July.

All groups are most likely to support incentives for renewable energy.

Decision on same sex marriage

Q. Do you think the issue of same sex marriage should be decided by Parliament or should there be a national vote?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aug 2015
Should be decided by Parliament	21%	26%	21%	29%	16%	22%
Should have a national vote	67%	66%	69%	64%	75%	66%
Don't know	12%	8%	10%	7%	9%	12%

67% favour a national vote on same sex marriage and 21% think the issue should be decided by Parliament.

This represents little change since this question was asked in August.

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.