

The Essential Report

06 April 2020



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Date: 06/04/2020

Prepared By: Essential Research

Data Supplied by:



AMSRS 

Our researchers are members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society.

About this poll

This report summarises the results of a fortnightly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Qualtrics. The survey was conducted online from 2nd April 2020 to 5th April 2020 and is based on 1,069 respondents.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix at the end of the report.

Note that due to rounding, not all tables necessarily total 100% and subtotals may also vary.

Performance of Scott Morrison

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job Scott Morrison is doing as Prime Minister?

	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Dec'19	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19
NET: Approve	59%	41%	39%	40%	45%	45%	47%	49%	48%	48%
NET: Disapprove	31%	49%	52%	52%	43%	41%	38%	36%	37%	34%
Don't know	10%	10%	9%	8%	13%	13%	15%	15%	16%	18%
Base (n)	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,035	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091

	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	20%	8%	45%	2%	9%
Approve	39%	37%	42%	27%	39%
Disapprove	20%	27%	8%	33%	27%
Strongly disapprove	11%	18%	2%	22%	15%
Don't know	10%	10%	4%	15%	10%
NET: Approve	59%	46%	87%	30%	49%
NET: Disapprove	31%	45%	10%	56%	42%
Base (n)	1,069	333	387	102	122

- The Prime Minister's approval rating has jumped up in the past month from 46% to 59% - the highest approval rating recorded for Scott Morrison.

- The proportion of people strongly approving of the job he's doing has increased from 11% to 20%, while those strongly disapproving has gone down from 26% to 11%.
- Approval of the Prime Minister among Labor voters is up (from 19% to 46%) and Greens voters (from 16% to 30%). While support has strengthened among his own voter base, with Coalition voters more likely to strongly approve of him (23% to 45%).



Performance of Anthony Albanese

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job Anthony Albanese is doing as Opposition Leader?

	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Dec'19	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19
NET: Approve	44%	41%	41%	43%	39%	37%	40%	36%	38%	39%
NET: Disapprove	29%	33%	31%	30%	28%	34%	29%	31%	29%	24%
Don't know	27%	26%	28%	27%	33%	29%	31%	33%	33%	37%
Base (n)	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,035	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091

	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention		
			Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	8%	18%	3%	4%	4%
Approve	36%	48%	32%	46%	23%
Disapprove	21%	10%	33%	23%	25%
Strongly disapprove	8%	3%	13%	5%	10%
Don't know	27%	20%	19%	22%	38%
NET: Approve	44%	66%	35%	50%	26%
NET: Disapprove	29%	13%	46%	29%	36%
Base (n)	1,069	333	387	102	122

- The Opposition Leader's approval rating has remained consistent this month, at 44% compared to 41% in March.
- Albanese's approval among Labor voters remains relatively low at 66%, compared to Morrison's approval among Coalition voters (87%).



Preferred Prime Minister

Q Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister out of Scott Morrison and Anthony Albanese?

	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19	Jun'19
Scott Morrison	46%	40%	36%	36%	44%	43%	46%	44%	44%	43%
Anthony Albanese	27%	35%	36%	39%	28%	28%	25%	28%	26%	25%
Don't know	27%	25%	28%	25%	29%	29%	29%	28%	31%	32%
Base (n)	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091	1,099

	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention		
			Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Scott Morrison	46%	25%	83%	16%	43%
Anthony Albanese	27%	47%	8%	50%	21%
Don't know	27%	28%	9%	34%	37%
Base (n)	1,069	333	387	102	122

- 46% of participants believe that Scott Morrison would make a better PM than Anthony Albanese (27%). Around a quarter (25%) of participants don't know who would make the better PM.
- A quarter of Labor voters believe Scott Morrison to make the better PM compared to Albanese (25%), up from 13% in March).



Coronavirus concerns

Q To what extent are you concerned about the threat of the Coronavirus in Australia?

	06/04	29/03	22/03	09/03	10/02
Very concerned	51%	53%	39%	27%	25%
Quite concerned	37%	35%	43%	36%	43%
Not that concerned	10%	10%	14%	28%	26%
Not at all concerned	2%	3%	4%	9%	6%
Base (n)	1,069	1,086	1,034	1,096	1,057

	Total	Age group			Location	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
Very concerned	51%	46%	51%	54%	53%	48%
Quite concerned	37%	39%	37%	36%	37%	36%
Not that concerned	10%	12%	9%	9%	8%	13%
Not at all concerned	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Base (n)	1,069	341	342	386	731	338



Likelihood of developing Coronavirus

Q How likely do you think it is, that you will develop Covid-19?

	06/04	29/03	22/03	09/03
Very likely	8%	8%	8%	7%
Somewhat likely	33%	36%	34%	24%
Somewhat unlikely	45%	45%	45%	43%
Very unlikely	14%	12%	13%	26%
Base (n)	1,069	1,086	1,034	1,096

	Total	Age group			Location	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
Very likely	8%	15%	9%	3%	9%	5%
Somewhat likely	33%	34%	36%	31%	33%	34%
Somewhat unlikely	45%	38%	42%	51%	44%	47%
Very unlikely	14%	13%	13%	14%	13%	15%
Base (n)	1,069	341	342	386	731	338



Reaction to Covid-19

Q Which of the following is closer to your personal views of the Covid-19 outbreak?

	06/04	29/03	22/03
There has been an over-reaction to the threat of Covid-19	17%	18%	33%
The response to the threat of Covid-19 is about right	46%	39%	39%
The threat of Covid-19 has been under-estimated	37%	43%	28%
Base (n)	1,069	1,086	1,034

	Total	Gender		Age Group		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
There has been an over-reaction to the threat of Covid-19	17%	20%	14%	28%	17%	11%
The response to the threat of Covid-19 is about right	46%	45%	47%	43%	46%	47%
The threat of Covid-19 has been under-estimated	37%	35%	39%	29%	36%	42%
Base (n)	1,069	523	546	341	342	386

- There has been an increase in the proportion of women rating the reaction to the Covid-19 crisis to be about right (47%, up from 36% last week).



- This increase has mainly come from a decrease in the proportion of women thinking the threat has been under-estimated (declining from 47% to 39%).



Economic expectations

Q Which of the following is closer to your expectations of what will happen to the economy following the Covid-19 situation?

	Total	Gender		Age Group		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
The economy will rebound within 2-3 months and grow just as strong or stronger than before Covid-19	11%	13%	9%	16%	11%	9%
The economy will be impacted for 6-12 months or longer and will stagnate or show slow growth thereafter	51%	51%	50%	51%	45%	53%
Covid-19 will have long lasting impact on the economy and the country will fall into a lengthy recession	29%	28%	30%	23%	33%	30%
Unsure	9%	7%	11%	10%	10%	7%
Base (n)	1,069	523	546	341	342	386

- Half of people (51%) think Covid-19 will impact the economy for up to a year, with slow growth following. A further 29% believe the impact will be even more devastating, with long-lasting impact and recession.
- Younger people aged 18-34 are a little more optimistic, with 16% thinking the economy will recover within 2-3 months (compared to 9% of those aged 55+).

Government response to Covid-19

Q Overall, how would you rate the Government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak?

	06/04	29/03	22/03
Very poor	6%	11%	9%
Quite poor	15%	21%	20%
Neither good, nor poor	21%	24%	26%
Quite good	37%	34%	33%
Very good	21%	11%	12%
NET: Poor	21%	31%	29%
NET: Good	58%	45%	45%
Base (n)	1,069	1,086	1,034

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Location	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
Very poor	6%	8%	5%	7%	8%	5%	7%	6%
Quite poor	15%	16%	13%	21%	15%	11%	15%	13%
Neither good, nor poor	21%	22%	20%	31%	22%	16%	23%	18%
Quite good	37%	36%	38%	34%	40%	37%	36%	39%
Very good	21%	18%	24%	7%	15%	31%	19%	24%
NET: Poor	21%	24%	18%	28%	23%	16%	22%	19%
NET: Good	58%	54%	62%	41%	55%	68%	55%	63%
Base (n)	1,069	523	546	341	342	386	731	338



Information about Covid-19

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the information you've received about the Covid-19 outbreak?

NET: Agree	06/04	29/03	22/03
I feel informed about the situation and the impact on me and my family	70%	63%	64%
I trust the Government to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak	63%	56%	56%
The information I've received has been clear and consistent	52%	47%	51%
I trust the media to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak	51%	42%	35%
Base (n)	1,069	1,086	1,034

	NET: Agree	NET: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel informed about the situation and the impact on me and my family	70%	14%	27%	43%	17%	9%	5%
I trust the Government to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak	63%	18%	26%	37%	19%	10%	8%
The information I've received has been clear and consistent	52%	26%	17%	34%	22%	19%	7%
I trust the media to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak	51%	26%	14%	37%	23%	16%	10%



NET: AGREE	Total	Gender		Age Group			Location	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
I feel informed about the situation and the impact on me and my family	70%	66%	74%	56%	68%	78%	69%	71%
I trust the Government to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak	63%	59%	66%	51%	60%	70%	63%	63%
The information I've received has been clear and consistent	52%	49%	55%	42%	46%	60%	51%	52%
I trust the media to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak	51%	50%	52%	41%	49%	56%	52%	49%
Base (n)	1,069	523	546	341	342	386	731	338

- This week, women are more likely to agree that they feel informed of the situation and the impact on them and their families (74% up from 62%), that they trust the government to provide honest and objective information (66%, up from 56%) and trust the media (52%, up from 41%). Men's agreement that they have trust in the media has also increased from 42% to 50%.
- People living in regional areas have higher agreement in all four statements this week - 'I feel informed about the situation and the impact on me and my family' (63% to 71%), 'I trust the Government to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak' (53% to 63%), 'The information I've received has been clear and consistent' (43% to 52%) and 'I trust the media to provide honest and objective information about the Covid-19 outbreak' (38% to 49%).
- There has been increased agreement among those aged 35-54 that they feel informed (59% to 68%) and have trust in the information from government (49% to 60%).
- Older people (aged over 55) and those in capital cities are more likely to agree that they trust the information in media this week (42% to 56% and 43% to 52% respectively).



Changing behaviour due to Covid-19

Q Have you changed your behaviour in any of the following ways since the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak?

	06/04	29/03	22/03
Increased personal hygiene measures (e.g. hand washing)	78%	79%	72%
Limited attending social spaces, shops, restaurants or group events	82%	75%	60%
Stopped physical greetings (e.g. shaking hands, kissing, hugging)	78%	73%	60%
Bought additional groceries to stock-up	38%	41%	33%
Reduced use of cash to pay for purchases	50%	43%	23%
Changed working patterns (e.g. changed hours, or working from home)	33%	33%	20%
None of these	3%	5%	12%
Base (n)	1,069	1,086	1,034

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Location	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
Increased personal hygiene measures (e.g. hand washing)	78%	73%	83%	68%	78%	83%	80%	74%
Limited attending social spaces, shops, restaurants or group events	82%	77%	87%	70%	81%	89%	81%	83%
Stopped physical greetings (e.g. shaking hands, kissing, hugging)	78%	75%	82%	63%	77%	87%	79%	78%
Bought additional groceries to stock-up	38%	32%	44%	41%	41%	35%	40%	33%
Reduced use of cash to pay for purchases	50%	47%	54%	50%	52%	50%	51%	48%
Changed working patterns (e.g. changed hours, or working from home)	33%	32%	33%	46%	48%	17%	38%	23%
None of these	3%	4%	2%	2%	4%	3%	2%	5%
Base (n)	1,069	523	546	341	342	386	731	338



Financial situation during Covid-19 outbreak

Q Which of the following best describes your financial situation during the Covid-19 outbreak?

NET: Agree	06/04	29/03	22/03
I do not expect the Covid-19 will impact my income	24%	26%	24%
I have sufficient savings to deal with a short-term loss of income	28%	32%	26%
I will struggle with a short-term loss of income, but will get by	31%	23%	29%
I will be in serious financial stress with short-term loss of income	16%	20%	21%
Base (n)	1,069	1,086	1,034

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Location	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
I do not expect the Covid-19 will impact my income	24%	25%	23%	13%	19%	32%	25%	29%
I have sufficient savings to deal with a short-term loss of income	28%	29%	27%	27%	24%	31%	29%	26%
I will struggle with a short-term loss of income, but will get by	31%	31%	32%	38%	34%	27%	31%	29%
I will be in serious financial stress with short-term loss of income	16%	15%	18%	22%	23%	10%	15%	17%
Base (n)	1,069	523	546	341	342	386	731	338

	Household		Employment			
	Total	Have dependent children	Do not have dependent children	In paid employment	Not in paid employment	Retired
I do not expect the Covid-19 will impact my income	24%	21%	26%	12%	27%	46%
I have sufficient savings to deal with a short-term loss of income	28%	24%	30%	33%	20%	29%
I will struggle with a short-term loss of income, but will get by	31%	36%	29%	39%	31%	17%
I will be in serious financial stress with short-term loss of income	16%	19%	15%	16%	22%	8%
Base (n)	1,069	353	716	533	255	223



Appendix: Household income definitions*

NET: Lower Income	Up to \$51,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
NET: Mid Income	\$52,000 to \$103,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
NET: High Income	More than \$104,000 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)

Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a fortnightly online omnibus conducted by Qualtrics.

Every two weeks, the team at Essential considers 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 current media and social issues.

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 online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants. 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 staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour.

