

The Essential Report

01 June 2020



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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 28th May to 31st May 2020 and is based on 1,059 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?

| | Jun'20 | May'20 | Apr'20 | Mar'20 | Feb'20 | Jan'20 | Dec'19 | Nov'19 | Oct'19 | Sep'19 | Aug'19 | Jul'19 |
|-------------------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| TOTAL: Approve | 65% | 64% | 59% | 41% | 39% | 40% | 45% | 45% | 47% | 49% | 48% | 48% |
| TOTAL: Disapprove | 26% | 27% | 31% | 49% | 52% | 52% | 43% | 41% | 38% | 36% | 37% | 34% |
| Don't know | 8% | 9% | 10% | 10% | 9% | 8% | 13% | 13% | 15% | 15% | 16% | 18% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,093 | 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 | TOTAL: Other |
| Strongly approve | 21% | 8% | 41% | 6% | 17% |
| Approve | 44% | 45% | 48% | 35% | 39% |
| Disapprove | 18% | 26% | 7% | 41% | 20% |
| Strongly disapprove | 8% | 13% | 2% | 14% | 12% |
| Don't know | 8% | 7% | 2% | 5% | 11% |
| TOTAL: Approve | 65% | 53% | 89% | 41% | 57% |
| TOTAL: Disapprove | 26% | 39% | 9% | 54% | 33% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 299 | 413 | 95 | 136 |

- The Prime Minister's approval rating has increased for the fifth straight month, reaching 65% from 39% at the start of February.
- Approval of the Prime Minister among is at 89% of Coalition supporters, with 53% approval among Labor voters, 41% among Greens voters and 57% of all others.



Performance of Anthony Albanese

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

| | Jun'20 | May'20 | Apr'20 | Mar'20 | Feb'20 | Jan'20 | Dec'19 | Nov'19 | Oct'19 | Sep'19 | Aug'19 | Jul'19 |
|-------------------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| TOTAL: Approve | 43% | 42% | 44% | 41% | 41% | 43% | 39% | 37% | 40% | 36% | 38% | 39% |
| TOTAL: Disapprove | 30% | 27% | 29% | 33% | 31% | 30% | 28% | 34% | 29% | 31% | 29% | 24% |
| Don't know | 26% | 31% | 27% | 26% | 28% | 27% | 33% | 29% | 31% | 33% | 33% | 37% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,093 | 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 | TOTAL: Other |
| Strongly approve | 8% | 12% | 5% | 7% | 14% |
| Approve | 36% | 51% | 31% | 43% | 26% |
| Disapprove | 21% | 14% | 30% | 21% | 24% |
| Strongly disapprove | 9% | 2% | 15% | 5% | 12% |
| Don't know | 26% | 22% | 20% | 24% | 25% |
| TOTAL: Approve | 43% | 63% | 35% | 50% | 40% |
| TOTAL: Disapprove | 30% | 16% | 45% | 26% | 35% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 299 | 413 | 95 | 136 |

- The Opposition Leader's approval rating has remained consistent this month, at 43% compared to 42% in May and 44% April.
- Albanese's approval among Labor voters remains relatively low at 63%, compared to Morrison's approval among Coalition voters (89%).



Preferred Prime Minister

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

| | Jun'20 | May'20 | Apr'20 | Mar'20 | Feb'20 | Jan'20 | Nov'19 | Oct'19 | Sep'19 | Aug'19 | Jul'19 | Jun'19 |
|------------------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Scott Morrison | 53% | 50% | 46% | 40% | 36% | 36% | 44% | 43% | 46% | 44% | 44% | 43% |
| Anthony Albanese | 23% | 25% | 27% | 35% | 36% | 39% | 28% | 28% | 25% | 28% | 26% | 25% |
| Don't know | 24% | 25% | 27% | 25% | 28% | 25% | 29% | 29% | 29% | 28% | 31% | 32% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,093 | 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 | TOTAL: Other |
| Scott Morrison | 53% | 29% | 84% | 34% | 51% |
| Anthony Albanese | 23% | 45% | 8% | 38% | 19% |
| Don't know | 24% | 26% | 9% | 28% | 31% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 299 | 413 | 95 | 136 |

- Over half of participants believe that Scott Morrison would make a better PM than Anthony Albanese (53% to 23%). Around a quarter (24%) of participants don't know who would make the better PM.
- Morrison is strongly favoured by Coalition voters, with 84% believing Morrison makes the better PM, compared to Albanese.
- Just under half of Labor voters believe Albanese would make the better PM (45%) compared to Morrison (29%). 27% said they didn't know who would make the better leader.



Leader attributes – Scott Morrison

Q Which of the following describe your opinion of the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison?

| | Total | Change (Jan'20) | Jan'20 | Oct'19 | Dec'18 |
|---|-------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Intelligent | 73% | +15 | 58% | 64% | 61% |
| Hard-working | 72% | +19 | 53% | 63% | 60% |
| A capable leader | 70% | +25 | 45% | 54% | 49% |
| Good in a crisis | 66% | +34 | 32% | 51% | 41% |
| Understands the problems facing Australia | 65% | +23 | 42% | 50% | 46% |
| Trustworthy | 56% | +16 | 40% | 43% | 39% |
| More honest than most politicians | 51% | +12 | 39% | 44% | 39% |
| Visionary | 48% | +18 | 30% | 42% | 38% |
| Out of touch with ordinary people | 47% | -15 | 62% | 56% | 54% |
| Superficial | 41% | -10 | 51% | 48% | 45% |
| Narrow-minded | 40% | -14 | 54% | 47% | 46% |
| Arrogant | 39% | -12 | 51% | 44% | 43% |
| Intolerant | 34% | -9 | 43% | 41% | 37% |
| Aggressive | 32% | 0 | 32% | 37% | 34% |
| Erratic | 28% | -10 | 38% | 34% | 36% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | | 1,081 | 1,088 | 1,026 |



- The attributes most associated with Scott Morrison are Intelligent (73%), Hard-working (72%) and A capable leader (70%).
- Since the start of the year, Morrison is more likely to be described with positive attributes such as Good in a crisis (up 34%), a capable leader (up 25%) and Understands the problems facing Australia (23%).
- He is now less associated with negative attributes such as Out of touch with ordinary people (-15%), Narrow-minded (-14%) and Arrogant (-12%).



Leader attributes – Anthony Albanese

Q Which of the following describe your opinion of the Opposition Leader, Anthony Albanese?

| | Total | Change (Oct'19) | Oct'19 |
|---|-------|-----------------|--------|
| Hard-working | 67% | +3 | 64% |
| Intelligent | 67% | +1 | 66% |
| Understands the problems facing Australia | 62% | +9 | 53% |
| A capable leader | 54% | +3 | 51% |
| Trustworthy | 48% | +7 | 41% |
| Good in a crisis | 47% | +7 | 40% |
| More honest than most politicians | 42% | 0 | 42% |
| Visionary | 41% | 0 | 41% |
| Out of touch with ordinary people | 41% | -3 | 44% |
| Superficial | 38% | -1 | 39% |
| Narrow-minded | 36% | -1 | 37% |
| Arrogant | 34% | +1 | 33% |
| Intolerant | 31% | +1 | 30% |
| Erratic | 31% | +1 | 30% |
| Aggressive | 30% | +3 | 27% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | | 1,088 |



- The attributes mainly associated with Anthony Albanese are Hard-working (67%), Intelligent (67%) and Understands the problems facing Australia (62%), He is less likely to be seen as Intolerant (31%), Erratic (31%) or Aggressive (30%).
- Since October last year, Anthony Albanese is more likely to be associated with Understands the problems facing Australia (up 9%), Trustworthy (up 7%) and Good in a crisis (up 7%). However, the Leader of the Opposition hasn't seen as much of an increase in these measures when compared to the Prime Minister.



Reflection of JobKeeper surplus

- Q Last Friday the Federal Government announced that, due to an accounting error, the number of people on JobKeeper is around half what the Treasury estimated it to be. The current cost of JobKeeper has consequently been reduced from \$130b to \$70b.

How do you think this reflects on the government’s credibility?

| | Total | Labor | Federal Voting Intention | | TOTAL: Other |
|--|--------------|-------|--------------------------|--------|--------------|
| | | | Coalition | Greens | |
| Very poorly | 18% | 30% | 6% | 24% | 22% |
| Quite poorly | 23% | 28% | 16% | 37% | 27% |
| Quite well | 11% | 12% | 14% | 8% | 5% |
| Very well | 5% | 4% | 5% | 0% | 10% |
| Does not affect the Government’s credibility | 43% | 26% | 59% | 31% | 37% |
| TOTAL: Poorly | 41% | 58% | 21% | 61% | 49% |
| TOTAL: Well | 16% | 16% | 19% | 8% | 15% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 299 | 413 | 95 | 136 |

- 43% of the public do not think the error causing the re-estimation of the JobKeeper cost affects the Government’s credibility, 41% think it reflects Very or Quite poorly.
- Most Coalition voters do not think the issue has affected the credibility of the Government (59%), while the majority of Labor (58%) and Greens (61%) voters think it reflects poorly.



Alternative spending options for JobKeeper surplus

- On which of the following would you prefer the Government use the \$60B it has previously allocated to the JobKeeper program?

| | Federal Voting Intention | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------|-----------|--------|--------------|
| | Total | Labor | Coalition | Greens | TOTAL: Other |
| Extend financial schemes supporting those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic (JobSeeker increases, JobKeeper and free early learning childcare) beyond their current end dates | 35% | 40% | 28% | 48% | 29% |
| Broaden JobKeeper scheme to include universities, migrant workers and employees of companies owned by foreign governments | 20% | 23% | 15% | 25% | 24% |
| Put money towards reducing national debt accumulate during the Covid-19 pandemic | 45% | 37% | 57% | 27% | 47% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 299 | 413 | 95 | 136 |

- A third of people would prefer the JobKeeper budget to be spent on extending the scheme beyond its current end date, with a further 20% preferring the scheme to be broadened to include more workers. 45% want the money to be put towards reducing the national debt.
- Younger people (aged 18-34) are more likely to want the money extending (42%) or broadening the scheme (29%) compared to those over 55 (25% and 16%).
- Over half of Coalition voters (57%) and retired people (58%) prefer using the money to reduce National debt, rather than providing more support for those who have lost work due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Coronavirus concerns

Q To what extent are you concerned about the threat of Covid-19 (coronavirus) in Australia?

| | 01/06 | 25/05 | 18/05 | 11/05 | 04/05 | 27/04 | 20/04 | 13/04 | 06/04 | 29/03 | 22/03 |
|----------------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Very concerned | 32% | 30% | 33% | 34% | 32% | 39% | 44% | 45% | 51% | 53% | 39% |
| Quite concerned | 49% | 49% | 47% | 49% | 46% | 44% | 43% | 43% | 37% | 35% | 43% |
| Not that concerned | 15% | 16% | 16% | 14% | 18% | 13% | 11% | 9% | 10% | 10% | 14% |
| Not at all concerned | 4% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 4% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,087 | 1,073 | 1,067 | 1,093 | 1,054 | 1,051 | 1,068 | 1,069 | 1,086 | 1,034 |

| | Total | Age group | | | Location | |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------|-------|-----|----------|-------------|
| | | 18-34 | 35-54 | 55+ | Capital | Non-Capital |
| Very concerned | 32% | 29% | 38% | 27% | 32% | 30% |
| Quite concerned | 49% | 51% | 45% | 52% | 50% | 47% |
| Not that concerned | 15% | 17% | 12% | 17% | 13% | 19% |
| Not at all concerned | 4% | 4% | 6% | 3% | 4% | 4% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 341 | 342 | 376 | 732 | 327 |



Likelihood of developing Coronavirus

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

| | 01/06 | 25/05 | 18/05 | 11/05 | 04/05 | 27/04 | 20/04 | 13/04 | 06/04 | 29/03 |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Very likely | 7% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 5% | 5% | 7% | 5% | 8% | 8% |
| Somewhat likely | 23% | 22% | 25% | 24% | 26% | 21% | 25% | 28% | 33% | 36% |
| Somewhat unlikely | 48% | 51% | 48% | 48% | 46% | 50% | 52% | 49% | 45% | 45% |
| Very unlikely | 22% | 23% | 21% | 21% | 23% | 23% | 17% | 18% | 14% | 12% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,087 | 1,073 | 1,067 | 1,093 | 1,054 | 1,051 | 1,068 | 1,069 | 1,086 |

| | Total | Age group | | | Location | |
|-------------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----|----------|-------------|
| | | 18-34 | 35-54 | 55+ | Capital | Non-Capital |
| Very likely | 7% | 10% | 10% | 3% | 9% | 4% |
| Somewhat likely | 23% | 29% | 25% | 16% | 24% | 22% |
| Somewhat unlikely | 48% | 40% | 45% | 57% | 46% | 50% |
| Very unlikely | 22% | 21% | 21% | 24% | 21% | 23% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 341 | 342 | 376 | 732 | 327 |



Government response to Covid-19

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

| | 01/06 | 25/05 | 18/05 | 11/05 | 04/05 | 27/04 | 20/04 | 13/04 | 06/04 |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Very poor | 5% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 6% | 6% |
| Quite poor | 7% | 6% | 7% | 9% | 9% | 9% | 10% | 12% | 15% |
| Neither good, nor poor | 20% | 16% | 17% | 16% | 20% | 17% | 21% | 20% | 21% |
| Quite good | 39% | 43% | 41% | 39% | 38% | 44% | 42% | 40% | 37% |
| Very good | 28% | 30% | 32% | 32% | 28% | 26% | 23% | 23% | 21% |
| TOTAL: Poor | 12% | 11% | 11% | 13% | 14% | 13% | 15% | 17% | 21% |
| TOTAL: Good | 68% | 73% | 73% | 71% | 66% | 70% | 65% | 63% | 58% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,087 | 1,073 | 1,067 | 1,093 | 1,054 | 1,051 | 1,068 | 1,069 |

| | Total | Gender | | Age Group | | | Location | |
|------------------------|-------|--------|--------|-----------|-------|-----|----------|-------------|
| | | Male | Female | 18-34 | 35-54 | 55+ | Capital | Non-Capital |
| Very poor | 5% | 5% | 4% | 6% | 6% | 3% | 5% | 4% |
| Quite poor | 7% | 8% | 6% | 13% | 5% | 4% | 7% | 7% |
| Neither good, nor poor | 20% | 21% | 20% | 31% | 20% | 11% | 21% | 19% |
| Quite good | 39% | 42% | 37% | 37% | 45% | 36% | 40% | 38% |
| Very good | 28% | 23% | 34% | 13% | 24% | 46% | 27% | 31% |
| TOTAL: Poor | 12% | 14% | 10% | 19% | 10% | 7% | 12% | 12% |
| TOTAL: Good | 68% | 65% | 70% | 50% | 70% | 82% | 67% | 69% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 521 | 538 | 341 | 342 | 376 | 732 | 327 |



State Government response to Covid-19

Q How would you rate your state government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak?

| | 01/06 | 25/05 | 18/05 | 11/05 | 04/05 | 27/04 | 20/04 | 13/04 |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Very poor | 6% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 5% |
| Quite poor | 6% | 7% | 8% | 8% | 8% | 9% | 9% | 11% |
| Neither good, nor poor | 20% | 17% | 17% | 16% | 18% | 17% | 20% | 20% |
| Quite good | 38% | 38% | 39% | 39% | 38% | 41% | 39% | 38% |
| Very good | 30% | 35% | 33% | 34% | 31% | 30% | 26% | 26% |
| TOTAL: Poor | 12% | 11% | 11% | 12% | 12% | 13% | 14% | 16% |
| TOTAL: Good | 68% | 73% | 72% | 73% | 70% | 70% | 66% | 64% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,087 | 1,073 | 1,067 | 1,093 | 1,054 | 1,051 | 1,068 |

| | State | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Total | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA |
| Very poor | 6% | 8% | 4% | 5% | 10% | 1% |
| Quite poor | 6% | 7% | 7% | 7% | 4% | 2% |
| Neither good, nor poor | 20% | 24% | 17% | 19% | 16% | 17% |
| Quite good | 38% | 41% | 39% | 38% | 30% | 30% |
| Very good | 30% | 20% | 33% | 30% | 40% | 49% |
| TOTAL: Poor | 12% | 14% | 11% | 12% | 14% | 4% |
| TOTAL: Good | 68% | 62% | 71% | 69% | 70% | 79% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 345 | 275 | 208 | 83 | 101 |

Easing restrictions

Q When do you think governments should start to ease the restrictions on travel and gatherings to allow offices, shops, restaurants, other workplaces, and public spaces to start operating again?

| | 01/06 | 25/05 | 18/05 | 11/05 | 04/05 | 27/04 | 20/04 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| As soon as possible | 17% | 14% | 9% | 13% | 10% | 10% | 9% |
| Within the next 1 to 2 weeks | 11% | 10% | 13% | 12% | 9% | 7% | 6% |
| Within the next month | 19% | 23% | 23% | 22% | 21% | 18% | 14% |
| By the end of next month | 16% | 17% | 22% | 20% | 15% | 15% | 13% |
| It is too soon to consider easing restrictions | 27% | 27% | 25% | 27% | 37% | 42% | 49% |
| Unsure | 10% | 9% | 8% | 6% | 8% | 8% | 10% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 1,087 | 1,073 | 1,067 | 1,093 | 1,054 | 1,051 |

| | Total | Gender | | Age Group | | |
|--|-------|--------|--------|-----------|-------|-----|
| | | Male | Female | 18-34 | 35-54 | 55+ |
| As soon as possible | 17% | 19% | 15% | 16% | 19% | 15% |
| Within the next 1 to 2 weeks | 11% | 14% | 9% | 15% | 10% | 9% |
| Within the next month | 19% | 19% | 19% | 23% | 15% | 20% |
| By the end of next month | 16% | 16% | 15% | 14% | 15% | 18% |
| It is too soon to consider easing restrictions | 27% | 23% | 32% | 21% | 29% | 30% |
| Unsure | 10% | 10% | 9% | 10% | 11% | 7% |
| Base (n) | 1,059 | 521 | 538 | 341 | 342 | 376 |

Appendix: Household income definitions*

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| TOTAL: 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) |
| TOTAL: 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) |
| TOTAL: 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.

