

The Essential Report

09 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 4th to 8th June 2020 and is based on 1,073 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.

Coronavirus concerns

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

	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04	06/04	29/03
Very concerned	27%	32%	30%	33%	34%	32%	39%	44%	45%	51%	53%
Quite concerned	48%	49%	49%	47%	49%	46%	44%	43%	43%	37%	35%
Not that concerned	21%	15%	16%	16%	14%	18%	13%	11%	9%	10%	10%
Not at all concerned	5%	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Base (n)	1,073	1,059	1,087	1,073	1,067	1,093	1,054	1,051	1,068	1,069	1,086



Likelihood of developing Coronavirus

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

	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04	06/04
Very likely	6%	7%	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%	7%	5%	8%
Somewhat likely	22%	23%	22%	25%	24%	26%	21%	25%	28%	33%
Somewhat unlikely	47%	48%	51%	48%	48%	46%	50%	52%	49%	45%
Very unlikely	25%	22%	23%	21%	21%	23%	23%	17%	18%	14%
Base (n)	1,073	1,059	1,087	1,073	1,067	1,093	1,054	1,051	1,068	1,069

	Total	Age group			Location	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
Very likely	6%	8%	8%	3%	6%	6%
Somewhat likely	22%	29%	22%	17%	25%	18%
Somewhat unlikely	47%	38%	47%	54%	47%	46%
Very unlikely	25%	25%	23%	27%	22%	30%
Base (n)	1,073	341	363	369	727	349



Government response to Covid-19

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

	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04
Very poor	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%
Quite poor	8%	7%	6%	7%	9%	9%	9%	10%	12%
Neither good, nor poor	18%	20%	16%	17%	16%	20%	17%	21%	20%
Quite good	40%	39%	43%	41%	39%	38%	44%	42%	40%
Very good	30%	28%	30%	32%	32%	28%	26%	23%	23%
TOTAL: Poor	12%	12%	11%	11%	13%	14%	13%	15%	17%
TOTAL: Good	70%	68%	73%	73%	71%	66%	70%	65%	63%
Base (n)	1,073	1,059	1,087	1,073	1,067	1,093	1,054	1,051	1,068

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Location	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
Very poor	4%	5%	2%	5%	4%	2%	4%	4%
Quite poor	8%	9%	7%	13%	8%	4%	9%	6%
Neither good, nor poor	18%	19%	17%	26%	18%	11%	18%	18%
Quite good	40%	38%	43%	41%	45%	36%	41%	39%
Very good	30%	29%	31%	14%	26%	47%	29%	33%
TOTAL: Poor	12%	14%	9%	18%	11%	6%	12%	10%
TOTAL: Good	70%	67%	74%	55%	71%	83%	70%	72%
Base (n)	1,073	528	545	341	363	369	727	349



State Government response to Covid-19

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

	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05	04/05	27/04	20/04
Very poor	4%	6%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Quite poor	7%	6%	7%	8%	8%	8%	9%	9%
Neither good, nor poor	17%	20%	17%	17%	16%	18%	17%	20%
Quite good	39%	38%	38%	39%	39%	38%	41%	39%
Very good	32%	30%	35%	33%	34%	31%	30%	26%
TOTAL: Poor	11%	12%	11%	11%	12%	12%	13%	14%
TOTAL: Good	71%	68%	73%	72%	73%	70%	70%	66%
Base (n)	1,073	1,059	1,087	1,073	1,067	1,093	1,054	1,051

	State					
	Total	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Very poor	4%	2%	6%	3%	3%	4%
Quite poor	7%	10%	6%	9%	6%	2%
Neither good, nor poor	17%	21%	16%	20%	12%	9%
Quite good	39%	44%	38%	38%	39%	32%
Very good	32%	23%	34%	29%	40%	52%
TOTAL: Poor	11%	12%	12%	13%	8%	6%
TOTAL: Good	71%	67%	72%	68%	79%	84%
Base (n)	1,073	336	275	214	85	108



Speed of Easing Restrictions

- Q Overall, do you think your state or territory is moving too quickly, too slowly or at about the right speed when it comes to lifting lockdown restrictions?

	Total	NSW	VIC	State		
				QLD	SA	WA
Moving too quickly	20%	24%	20%	13%	18%	16%
About the right speed	67%	67%	70%	63%	71%	68%
Moving too slowly	13%	9%	9%	23%	10%	16%
Base (n)	1,073	336	275	214	85	108

Reopening pubs and clubs with patron restrictions

	Total	NSW	VIC	State		
				QLD	SA	WA
Moving too quickly	30%	33%	40%	19%	19%	25%
About the right speed	59%	60%	49%	62%	71%	63%
Moving too slowly	11%	7%	11%	19%	9%	12%
Base (n)	1,073	336	275	214	85	108

Reopening restaurants and cafes with patron restrictions

	Total	NSW	VIC	State		
				QLD	SA	WA
Moving too quickly	22%	23%	28%	13%	20%	19%
About the right speed	65%	67%	60%	64%	75%	68%
Moving too slowly	13%	10%	11%	23%	6%	14%
Base (n)	1,073	336	275	214	85	108

Allowing outside group exercise classes

	Total	NSW	VIC	State		
				QLD	SA	WA
Moving too quickly	16%	19%	19%	12%	13%	14%
About the right speed	72%	70%	72%	73%	76%	77%
Moving too slowly	12%	12%	9%	16%	11%	10%
Base (n)	1,073	336	275	214	85	108

Reopening schools for all students

	Total	NSW	VIC	State		
				QLD	SA	WA
Moving too quickly	23%	27%	30%	17%	14%	16%
About the right speed	67%	67%	57%	72%	79%	77%
Moving too slowly	10%	6%	13%	11%	7%	7%
Base (n)	1,073	336	275	214	85	108

Reopening borders between states and territories

	Total	State				
		NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Moving too quickly	24%	22%	25%	20%	36%	23%
About the right speed	58%	57%	57%	60%	52%	64%
Moving too slowly	18%	21%	18%	20%	12%	13%
Base (n)	1,073	336	275	214	85	108

- Two-thirds (67%) of participants believe that their state/territory is moving at about the right speed when it comes to removing restrictions. 24% believe that the restrictions are being eased too quickly and another 18% say they are moving too slowly.
- Queensland residents are most likely to say their state is moving too slowly (23%) while New South Wales residents are more likely to say their state is moving too quickly (24%).
- Participants 18-34 years and those living capital cities are generally more likely to say that their state is lifting restrictions too quickly.
- When asked about specific restrictions, participants are more likely to say allowing outside group exercise classes is moving at the right speed (72%) and less likely to say reopening pubs and clubs (59%) or reopening borders between states and territories (58%).
- 40% Victorians think their government is moving too quickly to reopen pubs and clubs and 30% think schools are being reopened too quickly.

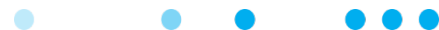


Agreement with 'Robodebt' Statements

Q As you may be aware, some of the people who received notifications had not actually been overpaid, but paid the money required in the notification. The government recently announced that it would be repaying \$721 million back to people who paid Centrelink debts they may never have owed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the 'Robodebt' program?

	NET: Agree	NET: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The Government should apologise to those negatively impacted by the 'Robodebt' program	74%	11%	46%	28%	14%	7%	5%
People who repaid money they didn't actually owe should be given interest and damages	66%	13%	36%	30%	20%	8%	5%
There should be a Royal Commission to investigate the failings of the 'Robodebt' program	55%	23%	28%	27%	22%	13%	11%
Even if it was poorly implemented, the use of automated notifications was a good idea	32%	43%	8%	24%	25%	18%	25%



NET: Agree	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
The Government should apologise to those negatively impacted by the 'Robodebt' program	74%	79%	69%	76%	81%
People who repaid money they didn't actually owe should be given interest and damages	66%	71%	60%	71%	74%
There should be a Royal commission to investigate the failings of the 'Robodebt' program	55%	64%	45%	60%	53%
Even if it was poorly implemented, the use of automated notifications was a good idea	32%	28%	43%	26%	24%
Base (n)	922	289	376	80	113

- 74% of participants who are aware of 'Robodebt' agree that the government should apologise to those who were negatively impacted and 66% agree people who repaid money they didn't actually owe, should be given interest and damages. Just over half (55%) of participants who are aware of 'Robodebt' agree there should be a Royal Commission into its failings, and only 32% agree the use of automated notifications was a good idea, even though it was poorly implemented.
- Participants over 55 are more likely to agree that people who repaid money they didn't actually owe should be given interest and damages (77%) and the Government should apologise (80%) than those 18-34 years old (57% and 63%).
- Coalition voters are the only voting segment to agree (43%) that even if it was poorly implemented, the use of automated notifications was a good idea, compared to all other voters (27%).



Agreement with Protests in America

Q In the United States of America, protesters accuse law enforcement officers of using excessive force towards African-Americans following the death of George Floyd, an African-American man who died whilst he was being arrested. A policeman has been charged with third-degree murder following his death.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	NET: Agree	NET: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
Protestors are right to demand better protection and treatment of African Americans in society	80%	11%	50%	30%	5%	5%	9%
Authorities in America have been unwilling to deal with institutional racism in the past, and that is why incidents like this continue to occur	78%	10%	50%	28%	6%	4%	12%
Incidents like this are only part of the wider discrimination against minority cultures in society	72%	16%	42%	30%	9%	7%	12%
The protesters want to loot and cause property damage, more than they want social change	54%	33%	30%	24%	17%	17%	12%
Incidents like this are isolated and do not provide evidence of institutional racism in police forces	33%	54%	13%	20%	26%	28%	12%



	NET: Agree	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Protestors are right to demand better protection and treatment of African Americans in society	80%		84%	80%	83%	77%
Authorities in America have been unwilling to deal with institutional racism in the past, and that is why incidents like this continue to occur	78%		81%	77%	88%	77%
Incidents like this are only part of the wider discrimination against minority cultures in society	72%		77%	71%	76%	72%
The protesters want to loot and cause property damage, more than they want social change	54%		49%	65%	29%	59%
Incidents like this are isolated and do not provide evidence of institutional racism in police forces	33%		28%	44%	20%	30%
		1,073	325	419	90	136

- The majority of participants agree that protestors are right to demand better protection and treatment of African Americans in society (80%), authorities in America have been unwilling to deal with institutional racism in the past, and that is why incidents like this continue to occur (78%) and incidents like this are only part of the wider discrimination against minority cultures in society (72%).
- 54% agree that the protesters want to loot and cause property damage, more than they want social change and 33% agree that incidents like this are isolated and do not provide evidence of institutional racism in police forces.
- Participants over 55 and those with dependent children are more likely to agree that the protesters want to loot and cause property damage, more than they want social change (60% and 61%) compared to 18-34 year olds (47%) and those without children (51%).
- Men (38%), 18-34 year olds (38%), those with a university education (39%), on a high household income (42%) or with dependent children (40%) are more likely to agree that incidents like this are isolated and do not provide evidence of institutional racism in police forces; than women (29%), 55+ year olds (28%), those with a secondary education (28%), on a low household income (31%) or without dependent children (29%).



- While a similar proportion of Coalition voters (80%) compared to all other voters (83%), agree that protestors are right to demand better protection and treatment of African Americans in society – they are less likely to ‘strongly agree’ with this statement (40% compared to 59% of all other voters).
- Coalition voters are also more likely to agree with the negative statements than other voters – with 65% agreeing that the protestors want to loot and cause property damage, more than they want social change (47% all other voters) and 44% agreeing that incidents like this are isolated and do not provide evidence of institutional racism in police forces (27% all other voters).



Institutional Racism in Australia

Q Institutional racism is where the institutions in a society are biased in a way that means particular ethnic groups are disadvantaged.

For example, Indigenous Australians are more likely to be arrested in some situations; whereas, white (European) Australians are more likely to be warned, cautioned or diverted away from the criminal justice system. Additionally, Indigenous Australians are more likely to die in custody than white Australians. To some people these arguments show that there is institutional racism against Indigenous Australians.

Which of the following best describes your view of institutional racism in Australia?

	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention		TOTAL: Other
			Coalition	Greens	
There is no racism in Australian police forces	9%	7%	11%	8%	11%
While there may be isolated incidents involving racism, police forces in Australia are not institutionally racist against Indigenous Australians	43%	40%	54%	21%	50%
There is institutional racism in Australian police forces which is shown through many examples of discrimination against Indigenous Australians	30%	36%	19%	56%	29%
I do not know enough about the issue to provide a view	18%	16%	16%	15%	10%
Base (n)	1,073	325	419	90	136



	NET: Agree	Total	Stance on Institutionalised			
			No institutional racism in police	Isolated incidences	Institutional racism in police	Don't know
Protestors are right to demand better protection and treatment of African Americans in society	80%		63%	82%	92%	67%
Authorities in America have been unwilling to deal with institutional racism in the past, and that is why incidents like this continue to occur	78%		67%	79%	89%	65%
Incidents like this are only part of the wider discrimination against minority cultures in society	72%		60%	73%	83%	59%
The protesters want to loot and cause property damage, more than they want social change	54%		70%	65%	40%	46%
Incidents like this are isolated and do not provide evidence of institutional racism in police forces	33%		74%	40%	21%	18%
Base (n)	1,073		97	471	315	190

- 43% of participants believe that while there may be isolated incidents involving racism, police forces in Australia are not institutionally racist against Indigenous Australians and another 30% say there is institutional racism in Australian police forces which is shown through many examples of discrimination against Indigenous Australians.
- Men (48%), participants over 55 (51%), Western Australia residents (52%) and Coalition voters (54%) are most likely to say that there are isolated incidents involving racism, police forces in Australia are not institutionally racist – compared to women (38%), 18-34 year olds (41%), NSW residents (39%) and Greens voters (21%).



- Participants who believe there is institutional racism in the Australian police force are more likely to agree with positive statements about the American protests and disagree with negative ones.



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.

