

The Essential Report

16 November 2020



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Date: 16/11/2020

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 11th to 16th November 2020 and is based on 1,010 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?

	Nov'20	Oct'20	Sep'20	Aug'20	Jul'20	Jun'20	May'20	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Dec'19
TOTAL: Approve	66%	63%	64%	66%	63%	65%	64%	59%	41%	39%	40%	45%
TOTAL: Disapprove	25%	27%	28%	23%	27%	26%	27%	31%	49%	52%	52%	43%
Don't know	9%	10%	8%	11%	10%	8%	9%	10%	10%	9%	8%	13%
Base (n)	1,010	1,082	1,076	1,010	1,054	1,059	1,093	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,035

	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Strongly approve	24%	11%	48%	8%	13%
Approve	41%	39%	46%	37%	41%
Disapprove	15%	21%	4%	26%	22%
Strongly disapprove	11%	19%	1%	21%	15%
Don't know	9%	9%	1%	8%	8%
TOTAL: Approve	66%	50%	94%	45%	55%
TOTAL: Disapprove	25%	40%	5%	47%	37%
Base (n)	1,010	323	404	80	122

- The Prime Minister's approval rating is now at 66%, equivalent of the score in August.
- Approval of the Prime Minister among is at 94% among Coalition supporters (89% last month) and 50% among Labor voters (45% last month).



Performance of Anthony Albanese

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

	Nov'20	Oct'20	Sep'20	Aug'20	Jul'20	Jun'20	May'20	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Dec'19
TOTAL: Approve	40%	44%	44%	44%	44%	43%	42%	44%	41%	41%	43%	39%
TOTAL: Disapprove	33%	29%	29%	30%	28%	30%	27%	29%	33%	31%	30%	28%
Don't know	27%	27%	27%	25%	28%	26%	31%	27%	26%	28%	27%	33%
Base (n)	1,010	1,082	1,076	1,010	1,054	1,059	1,093	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,035

	Total	Federal Voting Intention			TOTAL: Other
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	
Strongly approve	8%	11%	7%	8%	4%
Approve	33%	48%	23%	41%	27%
Disapprove	22%	14%	29%	15%	34%
Strongly disapprove	11%	5%	20%	5%	16%
Don't know	27%	23%	21%	31%	20%
TOTAL: Approve	40%	59%	30%	49%	31%
TOTAL: Disapprove	33%	19%	48%	19%	50%
Base (n)	1,010	323	404	80	122

- The Opposition Leader's approval rating has decreased from 44% in October to 40% this month.
- Albanese's approval rating has decreased among men (51% to 46%), people in regional areas (44% to 39%) and among Labor voters (65% to 59%).



Preferred Prime Minister

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

	Nov'20	Oct'20	Sep'20	Aug'20	Jul'20	Jun'20	May'20	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Nov'19
Scott Morrison	53%	50%	49%	52%	50%	53%	50%	46%	40%	36%	36%	44%
Anthony Albanese	24%	25%	26%	22%	27%	23%	25%	27%	35%	36%	39%	28%
Don't know	24%	25%	25%	26%	23%	24%	25%	27%	25%	28%	25%	29%
Base (n)	1,010	1,082	1,076	1,010	1,054	1,059	1,093	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,075

	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention		
			Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Scott Morrison	53%	31%	87%	28%	48%
Anthony Albanese	24%	48%	6%	37%	20%
Don't know	24%	22%	7%	35%	31%
Base (n)	1,010	323	404	80	122

- Just over half of participants believe that Scott Morrison would make a better PM than Anthony Albanese (53%), while a quarter would prefer the opposition leader (24%). A further quarter (24%) of participants don't know who would make the better PM.
- Morrison is strongly favoured by Coalition voters, with 87% believing Morrison makes the better PM, compared to Albanese (6%).
- Half of Labor voters believe Albanese would make the better PM (48%). 22% of Labor voters said they didn't know who would make the better leader.



Performance of State Premiers

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job <NAME> is doing as State Premier?

[Only asked in NSW, VIC, QLD, SA and WA]

TOTAL: Approve	16/11/20	02/11/20	19/10/20
Gladys Berejiklian NSW	75%	68%	67%
Daniel Andrews VIC	65%	61%	54%
Annastacia Palaszczuk QLD	65%	65%	62%
Steven Marshall SA	60%	71%	51%
Mark McGowan WA	87%	78%	84%

	Gladys Berejiklian NSW	Daniel Andrews VIC	Annastacia Palaszczuk QLD	Steven Marshall SA	Mark McGowan WA
Strongly approve	28%	28%	32%	24%	52%
Approve	47%	37%	33%	37%	35%
Disapprove	9%	14%	16%	14%	5%
Strongly disapprove	8%	14%	11%	8%	2%
Don't know	8%	7%	8%	18%	6%
TOTAL: Approve	75%	65%	65%	60%	87%
TOTAL: Disapprove	17%	28%	27%	21%	7%
Base (n)	307	278	219	66	98

- In NSW, Gladys Berejiklian improved her approval ratings over the past two weeks with to 75% (68% earlier in November).
- After the easing of lockdown restrictions and no number of new cases over the past two weeks, Daniel Andrews has seen his approval rating increase again to 65%. His disapproval rating has dropped from 40% in October to 28% this week.
- Following her election victory in Queensland, Annastacia Palaszczuk remains on 65% approval.



Interest in news stories

Q How closely have you been following these news stories in the last fortnight?

	TOTAL: CLOSELY	TOTAL: NOT CLOSELY
The 2020 US election	68%	32%
The easing of Covid-19 restrictions in Victoria	73%	27%
Labor MP Joel Fitzgibbon's resignation from the Shadow Cabinet	29%	71%
The allegations of sexual misconduct in the Federal Parliament, as outlined in an ABC Four Corners documentary	36%	64%

- The easing of restrictions in Victoria was the news item most closely followed over the past two weeks (73%), followed closely by the events following the US election (68%).
- The fall-out following the Four Corners documentary exposing allegations of sexual misconduct in the Federal Parliament was followed by 36% of people and Joel Fitzgibbon's resignation from the Shadow Cabinet by 29%.

Interest in news stories

Q How closely have you been following these news stories in the last fortnight?

The 2020 US election

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Very closely	28%	31%	24%	28%	27%	28%	30%	32%	28%	26%
Fairly closely	41%	44%	37%	39%	43%	40%	40%	45%	40%	32%
Not that closely	22%	18%	26%	24%	21%	21%	20%	18%	24%	29%
Not closely at all	10%	7%	12%	9%	9%	11%	9%	5%	7%	13%
TOTAL: CLOSELY	68%	75%	62%	67%	70%	68%	70%	77%	69%	58%
TOTAL: NOT CLOSELY	32%	25%	38%	33%	30%	32%	30%	23%	31%	42%
Base (n)	1,010	479	531	250	383	377	323	404	80	122



Interest in news stories

Q How closely have you been following these news stories in the last fortnight?

The easing of Covid-19 restrictions in Victoria

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Very closely	29%	28%	29%	20%	32%	33%	31%	32%	25%	23%
Fairly closely	44%	46%	42%	42%	43%	47%	48%	46%	35%	46%
Not that closely	20%	20%	20%	26%	19%	16%	17%	17%	30%	22%
Not closely at all	7%	5%	9%	12%	6%	4%	4%	4%	9%	10%
TOTAL: CLOSELY	73%	75%	71%	62%	75%	80%	79%	79%	61%	69%
TOTAL: NOT CLOSELY	27%	25%	29%	38%	25%	20%	21%	21%	39%	31%
Base (n)	1,010	479	531	250	383	377	323	404	80	122



Interest in news stories

Q How closely have you been following these news stories in the last fortnight?

Labor MP Joel Fitzgibbon’s resignation from the Shadow Cabinet

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Very closely	10%	14%	5%	7%	12%	10%	8%	13%	10%	7%
Fairly closely	20%	25%	15%	19%	18%	21%	21%	22%	13%	24%
Not that closely	36%	36%	35%	37%	35%	35%	42%	34%	34%	29%
Not closely at all	35%	26%	44%	37%	35%	34%	29%	31%	43%	40%
TOTAL: CLOSELY	29%	38%	20%	26%	30%	31%	29%	36%	23%	30%
TOTAL: NOT CLOSELY	71%	62%	80%	74%	70%	69%	71%	64%	77%	70%
Base (n)	1,010	479	531	250	383	377	323	404	80	122



Interest in news stories

Q How closely have you been following these news stories in the last fortnight?

The allegations of sexual misconduct in the Federal Parliament, as outlined in an ABC Four Corners documentary

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Very closely	12%	16%	9%	10%	15%	12%	13%	16%	10%	8%
Fairly closely	23%	26%	20%	22%	24%	23%	27%	25%	21%	27%
Not that closely	34%	32%	37%	34%	33%	36%	35%	34%	38%	30%
Not closely at all	30%	26%	34%	34%	29%	28%	25%	25%	30%	36%
TOTAL: CLOSELY	36%	42%	29%	32%	39%	36%	40%	40%	31%	34%
TOTAL: NOT CLOSELY	64%	58%	71%	68%	61%	64%	60%	60%	69%	66%
Base (n)	1,010	479	531	250	383	377	323	404	80	122



Coronavirus concerns

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

	16/11/20	02/11/20	05/10	21/09	07/09	24/08	10/08	27/07	13/07	22/06	15/06
Very concerned	27%	30%	30%	36%	37%	40%	50%	43%	36%	25%	28%
Quite concerned	44%	46%	52%	45%	45%	46%	40%	44%	48%	50%	45%
Not that concerned	23%	20%	15%	15%	13%	10%	7%	9%	12%	21%	23%
Not at all concerned	6%	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Base (n)	1,010	1,063	1,066	1,081	1,076	1,068	1,010	1,058	1,054	1,079	1,087

- Concern about the threat of Covid-19 is easing, with 29% saying they are either not that concerned (23%) or not at all concerned (6%). 27% are very concerned about the threat and the remaining 44% are quite concerned.

Federal Government response to Covid-19

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

	16/11	02/11	05/10	21/09	07/09	24/08	10/08	27/07	13/07	22/06	15/06	08/06
Very poor	5%	5%	5%	5%	8%	6%	7%	6%	6%	4%	3%	4%
Quite poor	9%	10%	12%	13%	12%	11%	8%	11%	10%	8%	8%	8%
Neither good, nor poor	18%	24%	22%	21%	22%	22%	21%	20%	20%	17%	16%	18%
Quite good	41%	39%	39%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	43%	42%	40%
Very good	26%	22%	21%	21%	18%	22%	24%	24%	24%	27%	30%	30%
TOTAL: Poor	15%	15%	18%	18%	19%	17%	16%	16%	16%	12%	11%	12%
TOTAL: Good	67%	61%	60%	61%	59%	61%	63%	64%	64%	71%	72%	70%
Base (n)	1,010	1,063	1,066	1,081	1,076	1,068	1,010	1,058	1,054	1,079	1,087	1,073

- Rating of the Federal Government's handling of Covid-19 has improved, with 67% rating it very or quite good (up from 61% earlier in the month).

State government response to Covid-19

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

TOTAL: Good	16/11	02/11	05/10	21/09	07/09	24/08	10/08	27/07	13/07	22/06	15/06	08/06
NSW	75%	68%	65%	67%	57%	59%	61%	62%	63%	70%	65%	67%
VIC	59%	55%	45%	47%	50%	47%	49%	53%	49%	65%	75%	72%
QLD	71%	69%	69%	68%	66%	73%	68%	67%	69%	64%	67%	68%
SA	76%	77%	81%	81%	74%	65%	72%	76%	79%	79%	76%	79%
WA	82%	81%	83%	84%	87%	84%	86%	82%	77%	75%	77%	84%

- Positive rating of the NSW Government has increased for the second time this month and now at 75%, and the highest rating we've seen in the past four months.
- Ratings in Victoria also continue to improve, with 59% now rating the Victorian government's response as good or very good.
- Ratings in Queensland, SA and WA are consistent with recent results.

Speed of easing lockdown restrictions in Victoria

Q Overall, do you think Victoria has moved too quickly, too slowly or at about the right speed in terms of lifting lockdown restrictions?

[ASKED IN VICTORIA ONLY]

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention		Location	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	Total: Coalition	Capital	Non-capital
Moved too quickly	7%	9%	5%	8%	9%	2%	3%	8%	7%	7%
About the right speed	65%	60%	71%	62%	68%	65%	77%	55%	68%	58%
Moved too slowly	28%	32%	24%	29%	22%	32%	20%	37%	26%	35%
Base (n)	278	133	145	74	113	91	90	112	206	72

- Victorians are generally satisfied with the speed of the easing of Covid-19 restrictions with 65% saying it's about right. 28% think the government have moved too slowly and just 7% said they moved too quickly.
- Those most likely to think the government has moved too slowly include men (32%), those aged 55+ (32%), people living in regional Victoria (35%) and Coalition voters (37%).



Trust in Federal Government

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Federal Government?

[% of participants who answered the question]

	TOTAL: Agree	TOTAL: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Regardless of who is in power, I trust the Federal Government to do what is right	66%	34%	23%	43%	22%	12%
As Australians we can always find ways to solve our country's problems and get what we want	84%	16%	29%	55%	13%	3%
The government should do more to solve the problems facing our country	91%	9%	53%	38%	7%	2%

TOTAL: Agree	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Regardless of who is in power, I trust the Federal Government to do what is right	66%	62%	70%	61%	71%	65%	60%	77%	56%	49%
As Australians we can always find ways to solve our country's problems and get what we want	84%	83%	85%	77%	87%	86%	80%	89%	79%	76%
The government should do more to solve the problems facing our country	91%	90%	93%	86%	92%	94%	92%	90%	91%	88%

- Almost unanimously, Australians agree that the government should do more to solve the problems facing our country (91%) however there is high levels of agreement that as Australians we can always find ways to solve our country's problems and get what we want (84%).
- Women are more likely than men to trust the Government to do what is right, regardless of who is in power (70% to 62%).



Appropriateness of elected officials engaging in sexual relations with staff

Q Is it ever appropriate for elected officials to start engaging in sexual relations with their staff?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Yes	18%	24%	13%	21%	16%	17%	13%	23%	22%	23%
No	82%	76%	87%	79%	84%	83%	87%	77%	78%	77%
Base (n)	1,010	479	531	250	383	377	323	404	80	122

- The majority of people do not think it is ever appropriate for elected officials to start engaging in sexual relations with their staff (82%).
- Men are more likely than women to think this practice is permissible (24% to 13%).



US politician favourability

Q How favourable or unfavourable do you feel towards each of the US politicians?

TOTAL: Favourable	After US election (16/11/20)	Before US election (02/11/20)
Donald Trump	21%	28%
Joe Biden	59%	43%
Base (n)	1,010	1,063

	TOTAL: Favourable	TOTAL: Unfavourable	Very favourable	Somewhat favourable	Somewhat unfavourable	Very unfavourable	Unsure	Never heard of them
Donald Trump	21%	72%	8%	12%	14%	58%	7%	1%
Joe Biden	59%	24%	21%	38%	13%	11%	15%	2%

- Since the US election, favourability of Donald Trump has fallen from 28% to 21%, while Joe Biden's has increased from 43% to 59%.



US election statements

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the recent US election?

	TOTAL: Agree	TOTAL: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
The Biden Presidency will be good for Australia	59%	14%	24%	34%	7%	7%	27%
The Biden Presidency should improve the USA's reputation	71%	15%	38%	33%	8%	7%	14%
The main reason Donald Trump lost the election is that many people voted illegally	21%	62%	11%	10%	12%	50%	17%

TOTAL: Agree	Federal Voting Intention				Gender	
	Labor	Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other	Male	Female
The Biden Presidency will be good for Australia	65%	61%	69%	47%	62%	55%
The Biden Presidency should improve the USA's reputation	76%	72%	86%	62%	72%	70%
The main reason Donald Trump lost the election is that many people voted illegally	18%	26%	17%	31%	27%	16%
Base (n)	323	404	80	122	479	531

- Most people think the Biden presidency will be good for Australia (59%) and it will restore the reputation of the USA (71%).



- Trump's widely disputed allegations of voter fraud are not accepted in Australia, with just 11% strongly agreeing that the main reason Donald Trump lost the election is that many people voted illegally, and 10% somewhat agreeing.



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.

