

# The Essential Report

29 March 2021



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Prepared By: Essential Research

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Data Supplied by:



Our researchers are members of the 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 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and is based on 1,100 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?

	29 Mar'21	15 Mar'21	Feb'21	Jan'21	Dec'20	Nov'20
TOTAL: Approve	<b>57%</b>	62%	65%	61%	62%	66%
TOTAL: Disapprove	<b>35%</b>	29%	28%	30%	28%	25%
Don't know	<b>8%</b>	8%	7%	9%	11%	9%
Base (n)	1,100	1,124	1,109	1,084	1,071	1,010

TOTAL: Approve	29 Mar'21	15 Mar'21	Feb'21	Jan'21	Dec'20	Nov'20
Men	<b>65%</b>	65%	65%	62%	68%	65%
Women	<b>49%</b>	59%	65%	59%	56%	67%
TOTAL: Disapprove						
Men	<b>30%</b>	28%	28%	32%	25%	28%
Women	<b>40%</b>	30%	28%	29%	30%	23%

- The Prime Minister's approval rating has dropped to 57% (from 62% earlier in the month) driven by lower approval among women (59% to 49%).
- Disapproval of the PM among women has increased to 40%, from 30% two weeks ago.



## Women in Politics

Q Currently there are 45 (out of 151) federal MPs who are women.

To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following reasons why there are fewer women than men in parliament.

	TOTAL: Agree	Mar'21	Feb'19
Political parties do not do enough to ensure gender equality in their organisations	<b>63%</b>	63%	57%
The process used by political parties to select electoral candidates favours men, not women	<b>56%</b>	56%	54%
Women choose not to get involved with politics	<b>43%</b>	43%	47%
Voters prefer to elect men, rather than women	<b>40%</b>	40%	39%
Women are less likely than men to have the experience and skills to make a good politician	<b>20%</b>	20%	20%

	TOTAL: Agree	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
			Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Political parties do not do enough to ensure gender equality in their organisations	<b>63%</b>	63%	58%	68%	66%	61%	62%	71%	59%	75%	56%
The process used by political parties to select electoral candidates favours men, not women	<b>56%</b>	56%	53%	60%	54%	59%	56%	63%	52%	67%	55%
Women choose not to get involved with politics	<b>43%</b>	43%	52%	34%	36%	45%	47%	37%	51%	39%	49%
Voters prefer to elect men, rather than women	<b>40%</b>	40%	43%	36%	52%	40%	29%	37%	46%	39%	41%
Women are less likely than men to have the experience and skills to make a good politician	<b>20%</b>	20%	28%	12%	23%	23%	13%	16%	27%	17%	19%
Base (n)		<b>1,100</b>	539	561	332	382	386	382	389	92	122



- The main barrier to female representation in parliament is seen to be the parties themselves. Almost two-thirds agree that political parties do not do enough to encourage gender equality in their organisations. Agreement with this statement has increased from 57% in 2019. The majority of Coalition (59%), Labor (71%) and Greens voters (75%) all agreed with this statement.
- Just over half of people (56%) agreed that the selection process is biased towards men.
- Women are more likely than men to agree that 'Political parties do not do enough to ensure gender equality in their organisations' (68% to 58%) and 'The process used by political parties to select electoral candidates favours men, not women' (60% to 53%).
- While men are more likely than women to agree that 'Women choose not to get involved with politics' (52% to 34%), 'Voters prefer to elect men, rather than women' (43% to 36%) and 'Women are less likely than men to have the experience and skills to make a good politician' (28% to 12%).



## Gender quotas

Q To what extent do you support or oppose political parties setting gender quotas when selecting candidates to achieve a representative number of women in parliament?

	Mar'21	Feb'19
Strongly support	<b>21%</b>	18%
Somewhat support	<b>27%</b>	29%
Somewhat oppose	<b>21%</b>	20%
Strongly oppose	<b>15%</b>	20%
Unsure	<b>16%</b>	14%
TOTAL: Support	<b>48%</b>	46%
TOTAL: Oppose	<b>36%</b>	40%
Base (n)	<b>1,100</b>	1,101

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Strongly support	<b>21%</b>	21%	20%	23%	26%	13%	22%	19%	40%	19%
Somewhat support	<b>27%</b>	28%	27%	33%	25%	25%	32%	29%	27%	22%
Somewhat oppose	<b>21%</b>	23%	19%	16%	19%	26%	21%	24%	13%	22%
Strongly oppose	<b>15%</b>	17%	12%	10%	14%	19%	10%	19%	4%	24%
Unsure	<b>16%</b>	11%	21%	18%	15%	16%	15%	9%	16%	14%
TOTAL: Support	<b>48%</b>	49%	47%	56%	52%	38%	54%	48%	67%	40%
TOTAL: Oppose	<b>36%</b>	40%	31%	26%	33%	46%	31%	43%	17%	46%
Base (n)	<b>1,100</b>	539	561	332	382	386	382	389	92	122

- Support for the introduction of gender quotas for candidate selection is unchanged from 2019 at 46% (48% in 2019).
- 48% of Coalition party voters support the introduction of quotas, 43% oppose and 9% are unsure.





## Views towards workplace culture and treatment of women in Parliament House

Q Following allegations of sexual assault and misogynistic behaviour by staffers, a review into Parliament House workplace culture has been initiated.

Which of the following is closest to your view on the issue?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Recent revelations about the culture in Parliament House is an isolated workplace issue, primarily about the safety of women working in politics	<b>40%</b>	50%	30%	47%	44%	29%	30%	52%	30%	41%
Recent revelations about the culture in Parliament House are symptomatic of the discrimination of women in society	<b>60%</b>	50%	70%	53%	56%	71%	70%	48%	70%	59%
Base (n)	<b>1,100</b>	539	561	332	382	386	382	389	92	122

- More people believe that the allegations of sexual assault and misogynistic culture in Parliament House is a wider society issue, than isolated to Federal politics (60% to 40%).
- This view was more strongly held by women than Men (70% to 50%).
- Labor and Greens voters were more likely to think the culture is shared by society (both 70%), while Coalition voters were more likely to believe the issues are isolated to politics (52%).



## Action to address gender inequality in Australia

Q To what extent do you support or oppose the following measures to address gender inequality in Australia?

	TOTAL: Support	TOTAL: Oppose	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support, nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Organise a national summit of all state and federal leaders to set targets and policies to reduce violence and sexual assault	69%	9%	37%	32%	22%	4%	4%
Implement the recommendations of the respect@work inquiry	68%	8%	33%	34%	24%	5%	4%
Establish a specialist sexual assault court	62%	13%	30%	31%	25%	8%	6%
Universal access to free child-care and early learning for families with young children	60%	16%	30%	30%	24%	9%	8%

TOTAL: Support	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Organise a national summit of all state and federal leaders to set targets and policies to reduce violence and sexual assault	<b>69%</b>	65%	73%	68%	68%	71%	76%	68%	70%	63%
Implement the recommendations of the respect@work inquiry	<b>68%</b>	62%	73%	64%	69%	70%	74%	65%	80%	59%
Establish a specialist sexual assault court	<b>62%</b>	53%	70%	64%	64%	58%	67%	58%	74%	56%
Base (n)	<b>1,100</b>	539	561	332	382	386	382	389	92	122

- There is majority support for all of the proposed steps to address gender inequality in Australia including a national summit to reduce violence and sexual assault (69% support), implement the recommendations of the respect@work inquiry (68%) and the establishment of a specialist sexual assault court (62%).
- In all cases women were more likely than men to support making the changes. Still, over half of men support making changes.



## Impact of Casualisation of work

Q Approximately 35% of Australia's workforce is now employed on a casual or contract basis.

Casual employees are not entitled to annual or sick leave or superannuation. They also face greater employment uncertainty. However, people choose casual work as it can provide higher wages and more flexibility in terms of hours.

Overall, do you think casual work has been good or bad for the following people or groups?

	NET: Good	NET: Bad	Very good	Quite good	Neither good, nor bad	Quite bad	Very bad
Employers	<b>65%</b>	<b>11%</b>	22%	43%	24%	8%	3%
The economy	<b>46%</b>	<b>19%</b>	13%	33%	35%	14%	6%
Individual workers	<b>42%</b>	<b>29%</b>	12%	30%	29%	19%	10%
The nation	<b>41%</b>	<b>26%</b>	11%	30%	33%	18%	8%
For you personally	<b>30%</b>	<b>17%</b>	12%	18%	53%	9%	8%

- Casual labour is seen to most benefit employers (65% think casual work has been very good or quite good) and the economy (46%).
- While 42% of people think casual work has been good for individual workers, 29% think it has been very bad or quite bad.
- Around a third of people (30%) say casual work has been good for them personally.

## Support for action for casual workers

Q To what extent do you support or oppose the following measures to protect the rights of workers currently employed on casual contracts?

	TOTAL: Support	TOTAL: Oppose	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Unsure
Right of workers to convert from casual to permanent after six months constant employment if they choose	84%	10%	53%	31%	6%	4%	7%
Recognise the status of gig-based workers who do regular hours as permanent	80%	8%	44%	37%	5%	3%	12%
Mobile leave entitlements for casuals and contract workers (sick leave, LSL)	74%	14%	41%	33%	10%	5%	11%

	TOTAL: Support	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
			Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Right of workers to convert from casual to permanent after six months constant employment if they choose	84%	84%	80%	87%	83%	81%	87%	87%	83%	87%	79%
Recognise the status of gig-based workers who do regular hours as permanent	80%	80%	80%	81%	80%	78%	83%	83%	81%	85%	73%
Mobile leave entitlements for casuals and contract workers (sick leave, LSL)	74%	74%	72%	77%	82%	72%	70%	78%	74%	82%	65%
Base (n)		1,100	539	561	332	382	386	382	389	92	122



- There is strong support for greater protection of workers' rights. 84% support the right of workers to convert from casual to permanent after six months constant employment if they choose, 80% support the recognition of the status of gig-based workers who do regular hours as permanent and 74% support the introduction of Mobile leave entitlements for casuals and contract workers.



## Republic

Q To what extent would you support or oppose Australia becoming a republic with an Australian head of state?

	Mar'21	Nov'18	May'18	Jan'18	Jan'17
TOTAL: Support	<b>48%</b>	44%	48%	44%	44%
TOTAL: Oppose	<b>28%</b>	32%	30%	29%	30%
Unsure	<b>25%</b>	24%	22%	26%	26%
Base (n)	<b>1,100</b>	1,028	1,025	1,038	1,015

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Strongly oppose	<b>16%</b>	18%	14%	9%	14%	23%	14%	20%	6%	23%
Somewhat oppose	<b>12%</b>	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	10%	17%	14%	9%
Somewhat support	<b>24%</b>	23%	26%	27%	24%	22%	26%	25%	23%	19%
Strongly support	<b>23%</b>	32%	15%	18%	25%	26%	27%	22%	29%	26%
Unsure	<b>25%</b>	16%	33%	33%	25%	17%	23%	17%	28%	24%
TOTAL: Oppose	<b>28%</b>	29%	26%	21%	26%	35%	25%	37%	20%	31%
TOTAL: Support	<b>48%</b>	55%	41%	45%	49%	48%	52%	47%	52%	45%
Base (n)	<b>1,100</b>	539	561	332	382	386	382	389	92	122



- Support for republic is now at 48%, consistent with previous years.
- Support for a republic with an Australian head of state is strongest among Labor (52%) and Greens voters (52%). Those aged over 55 were most likely to oppose the establishment of a republic (35%).
- A third of women and those aged 18-35 (both 33%) are unsure on their support or opposition to Australia becoming a republic.





## 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 Research Society membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour.

