

The Essential Report

25 October 2021



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Prepared By: Essential Research

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 20th October to 24th October 2021 and is based on 1,781 respondents.

This wave included a boosted sample size of respondents in SA and WA to examine these states more closely. The total number of respondents this wave in SA is n=443, and n=441 in WA. The weighting efficiency applied to the results at a national level is 63%, which gives an effective sample size of 1,120. The maximal margin of error at this effective sample size is $\pm 2.9\%$ (95% confidence level).

The full 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 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	25/10/21	16/11/20	02/11/20	19/10/20
[Prior to Oct'21] Gladys Berejiklian [Oct'21 onwards] Dominic Perrottet NSW	47%	75%	68%	67%
Daniel Andrews VIC	52%	65%	61%	54%
Annastacia Palaszczuk QLD	66%	65%	65%	62%
Steven Marshall SA	61%	60%	71%	51%
Mark McGowan WA	82%	87%	78%	84%
Base (n)	1,781	1,036	1,063	1,082

- Approval of Dominic Perrottet among those in NSW is at 47%, however as he has just been in the job for a short period of time, there is a large number who are as yet unsure of him (25%). Last October, approval of Gladys Berejiklian was at 67%.
- Approval of Daniel Andrews among Victorians is at 52%, around the same level as last October (54%) but a drop from the level last November (65%).
- Approval of Steven Marshall among South Australians remains at 61%, around the same level as last November (60%).
- Approval of Annastacia Palaszczuk among Queenslanders and Mark McGowan among Western Australians remain at similar levels as last October at 66% and 82% respectively.

	Dominic Perrottet NSW	Daniel Andrews VIC	Annastacia Palaszczuk QLD	Steven Marshall SA	Mark McGowan WA
Strongly approve	9%	20%	26%	15%	46%
Approve	38%	32%	40%	46%	36%
Disapprove	17%	16%	12%	18%	8%
Strongly disapprove	11%	24%	15%	8%	5%
Don't know	25%	9%	7%	13%	5%
TOTAL: Approve	47%	52%	66%	61%	82%
TOTAL: Disapprove	28%	40%	27%	27%	13%
Base (n)	352	275	217	443	441

- Nearly half (46%) of Western Australians strongly approve of the job Mark McGowan is doing as State Premier.
- About a quarter (26%) of Queenslanders strongly approve of the job Annastacia Palaszczuk is doing as State Premier.
- While 20% of Victorians strongly approve of the job Daniel Andrews is doing as State Premier, about a quarter (24%) strongly disapprove.
- A quarter (25%) of those in NSW are unsure about the job newly appointed State Premier Dominic Perrottet is doing.



Federal government response to Covid-19

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

	25/10	11/10	27/09	13/09	30/08	16/08	02/08	19/07	05/07	07/06	24/05	12/04	15/03
Very poor	12%	12%	12%	16%	16%	13%	16%	13%	12%	10%	6%	7%	5%
Quite poor	19%	18%	18%	20%	20%	22%	19%	19%	17%	14%	12%	10%	7%
Neither good nor poor	24%	25%	25%	21%	24%	24%	28%	23%	26%	22%	25%	21%	18%
Quite good	32%	32%	34%	28%	29%	32%	28%	32%	33%	38%	40%	40%	39%
Very good	14%	13%	11%	15%	10%	9%	10%	14%	11%	15%	18%	22%	31%
TOTAL: Poor	31%	30%	30%	35%	36%	35%	35%	31%	30%	24%	18%	17%	12%
TOTAL: Good	46%	45%	45%	43%	39%	41%	38%	46%	44%	53%	58%	62%	70%
Base (n)	1,781	1,097	1,094	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,098	1,100	1,099	1,104	1,100	1,368	1,124

TOTAL: Good	25/10	11/10	27/09	13/09	30/08	16/08	02/08	19/07	05/07	07/06	24/05	12/04	15/03
NSW	50%	48%	48%	41%	34%	34%	39%	49%	44%	62%	56%	66%	69%
VIC	34%	37%	39%	39%	35%	37%	33%	39%	40%	42%	57%	55%	65%
QLD	46%	50%	44%	43%	45%	44%	40%	46%	48%	54%	56%	63%	69%
SA	52%	46%	42%	54%	48%	45%	48%	51%	48%	58%	66%	62%	78%
WA	46%	49%	48%	51%	51%	53%	37%	51%	42%	49%	56%	65%	75%

- 46% of people rate the federal government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak as quite good or very good (similar to earlier this month), with 31% rating it as quite poor or very poor.
- The only state to record an improvement in positive rating of the federal government's handling of Covid-19 is South Australia (52% from 46% earlier in October).



State government response to Covid-19

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

TOTAL: Good	25/10	11/10	27/09	13/09	30/08	16/08	02/08	19/07	05/07	07/06	24/05	12/04	15/03
NSW	57%	55%	53%	46%	40%	42%	47%	54%	57%	69%	68%	73%	75%
VIC	43%	46%	44%	50%	44%	56%	54%	49%	50%	48%	63%	58%	62%
QLD	59%	68%	62%	65%	67%	66%	60%	62%	61%	65%	68%	72%	75%
SA	66%	67%	55%	67%	76%	68%	73%	68%	67%	67%	71%	75%	85%
WA	78%	80%	82%	87%	78%	87%	82%	77%	86%	75%	77%	84%	91%

- Positive rating of the state government's response to Covid-19 in NSW continues to increase (now 57%, up from 40% in August).
- Compared to earlier this month, positive rating has remained at a similar level in SA and WA, and decreased in VIC and most notably in QLD (now 59%, from 68%). This is the lowest rating in Queensland this year.



Immigration levels

Q Do you think the levels of immigration into Australia over the past ten years have been...?

	Oct'21	Jan'19	Apr'18	Oct'16
Much too low	5%	4%	1%	4%
A little too low	11%	7%	4%	8%
About right	36%	26%	23%	28%
A little too high	17%	23%	27%	22%
Much too high	20%	33%	37%	28%
Don't know	11%	6%	7%	10%
TOTAL: Too low	16%	12%	5%	12%
TOTAL: Too high	37%	56%	64%	50%

- Significantly fewer people now think levels of immigration into Australia over the last decade have been too high, compared to January 2019 and prior.
- Over a third (37%) of people now think immigration levels are too high, compared to 56% in January 2019, 64% in April 2018 and 50% in October 2016.
- This is driven by an increase of people who think immigration levels are about right (36% from 26% in January 2019).
- 16% of people now think immigration levels are too low.



	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Much too low	5%	6%	4%	6%	5%	4%	7%	3%	7%	7%
A little too low	11%	12%	10%	14%	8%	12%	13%	9%	16%	11%
About right	36%	37%	35%	40%	36%	34%	38%	39%	43%	31%
A little too high	17%	16%	17%	16%	17%	17%	16%	21%	9%	13%
Much too high	20%	20%	20%	13%	20%	26%	18%	23%	10%	28%
Don't know	11%	8%	14%	11%	13%	8%	8%	5%	15%	9%
TOTAL: Too low	16%	18%	14%	20%	13%	15%	20%	12%	23%	19%
TOTAL: Too high	37%	37%	37%	29%	38%	43%	34%	44%	19%	41%
Base (n)	1,781	875	906	533	601	647	636	610	157	220

- Those aged over 55 are more likely than younger cohorts to think immigration levels are too high (43% to 38% of those aged 35-54, and 29% of those aged 18-34). A quarter (26%) of those over 55 think the levels are much too high.
- Among voters, Coalition voters (44%) are most likely to think immigration levels are too high, followed by minor and independent party voters (41%). Greens voters (19%) are least likely to think this. About a third (34%) of Labor voters think the levels are too high.



Views towards immigration

Q The NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet recently called for an increase in Australia’s immigration levels.

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

	TOTAL: Agree	TOTAL: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Increasing immigration levels would add more pressure on the housing system and infrastructure	63%	11%	31%	32%	25%	8%	4%
Immigration is vital for Australia’s business and economy	51%	20%	18%	33%	29%	11%	9%
Increasing immigration levels would equip businesses with the skilled workers they need to reopen as Covid-19 restrictions are eased	50%	22%	16%	33%	28%	13%	9%
Increasing immigration levels would help to address Australia’s growing skills shortages as the population ages	49%	22%	14%	35%	29%	13%	9%
Increasing immigration levels would create more competition for jobs and slow wage growth	48%	21%	18%	30%	31%	13%	7%



	TOTAL: Agree	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
			Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Increasing immigration levels would add more pressure on the housing system and infrastructure	63%		62%	64%	54%	65%	70%	66%	65%	59%	64%
Immigration is vital for Australia's business and economy	51%		54%	48%	53%	50%	50%	56%	54%	60%	39%
Increasing immigration levels would equip businesses with the skilled workers they need to reopen as Covid-19 restrictions are eased	50%		52%	47%	50%	47%	51%	54%	52%	56%	42%
Increasing immigration levels would help to address Australia's growing skills shortages as the population ages	49%		51%	46%	48%	46%	52%	53%	51%	57%	39%
Increasing immigration levels would create more competition for jobs and slow wage growth	48%		51%	45%	50%	50%	46%	51%	48%	45%	51%
Base (n)		1,781	875	906	533	601	647	636	610	157	220

- Older cohorts are more likely to agree than younger groups that increasing immigration levels would add more pressure on the housing system and infrastructure. 70% of those over 55 agree with this statement, compared to 65% of those aged 35-54 and 54% of those aged 18-34. Agreement with this statement is consistent across voters.
- Men are more likely than women to agree that immigration is vital for Australia's business and economy (54% to 48% respectively).
- Minor and independent party voters are least likely to agree that immigration is vital for Australia's business and economy (39%), that increasing immigration levels would equip businesses with the skilled workers they need (42%), and help to address Australia's growing skills shortages as the population ages (39%).



TOTAL: Agree	People who say the levels of immigration have been too low	People who say the levels of immigration have been about right	People who say the levels of immigration have been too high
Increasing immigration levels would add more pressure on the housing system and infrastructure	47%	62%	76%
Immigration is vital for Australia's business and economy	74%	60%	34%
Increasing immigration levels would equip businesses with the skilled workers they need to reopen as Covid-19 restrictions are eased	77%	58%	34%
Increasing immigration levels would help to address Australia's growing skills shortages as the population ages	75%	56%	34%
Increasing immigration levels would create more competition for jobs and slow wage growth	47%	48%	53%
Base (n)	277	645	694

- Those who think immigration levels have been too high in the past decade are less likely to agree with the benefits and business need for immigration.
- Those who think immigration levels have been too low are more likely to agree that immigration is vital for business and economy (74% to 60% 'about right' and 34% 'too high'), and that increasing immigration levels would equip businesses with the skilled workers they need (77% to 58% and 34%), and help to address Australia's growing skills shortages as the population ages (75% to 56% and 34%).
- Those who think the levels are too high are more likely to think increasing levels would add more pressure on the housing system and infrastructure (76% to 47%).



Views towards temporary work visas

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about temporary work visas in Australia?

	TOTAL: Agree	TOTAL: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Temporary work visas should be used to cover genuine skills shortages, not to provide cheap labour	72%	8%	41%	31%	20%	5%	3%
Everyone who works in Australia should be entitled to the same pay and working conditions regardless of their visa status	67%	10%	34%	33%	24%	7%	3%
Temporary work visas are essential for Australian businesses to fill skills shortages	59%	14%	19%	40%	26%	8%	6%
Temporary work visas have been used to drive down wages and working conditions in Australia	47%	16%	17%	30%	37%	12%	4%

- There is high agreement with the need to provide equivalent pay and conditions to migrant workers. 72% of people agree temporary work visas should be used to cover genuine skills shortages, not to provide cheap labour and 67% agree that all workers in Australia should be entitled to the same pay and working conditions.
- There is less consensus as to whether temporary work visas have been used to drive down wages and working conditions in Australia. Just 47% agree with this statement, and a further 37% neither agree nor disagree.



	TOTAL: Agree	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
			Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Temporary work visas should be used to cover genuine skills shortages, not to provide cheap labour	72%		71%	73%	60%	70%	85%	74%	77%	74%	64%
Everyone who works in Australia should be entitled to the same pay and working conditions regardless of their visa status	67%		67%	66%	57%	66%	75%	71%	70%	75%	55%
Temporary work visas are essential for Australian businesses to fill skills shortages	59%		61%	58%	55%	57%	66%	63%	66%	63%	46%
Temporary work visas have been used to drive down wages and working conditions in Australia	47%		50%	44%	49%	50%	43%	53%	44%	51%	46%
Base (n)		1,781	875	906	533	601	647	636	610	157	220

- Those aged over 55 are more likely than younger cohorts to agree that temporary work visas should be used to cover genuine skills shortages, not to provide cheap labour (85% to 65% younger cohorts), everyone who works in Australia should be entitled to the same pay and working conditions regardless of their visa status (75% to 62%), and temporary work visas are essential for Australian businesses to fill skills shortages (66% to 56%).
- Minor/independent party voters are less likely than other voters to agree that temporary work visas should be used to cover genuine skills shortages, not to provide cheap labour (64% to 75% all other voters), everyone who works in Australia should be entitled to the same pay and working conditions regardless of their visa status (55% to 71%), and temporary work visas are essential for Australian businesses to fill skills shortages (46% to 64%).



	TOTAL: Agree	People who say the levels of immigration have been too low	People who say the levels of immigration have been about right	People who say the levels of immigration have been too high
Temporary work visas should be used to cover genuine skills shortages, not to provide cheap labour		71%	73%	75%
Everyone who works in Australia should be entitled to the same pay and working conditions regardless of their visa status		78%	67%	64%
Temporary work visas are essential for Australian businesses to fill skills shortages		71%	66%	52%
Temporary work visas have been used to drive down wages and working conditions in Australia		49%	44%	56%
	Base (n)	277	645	694

- Irrespective of views towards immigration, the majority agree temporary work visas should be used to cover genuine skills shortages, not to provide cheap labour.
- While overall there is majority agreement that everyone who works in Australia should be entitled to the same pay and working conditions regardless of their visa status, those who say the levels of immigration have been too low are more likely to agree with this than those who think the levels have been about right or too high (78% to 67% and 64% respectively).
- Those who say the levels of immigration have been too low are also more likely to agree that temporary work visas are essential for Australian businesses to fill skills shortages (71% to 66% and 52%).
- Those who say immigration levels have been too high are more likely to agree temporary work visas have been used to drive down wages and working conditions in Australia (56% to 44% 'about right' and 49% 'too low').



Federal government’s role in increasing employment and jobs

Q Which of the following is closer to your view of the federal government’s role in relation to employment and jobs?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
The federal government’s role is to reduce taxes and red tape so businesses can employ more workers	35%	42%	29%	34%	35%	36%	30%	44%	31%	38%
The federal government’s role is to invest behind local industries to create more jobs	44%	44%	43%	40%	43%	47%	49%	42%	48%	46%
Unsure	21%	14%	28%	26%	22%	18%	21%	14%	21%	16%
Base (n)	1,781	875	906	533	601	647	636	610	157	220

- More people think the federal government’s role is to invest behind local industries to create more jobs than to reduce taxes and red tape so businesses can employ more workers (44% to 35%). 21% are unsure on their preferred role.
- Men are more likely than women to think the federal government’s role is to reduce taxes and red tape so businesses can employ more workers (42% to 29%).
- Coalition voters are also more likely to agree with this viewpoint than all other voters combined (44% to 32% respectively).



Best net zero target for jobs

Q Which of the following approaches to acting on climate change and reducing emissions do you think will have the most positive long-term effect on jobs?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Set a more ambitious target for 2030	35%	36%	34%	34%	35%	36%	43%	27%	55%	32%
Set a net zero target for 2050	29%	32%	26%	37%	29%	23%	31%	32%	27%	26%
Not set any targets for 2030 or 2050	14%	16%	12%	10%	10%	20%	6%	21%	2%	24%
Unsure	22%	16%	28%	19%	26%	21%	20%	19%	15%	18%
Column n	1,781	875	906	533	601	647	636	610	157	220

- About a third (35%) think setting a more ambitious emissions reduction target for 2030 will have the most positive long-term effect on jobs, while a further 29% think setting a net zero target for 2050 would be best for jobs.
- 14% think not setting any targets for 2030 or 2050 is best for jobs, and 22% are unsure.
- Labor voters (43%) and Greens voters (55%) are most likely to think a more ambitious 2030 target will have the most positive long-term effect on jobs.
- Minor/independent party voters (24%) and Coalition voters (21%) are most likely to think not setting any targets would be best for jobs.
- Those aged 18-34 are more likely than older cohorts to think setting a net zero target for 2050 is best (37% to 29% of those aged 35-54 and 23% of those over 55).



View of Australia's manufacturing industry

Q Thinking about the Australian manufacturing industry, which of the following statements is closest to your view?

	Oct'21	Oct'13	Jun'13	Aug'12
With government support, Australia can have a successful manufacturing industry	69%	65%	61%	63%
There is no future for manufacturing in Australia and government support would be a waste of money	15%	19%	22%	17%
Unsure	16%	16%	17%	21%

- 69% of people think with government support, Australia can have a successful manufacturing industry. 15% think there is no future for manufacturing in Australia and government support would be a waste of money. 16% are unsure.
- Results in 2021 are similar to 2013 and 2012 levels.

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	TOTAL: Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
With government support, Australia can have a successful manufacturing industry	69%	69%	68%	57%	64%	83%	69%	73%	61%	70%
There is no future for manufacturing in Australia and government support would be a waste of money	15%	19%	12%	22%	16%	8%	16%	16%	18%	17%
Unsure	16%	12%	20%	20%	21%	9%	15%	11%	21%	13%
Column n	1,781	875	906	533	601	647	636	610	157	220

- Those aged over 55 (83%) are most likely to think Australia can have a successful manufacturing industry with government support.
- Among voters, Coalition voters (73%) are most likely to have this view, with minor/independent party voters (70%) and Labor voters (69%) following closely behind.
- Men (19%) and those aged 18-34 (22%) are most likely to think there is no future for manufacturing in Australia and government support would be a waste of money.



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 run by Essential Research with sample provided by Qualtrics from online panels.

The online omnibus is active from the Wednesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. The target population is all Australian residents aged 18+. Participants were invited to participate and completed the survey online without an interviewer present and incentives were offered for participation.

The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000+ interviews. Quotas are applied to be representative of the target population by age, gender and location.

RIM weighting is applied to the data using information sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). The factors used in the weighting are age, gender, location and party ID.

Information for the weighting efficiency, effective sample size and margin of error for each poll (from June 2021) can be found here: <https://essentialvision.com.au/about-this-poll>

Each fortnight, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses 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. Full text for standard voting and regular political preferences can be found in the link above. No questions were asked prior to these questions which have material influence on results.

Participants not eligible to vote in federal elections (either for age, residency or other reasons) are excluded from voting intention. Eligible participants are able to select 'Unsure' for voting intention. They were then asked a 'leaner' question which also included an 'Unsure' option. Participants answering 'Unsure' are NOT excluded from published results, or any subsequent questions. 2 party preferred (2PP) calculations use stated preference. Preference flows from previous federal and state elections are only used for participants answering 'Unsure' for stated preference.

All Essential Research staff hold Research Society membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour. This research is compliant with the Australian Polling Council Quality Mark standards.

