

# The Essential Report

21 April 2015





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**Prepared by:** Essential Research

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the Association of Market and Social Research Organisations.



Our researchers are members of  
the Australian Market and Social Research Society

## About this poll

This report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The survey was conducted online from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> April and is based on 1,009 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on economic issues, the Federal Budget, taxes, superannuation funds investments, sending troops to Iraq and penalty rates.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 13.

Note that due to rounding, not all tables necessarily total 100% and subtotals may also vary.

## Federal politics – voting intention

Q. If a Federal Election was held today to which party will you probably give your first preference vote? If not sure, which party are you currently leaning toward?

Q. If don't know -Well which party are you currently leaning to?

Sample size = 1,790 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 24/3/15	2 weeks ago 7/4/15	Last week 14/4/15	This week 21/4/15
Liberal		37%	36%	37%	<b>37%</b>
National		3%	4%	3%	<b>3%</b>
<b>Total Liberal/National</b>	<b>45.6%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>33.4%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Greens	8.6%	10%	10%	10%	<b>11%</b>
Palmer United Party	5.5%	1%	2%	2%	<b>1%</b>
Other/Independent	6.9%	8%	9%	9%	<b>9%</b>

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 24/3/15	2 weeks ago 7/4/15	Last week 14/4/15	This week 21/4/15
<b>Liberal National</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	46%	47%	48%	<b>48%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>46.5%</b>	54%	53%	52%	<b>52%</b>

NB. The data in the above tables comprise 2-week averages derived from the first preference/leaning to voting questions. Respondents who select 'don't know' are not included in the results. The two-party preferred estimate is calculated by distributing the votes of the other parties according to their preferences at the 2013 election.

## Concern about economic issues

Q. How concerned are you personally about the following economic issues?

	Total concerned	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not very concerned	Not at all concerned	Don't know
The cost of living	<b>87%</b>	53%	34%	9%	2%	2%
House prices	<b>73%</b>	40%	33%	19%	6%	3%
Unemployment	<b>74%</b>	33%	41%	18%	5%	3%
Insecure employment	<b>69%</b>	33%	36%	20%	7%	4%
The value of the Australian dollar	<b>67%</b>	26%	41%	25%	4%	3%
National debt	<b>63%</b>	26%	37%	25%	7%	5%
The current budget deficit	<b>63%</b>	26%	37%	25%	8%	5%

Issues of highest concern were cost of living (53% very concerned) and house prices (40%). Only 26% were very concerned about the national debt and the current budget deficit.

Cost of living was of more concern to women (57% very concerned), Labor voters (62%) and those on incomes under \$1,000 pw (63%).

House prices were of more concern to those aged under 35 (50%)

National debt was of more concern to Liberal/National voters (37%) and those aged 65+ (42%).

## Policies of the major parties

*Q. In general, do you think the policies of the Liberal/National Coalition and the policies of Labor favor the rich, favor the middle class, favor the poor, or do they treat all groups equally?*

						May 2014				
	Favor the rich	Favor the average Australian	Favor the poor	Treat all groups equally	Don't know	Favor the rich	Favor the average Australian	Favor the poor	Treat all groups equally	Don't know
The policies of the Liberal/National Coalition...	56%	20%	2%	8%	14%	54%	16%	5%	13%	12%
The policies of Labor...	16%	39%	18%	7%	19%	16%	34%	22%	11%	17%

Just over half (56%) of Australians believe that the policies of the Lib/Nat Coalition favour the rich. 20% think they favour the average Australian, 2% think they favour the poor and 8% think they favour all groups equally.

The largest proportion of respondents (39%) think that the policies of Labor favour the average Australian. 16% think they favour the rich, 18% think they favour the poor and 7% think they treat all groups equally.

Since this question was asked 12 months ago, there has been a slight shift for the Liberal/National Coalition toward favouring the wealthy (+2%) and the average Australian (+4%). And for Labor there has been a small shift toward favouring the average Australian (+5%). Fewer respondents think either party treats all groups equally.

## Budget expectations

Q. In general, do you think the next Federal Budget, to be announced next month, will be good or bad for?

	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Bad	Very bad	Don't know	May 2014 good	May 2014 bad
Older Australians	9%	52%	2%	7%	25%	33%	19%	14%	8%	67%
People on lower incomes	11%	51%	2%	9%	23%	29%	22%	14%	12%	60%
Younger Australians	10%	43%	2%	8%	33%	28%	15%	15%	11%	49%
Average working people	11%	43%	1%	10%	32%	32%	11%	11%	9%	63%
Australian families	13%	42%	2%	11%	30%	32%	10%	14%	11%	59%
You personally	9%	41%	2%	7%	37%	26%	15%	14%	8%	55%
The economy over all	19%	33%	2%	17%	33%	24%	9%	14%	28%	36%
Australian business	32%	17%	6%	26%	34%	13%	4%	16%	25%	33%
People who are well off	49%	9%	19%	30%	27%	8%	1%	14%	40%	23%

41% of respondents believe that the budget will be bad for them personally. About half think it will be bad for older Australians (52%) and people on lower incomes (51%).

The only groups that more respondents thought the budget would be good for rather than bad was 'people who are well off' (49% good, 9% bad) and Australian business (32% good/17% bad).

Compared to expectations of the previous budget, respondents were considerably less pessimistic on most issues, especially older Australian (-15%), average working people (-20%), Australian families (-17%) and you personally (-14%).

## Concern about taxes

Q. Thinking about taxes, how concerned are you about the following?

	Total concerned	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not very concerned	Not at all concerned	Don't know
The feeling that some companies don't pay their fair share	<b>82%</b>	53%	29%	10%	2%	6%
The feeling that some wealthy people don't pay their fair share	<b>82%</b>	53%	29%	11%	2%	6%
The complexity of the tax system	<b>67%</b>	27%	40%	22%	4%	6%
The amount of tax you pay	<b>54%</b>	22%	32%	29%	10%	7%
The feeling that some poor people don't pay their fair share	<b>37%</b>	14%	23%	29%	26%	8%

More than half were very concerned about the feeling that some companies don't pay their fair share of taxes (53%) and the feeling that some wealthy people don't pay their fair share (53%). Only 14% were very concerned about the feeling that some poor people don't pay their fair share.

65% of Labor voters were very concerned that some wealthy people don't pay their fair share compared to 43% of Liberal/National voters. 34% of Labor voters were very or somewhat concerned that some poor people don't pay their fair share compared to 49% of Liberal/National voters.



## Superannuation fund investments

*Q. When making decisions about investing members' money do you think superannuation funds should consider the social and environmental impacts of companies they invest in or should they only consider the profits made by those companies?*

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Industry fund	Retail fund	SMF
Should consider social and environmental impacts	<b>59%</b>	60%	54%	86%	64%	64%	61%	64%
Should only consider profits	<b>18%</b>	15%	29%	8%	11%	18%	23%	24%
Don't know	<b>23%</b>	25%	17%	7%	24%	18%	16%	12%

59% think that when making decisions about investing members' money, superannuation funds should consider the social and environmental impacts of companies they invest in and 18% think that they should only consider the profits made by those companies.

64% of those with in industry super funds and 61% of those in retail funds think they should consider the social and environmental impacts of companies they invest in.

There was little difference across income groups.

## Approval of superannuation fund investments

Q. Would you approve or disapprove of superannuation companies investing their members' funds in the following industries?

	Total approve	Total dis-approve	Strongly approve	Approve	Dis-approve	Strongly dis-approve	Don't know	Approve Industry fund	Approve Retail fund	Approve SMF
Medical science and technology	<b>81%</b>	<b>7%</b>	40%	41%	5%	2%	12%	84%	85%	87%
Renewable energy	<b>80%</b>	<b>7%</b>	39%	41%	5%	2%	12%	86%	83%	84%
Building and construction	<b>78%</b>	<b>9%</b>	25%	53%	7%	2%	13%	81%	83%	91%
Defence manufacturing	<b>57%</b>	<b>26%</b>	13%	44%	17%	9%	18%	58%	67%	71%
Fossil fuels (coal, gas)	<b>47%</b>	<b>35%</b>	8%	39%	22%	13%	17%	44%	58%	62%
Alcoholic beverages	<b>32%</b>	<b>53%</b>	4%	28%	27%	26%	14%	33%	44%	33%
Gambling	<b>19%</b>	<b>70%</b>	4%	15%	24%	46%	11%	18%	27%	25%
Tobacco companies	<b>14%</b>	<b>74%</b>	3%	11%	23%	51%	12%	13%	19%	15%

There was very strong approval of super companies investing in medical science and technology (81%), renewable energy (80%) and building and construction (78%). There was strong disapproval of investing in tobacco companies (74%) and gambling (70%).

Respondents were more divided over investing in fossil fuels (47% approve/35% disapprove). Members of industry super funds even were evenly split (44% approve/42% disapprove).

## Sending troops to Iraq

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of sending more Australian troops to Iraq to help train Iraqi forces fighting Islamic State militants?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	March 2015
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Strongly approve	11%	10%	16%	7%	8%	7%
Approve	29%	25%	39%	20%	33%	29%
Disapprove	27%	31%	23%	30%	29%	29%
Strongly disapprove	17%	23%	10%	21%	17%	21%
Don't know	16%	12%	12%	22%	14%	14%

40% approve of sending more Australian troops to Iraq to help train Iraqi forces fighting Islamic State militants and 44% disapprove.

A majority of Liberal/National voters (55%) approve but other voter groups disapprove – 54% of Labor voters and 51% of Greens voters.

Men are more likely to approve (49% approve/38% disapprove) while women tend to disapprove (32% approve/49% disapprove).

Since a similar question was asked in March, there has been a shift towards approval of sending troops to Iraq.

## Surcharge for hospitality

*Q. Hospitality businesses typically pay their staff 250 per cent of their regular wage to work on public holidays. What surcharge would you be willing to pay to use these businesses on public holidays?*

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other
None	34%	31%	41%	25%	27%
10 per cent	32%	31%	32%	37%	34%
20 per cent	11%	11%	11%	19%	8%
30 per cent	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%
More than 30%	3%	6%	1%	2%	3%
<b>Total 10% or more</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>48%</b>
Not sure	18%	18%	11%	14%	26%

49% say they would be willing to pay a surcharge of at least 10% to use hospitality businesses on public holidays. 34% would not be willing to pay any surcharge.

Those most likely to be willing to pay a surcharge were part-time workers (56%) and people on income over \$1,600 pw (54%).

## Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a weekly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct research on a week-by-week basis since November 2007.

Each week, 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 media and social issues that are present at the time.

Your Source has a self-managed consumer online panel of over 100,000 members. The majority of panel members have been recruited using off line methodologies, effectively ruling out concerns associated with online self-selection.

Your Source has validation methods in place that prevent panellist over use and ensure member authenticity. Your Source randomly selects 18+ males and females (with the aim of targeting 50/50 males/females) from its Australia wide panel. An invitation is sent out to approximately 7000 – 8000 of their panel members. 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 best guide to a poll's accuracy is to look at the record of the polling company - how have they performed at previous elections or other occasions where their estimates can be compared with known population figures. In the last poll before the 2010 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes were all within 1% of the election results.

The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points. 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 and senior Your Source staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour. Your Source is an Australian social and market research company specializing in recruitment, field research, data gathering and data analysis. Essential Research is a member of the Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO). Your Source holds Interviewer Quality Control Australia (IQCA) accreditation, Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO) membership and World Association of Opinion and Marketing Research Professionals (ESOMAR) membership. Both Essential Research and Your Source are ISO accredited market research companies. This research was conducted in compliance with AS: ISO20252 guidelines.