

The Essential Report

4 August 2015





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Prepared by: Essential Research

Data supplied:



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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 30th July to 2nd August and is based on 1,127 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leaders, international threats, asylum seeker policies and renewable energy target.

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 = 1,866 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 7/7/15	2 weeks ago 21/7/15	Last week 28/7/15	This week 4/8/15
Liberal		38%	38%	36%	36%
National		3%	3%	4%	3%
Total Liberal/National	45.6%	41%	41%	40%	39%
Labor	33.4%	39%	38%	38%	38%
Greens	8.6%	10%	11%	11%	12%
Palmer United Party	5.5%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Other/Independent	6.9%	9%	9%	9%	9%

2 Party Preferred	Election 7 Sep 13	4 weeks ago 7/7/15	2 weeks ago 21/7/15	Last week 28/7/15	This week 4/8/15
Liberal National	53.5%	48%	48%	47%	47%
Labor	46.5%	52%	52%	53%	53%

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.

Best leader of the Liberal Party

Q. Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Liberal Party?

	Total	Male	Female	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2014	Feb 2015
Tony Abbott	18%	21%	15%	4%	41%	3%	9%	18%	11%
Malcolm Turnbull	24%	30%	18%	32%	21%	34%	20%	31%	24%
Joe Hockey	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	6%	5%
Julie Bishop	17%	11%	22%	17%	17%	21%	20%	4%	21%
Christopher Pyne	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	<1%	<1%
Scott Morrison	3%	5%	1%	2%	6%	-	3%	1%	2%
Someone else	13%	13%	13%	17%	3%	20%	28%	19%	13%
Don't know	22%	16%	27%	24%	6%	187%	17%	21%	24%

24% (no change since February) think Malcolm Turnbull would make the best leader of the Liberal Party, 18% prefer Tony Abbott (up 7%) and 17% prefer Julie Bishop (down 4%).

Among Liberal/National voters, 41% (up 18%) prefer Tony Abbott, 21% (down 3%) Malcolm Turnbull and 17% (down 9%) Julie Bishop.

Preferences of men were Malcolm Turnbull 30%, Tony Abbott 21% and Julie Bishop 11%.

Preferences of women were Julie Bishop 22%, Malcolm Turnbull 18% and Tony Abbott 15%.

Leader of the Labor Party

Q. Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Labor Party?

	Total	Men	Women	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Bill Shorten	16%	20%	13%	34%	10%	4%	6%
Anthony Albanese	12%	13%	11%	13%	11%	18%	16%
Tanya Plibersek	13%	12%	14%	15%	10%	29%	7%
Chris Bowen	5%	7%	3%	3%	7%	7%	5%
Someone else	18%	20%	17%	10%	26%	15%	35%
Don't know	36%	29%	42%	25%	35%	27%	31%

16% think Bill Shorten would make the best leader of the Labor Party, 13% prefer Tanya Plibersek and 12% Anthony Albanese. 18% prefer someone else and 36% don't know.

Among Labor voters, 34% prefer Bill Shorten, 15% Tanya Plibersek and 13% Anthony Albanese

Preferences of men were Bill Shorten 20%, Anthony Albanese 13% and Tanya Plibersek 12%.

Preferences of women were Tanya Plibersek 14%, Bill Shorten 13% and Anthony Albanese 11%.

Biggest threats to the world

Q. Which of the following international issues represents the biggest threat to the world? And which is the second biggest threat?

	Total	Biggest threat	Second biggest threat	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Terrorism	61%	43%	18%	61%	71%	35%	57%
Global economic instability	51%	23%	28%	50%	52%	50%	54%
Climate change	38%	21%	17%	47%	21%	68%	36%
Fighting in the Middle East	23%	6%	17%	17%	27%	21%	29%
Chinese economic slowdown	12%	4%	8%	12%	13%	4%	12%
Tensions between Russia and its neighbours	8%	2%	6%	6%	10%	8%	9%
Tensions between China and its neighbours	7%	1%	6%	6%	6%	14%	3%

61% think that terrorism is one of the two biggest threats to the world and 51% nominated global economic instability as one of the biggest threats. 38% think climate change is one of the two biggest threats.

Labor and Liberal/National voters nominated terrorism and global economic instability as the biggest threats while Greens voters were more likely to think climate change was a bigger threat (68%). Only 21% of Liberal/National voters think climate change is one of the two biggest threats.

Biggest threats to Australia

Q. Which of the following international issues represents the biggest threat to Australia? And which is the second biggest threat?

	Total	Biggest threat	Second biggest threat	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Global economic instability	55%	25%	30%	51%	58%	59%	55%
Terrorism	47%	26%	21%	48%	54%	21%	46%
Climate change	38%	22%	16%	47%	18%	72%	31%
Chinese economic slowdown	36%	20%	16%	31%	44%	27%	36%
Fighting in the Middle East	12%	3%	9%	10%	13%	9%	15%
Tensions between China and its neighbours	9%	4%	5%	11%	8%	8%	13%
Tensions between Russia and its neighbours	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	3%	5%

55% think that global economic instability is one of the two biggest threats to Australia and 47% nominated terrorism as one of the biggest threats. 38% think climate change is one of the two biggest threats and 36% nominated the Chinese economic slowdown.

Labor voters think global economic instability, terrorism and climate change represent similar levels of threat while Liberal/National voters were more likely to think the Chinese economic slowdown was a threat. Only 18% of Liberal/National voters thought climate change was one of the two biggest threats to Australia.

Importance of Asylum Seeker issue

Q. How important is the asylum seeker issue of in deciding which party you will vote for in the Federal election?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2013
The most important issue	7%	7%	8%	6%	9%	6%
One of the most important issues	29%	23%	35%	38%	28%	28%
Quite important but not as important as other issues	37%	44%	36%	33%	33%	37%
Not very important	10%	11%	11%	13%	9%	14%
Not at all important	9%	9%	7%	6%	17%	10%
Don't know	8%	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%

36% of respondents think the asylum seeker issue is the most important or one of the most important election issues.

43% of Liberal/National voters think it is one of or the most important issues.

These results are very similar to those from June 2013.

Party with Best Policy on Handling Asylum Seeker issue

Q. Which party has the best policy for handling the issue of asylum seekers arriving by boat?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2013
Labor	12%	32%	2%	4%	1%	13%
Liberal	37%	11%	78%	4%	32%	38%
Greens	8%	7%	3%	55%	6%	7%
None of them	24%	29%	11%	27%	41%	31%
Don't know	19%	21%	6%	9%	19%	11%

37% think the Liberal Party has the best policy for handling the issue of asylum seekers arriving by boat and 12% think the Labor Party has the best policy. 24% think no party has the best policy. These results are very similar to those from June 2013.

Only 32% of Labor voters think the Labor Party has the best policy compared with 78% of Liberal/National voters who think the Liberals have the best policy.

Of those who think the asylum seeker issue is one of the most important election issue, 46% think that the Liberals have the best policy, 15% think Labor has the best policy, 12% think the Greens have the best policy and 14% think none of them do.

50% renewable energy target

Q. The Labor Party recently committed to a target of 50% renewable energy by 2030. Do you approve or disapprove of this policy?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other
Total approve	65%	84%	45%	96%	59%
Total disapprove	16%	3%	35%	2%	15%
Strongly approve	25%	40%	8%	43%	20%
Approve	40%	44%	37%	53%	39%
Disapprove	9%	3%	18%	1%	8%
Strongly disapprove	7%	*	17%	1%	7%
Don't know	19%	13%	20%	3%	25%

65% approve of the Labor Party commitment to a target of 50% renewable energy by 2030 and 16% disapprove.

A very high majority of Labor voters (84%) and Greens voters (96%) approve.

Liberal/National voters were split but more likely to approve (45%) than disapprove (35%).

Electricity costs

Q. Do you think a 50% renewable target will mean higher or lower electricity costs?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote Other	Approve 50% target	Dis-approve 50% target
Higher costs	51%	45%	67%	42%	48%	48%	82%
Lower costs	18%	22%	11%	25%	19%	24%	10%
Much higher costs	24%	12%	42%	8%	27%	13%	71%
A little higher costs	27%	33%	25%	34%	21%	35%	11%
A little lower costs	12%	14%	8%	16%	15%	16%	5%
Much lower costs	6%	8%	3%	9%	4%	8%	5%
Make no difference to costs	11%	13%	8%	20%	13%	14%	5%
Don't know	19%	20%	14%	14%	19%	15%	3%

51% think that a 50% renewable target will mean higher electricity costs and 18% think it will mean lower costs. 11% think it will make no difference.

Of those who approve the Labor Party's 50% renewable target 48% think it will mean higher electricity costs and 24% think it will mean lower costs – although only 13% think it will mean much higher costs.

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.