

The Essential Report

9 December 2019



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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 5th December 2019 to 8th December 2019 and is based on 1,035 respondents.

This week's report includes questions about performance of party leaders against expectations, which groups had a good or bad year, the impact of same-sex marriage, attitudes towards unions, Angus Taylor and the Sydney Lord Mayor and support for a federal independent corruption organisation.

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?

	Dec'19	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19	Jun'19
NET: Approve	45%	45%	47%	49%	48%	48%	48%
NET: Disapprove	43%	41%	38%	36%	37%	34%	36%
Don't know	13%	13%	15%	15%	16%	18%	18%
Base (n)	1,035	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091	1,099

	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	12%	3%	27%	3%	9%
Approve	32%	18%	55%	24%	19%
Disapprove	21%	32%	13%	19%	25%
Strongly disapprove	22%	36%	1%	46%	35%
Don't know	13%	11%	5%	7%	12%
NET: Approve	45%	21%	82%	27%	28%
NET: Disapprove	43%	68%	13%	66%	60%
Base (n)	1,035	339	356	106	116



Performance of Scott Morrison compared to expectations

Q Since the federal election in May 2019, how has the performance of Scott Morrison compared to your expectations?

	Performance of Scott Morrison				Federal Voting Intention			
	Total	NET: Approve	NET: Disapprove	Don't know	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Has exceeded my expectations	11%	22%	1%	6%	4%	22%	6%	8%
Has met my expectations	41%	66%	12%	53%	27%	60%	34%	25%
Has fallen short of my expectations	47%	12%	86%	41%	69%	18%	60%	67%
Base (n)	1,035	441	461	133	339	356	106	116

- The Prime Minister's approval rating is now 45% and on par with Nov'19.
- While the PM's approval has remained steady, disapproval scores have been increasing from 34% in July to 43% in December.
- The vast majority of Coalition voters approve of Morrison's performance as PM, with 82% approval (on par with 83% approval last month).
- 66% of participants who approve of the PM's performance say he has met their expectations, compared to just 12% of those who disapprove of his performance.
- Again, Coalition voters are most likely to say Scott Morrison has met their expectations (60%) than other voters (28%).

Performance of Anthony Albanese

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

	Dec'19	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19	Jun'19
NET: Approve	39%	37%	40%	36%	38%	39%	35%
NET: Disapprove	28%	34%	29%	31%	29%	24%	25%
Don't know	33%	29%	31%	33%	33%	37%	39%
Base (n)	1,035	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091	1,099

	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strongly approve	8%	14%	7%	8%	3%
Approve	31%	44%	31%	29%	14%
Disapprove	18%	10%	25%	20%	28%
Strongly disapprove	10%	4%	15%	7%	20%
Don't know	33%	28%	22%	35%	35%
NET: Approve	39%	58%	38%	37%	17%
NET: Disapprove	28%	14%	40%	28%	48%
Base (n)	1,035	339	356	106	116



Performance of Anthony Albanese compared to expectations

Q Since the federal election in May 2019, how has the performance of Anthony Albanese compared to your expectations?

	Performance of Anthony Albanese				Federal Voting Intention			
	Total	NET: Approve	NET: Disapprove	Don't know	Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Has exceeded my expectations	8%	16%	3%	2%	11%	6%	10%	6%
Has met my expectations	48%	67%	21%	50%	55%	47%	46%	30%
Has fallen short of my expectations	44%	18%	77%	48%	34%	47%	44%	64%
Base (n)	1,035	441	461	133	339	356	106	116

- Anthony Albanese has 39% approval as Opposition Leader, but one third (33%) still don't know how to rate his performance.
- Less than half of participants say that Anthony Albanese has met their expectations since the election, with 77% of those who disapprove of his performance saying he fell short of their expectations.
- Labor voters are most likely to say that he has met their expectations (55%) whereas 64% of other party or independent voters say he has fallen short of their expectations.



Last 12 months

Q Thinking about the last 12 months, has it been a good or bad year for each of the following?

	Total good	Total bad	NET	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know	2018 NET
The Australian cricket team	44%	10%	+34	13%	32%	26%	6%	4%	12%	+2
Large companies and corporations	41%	18%	+23	10%	31%	31%	13%	5%	10%	+9
You and your family overall	41%	22%	+19	9%	32%	35%	15%	7%	3%	+28
Your workplace	30%	16%	+14	7%	23%	29%	10%	6%	23%	+28
Your personal financial situation	30%	32%	-2	6%	24%	35%	19%	13%	3%	-
The average Australian	27%	31%	-4	7%	21%	37%	22%	9%	4%	-1
The Australian Government	29%	36%	-7	7%	22%	31%	22%	14%	5%	-41
Trade unions	19%	30%	-11	5%	14%	35%	21%	9%	10%	-2
Small business	24%	36%	-12	4%	20%	31%	27%	9%	9%	+6
The Australian economy	25%	38%	-13	5%	20%	31%	26%	12%	5%	+6
Australian politics in general	21%	41%	-20	5%	16%	32%	24%	18%	4%	-50
The planet	20%	49%	-29	6%	14%	27%	28%	21%	4%	-19

- Participants believe that 2019 has been a good year for the Australian cricket team (+34, up from +2 in 2018), large companies and corporations (+23, up from +9 in 2018) and them and their families.
- This year has been bad for the planet (-29, down 10pts from 2018) and Australian politics in general (-20).
- Australian politics in general and the Australian Government have the greatest swing compared to 2018 with Australian politics in general up from -50 to -20 and the Australian Government up from -41 to -7.
- The Australian economy also saw a large swing from 2018, dropping from +6 in 2018 to -13 in 2019; which is mirrored by small businesses (from +6 in 2018 to -12 in 2019).
- Trade unions are similarly seen as having a bad year, falling from -2 in 2018 to -11 in 2019.



Impact of same-sex marriage

Q Same-sex marriage has now been legal in Australia for two years (since December 2017). To what extent do you think allowing same-sex people to marry has had a positive or negative impact on Australia?

	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention		
			Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
Strong positive impact	24%	28%	18%	43%	22%
Somewhat positive impact	23%	27%	24%	22%	10%
Neither positive, nor negative impact	38%	33%	43%	27%	38%
Somewhat negative impact	7%	5%	8%	4%	10%
Strong negative impact	8%	7%	8%	5%	21%
NET: Positive impact	47%	55%	42%	65%	31%
NET: Negative impact	15%	12%	15%	8%	31%
Base (n)	1,035	339	356	106	116

- 47% of participants say allowing same-sex people to marry has had a positive impact on Australia with only 15% saying this has had a negative impact.
- Greens voters are most likely to say this has had a positive impact (65%) whereas 31% of other party or independent voters believe this has had a negative impact.



Attitudes towards unions

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

	NET: Agree	NET: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
Union officials should be disqualified for breaching administrative laws such as failing to file annual financial reports	68%	18%	30%	38%	13%	5%	14%
The government seems to be more concerned about the actions of union officials than the CEO's of banks and other corporations	62%	24%	29%	34%	18%	6%	14%
Union officials should be disqualified for taking unprotected industrial action, such as snap strikes	51%	32%	20%	31%	22%	10%	17%
Overall unions have too much power in Australia today	49%	37%	18%	31%	24%	13%	14%

- Two-thirds of participants agree that 'union officials should be disqualified for breaching administrative laws such as failing to file annual financial reports' (68%) and 62% agree that the government seems to be more concerned about the actions of union officials than the CEO's of banks and other corporations.
- Half of participants agree that union officials should be disqualified for taking unprotected industrial action, such as snap strikes (51%) and 49% agree that overall unions have too much power in Australia today.
- Capital city residents are more likely than non-capital city residents to agree that overall unions have too much power in Australia today, with 53% of capital city and 41% of non-capital city residents agreeing with the statement.
- Broadly, Coalition voters and those over 55 years old were most likely to agree with statements that are more negative towards unions.



Angus Taylor and Sydney Lord Mayor

Q Over the past few weeks the Opposition has been raising concern about Energy Minister Angus Taylor, in regards to false information which was critical of the Sydney Lord Mayor.

Which of the following best describes your perspective on the issue?

	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention		
			Coalition	Greens	NET: Other
The Prime Minister should have stood the Minister down from Cabinet	35%	47%	29%	42%	35%
The Prime Minister was right not to stand the Minister down from Cabinet	17%	11%	27%	13%	15%
I have not been following the issue	48%	42%	44%	45%	50%
Base (n)	1,035	339	356	106	116

- Almost half of participants have not been following the issue between Angus Taylor the Sydney Lord Mayor (48%).
- Coalition voters are least likely to say that the PM should have stood the Minister down (29% versus 44% all other voters).



Federal ICAC

- Q To what extent would you support or oppose the establishment of an independent federal corruption body to monitor the behaviour of our politicians and public servants?

	Total	Voting Intention				Sep'18
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	NET: Other	
Strongly support	42%	49%	48%	37%	51%	46%
Support	33%	35%	28%	45%	30%	36%
Oppose	7%	7%	8%	6%	5%	4%
Strongly oppose	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%
Unsure	17%	8%	15%	10%	12%	14%
NET: Support	75%	84%	76%	82%	80%	82%
NET: Oppose	8%	8%	10%	8%	8%	5%
Base (n)	1,035	339	356	106	116	1,030

- 75% of participants support the establishment of an independent federal corruption body to monitor the behaviour of our politicians and public servants – this is lower than Sep'18, when 82% supported of an independent body.

Appendix: Household income definitions*

NET: 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)
NET: 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)
NET: 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.

