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ATTITUDES TO ELECTORAL REFORM
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ANUPOLL

Attitudes to electoral reform

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ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

ANUpoll is conducted for The Australian National University (ANU) by the Social Research Centre, Melbourne. The survey is a national random sample of the adult population aged 18 years and over conducted by telephone. In this survey, 1,200 people were interviewed between 9 and 23 July 2013, with a response rate of 48.3 per cent. The results have been weighted to represent the national population. The survey's margin of error is ± 2.5 per cent. Full details of the survey can be found at www.anu.edu.au/anupoll

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S INTRODUCTION

Since Federation in 1901, Australia has maintained a long tradition of innovation in electoral system design.

Australia was the first Anglo-American democracy to adopt the secret ballot and the payment of elected representatives, and it was the second major country in the world to grant women the vote.

The manner in which national elections are conducted in Australia is often regarded as representing international best practice. Not surprisingly, many commentators have characterised Australia as a 'democratic laboratory'.

In recent years the pace of electoral reform in Australia has been slower. Scandinavian countries count more women among their elected representatives than Australia, and many European countries have more effective rules on political finance. The level of informal votes in Australia is high compared to other established democracies, partly because of the multiplicity of our electoral systems with different rules.

This ANUpoll contributes to the ongoing debate about electoral reform by examining how the public views the act of voting, the funding and integrity of elections, minority government and political representation generally.

The results provide a benchmark for understanding both the concerns of the public and the changes they find most acceptable in order to address those concerns.

ANUpoll was designed to inform public and policy debate as well as to assist in scholarly research. It builds on The Australian National University's long tradition of social survey research, which began in the 1960s. Today, it fulfils the University's mission of addressing topics of national importance.

I hope the timely release of this poll's findings contributes to a greater understanding of the nation's attitudes towards electoral reform.

Professor Ian Young AO

Vice-Chancellor and President

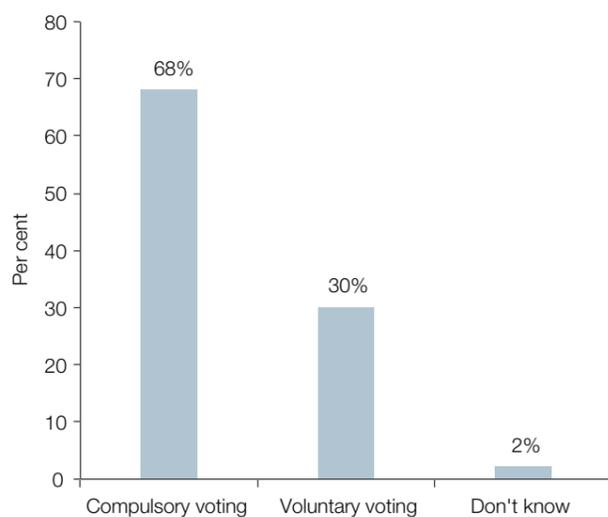


Photo by Belinda Pratten.

THE ACT OF VOTING

Key points

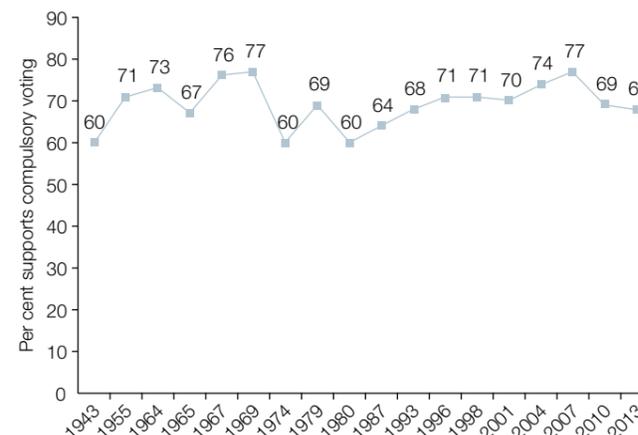
- > A majority of voters consistently support compulsory voting, and there has been relatively little change in these proportions since the 1950s.
- > If compulsory voting was replaced by voluntary voting, we would expect a decline in election turnout of about 10 percentage points, to 85 per cent.
- > About one-third of voters support increasing the fine for non-voting from \$50 to \$100, but there is reduced support for applying this to groups that are less likely to vote.
- > There is little public support for changing the current Commonwealth parliamentary election terms from three to four years.



'Do you think that voting at federal elections should be compulsory, or do you think that people should only vote if they want to?'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

When the question was first asked in an opinion poll, in 1943, 60 per cent supported compulsory voting. That proportion gradually increased during the 1950s and 1960s, peaking at 77 per cent in 1969. Following the dismissal of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1975, and some disillusionment with politics, support for compulsory voting declined to 64 per cent in 1987. Since then, support has gradually increased once again, peaking at 77 per cent in 2007. The figure of 68 per cent recorded in the current ANUpoll is almost identical to the estimate for 2010, and reflects concerns among some voters about the experience of minority government between 2010 and 2013.



'Do you think that voting at Federal elections should be compulsory, or do you think that people should only vote if they want to?' Question wordings vary before 1993.

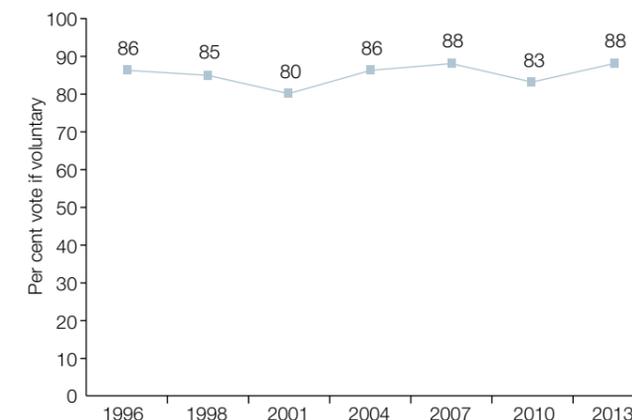
Sources: Ian McAllister and Malcolm Mackerras. 'Compulsory Voting, Party Stability and Electoral Advantage in Australia.' *Electoral Studies* 18: 217-33 (1999); Ian McAllister, *The Australian Voter: Fifty Years of Change*. Sydney: University of NSW Press; ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

Judged over an extended period, then, compulsory voting has attracted widespread public support, rarely dropping below two in every three voters. Moreover, when strength of opinions are measured, those who felt strongly about opposing the system are easily outnumbered by those who feel strongly about retaining it.

Voluntary voting

If compulsory voting was to be replaced by voluntary voting, what level of turnout could we expect in national elections? The experience of the Netherlands, where an enforced system of compulsory voting was abolished in 1971, is that turnout would decline by around 10 percentage points. For example, the last Dutch election under compulsory voting, in 1967, registered a turnout of 92.1 per cent; in the six elections following abolition the average level of turnout was 84.1 per cent.

Estimated turnout in Australia under a voluntary voting system is very similar to the Dutch experience. When survey respondents are asked if they would vote if it was not compulsory to do so, between 80 and 88 per cent say that they would still 'definitely' or 'probably' vote; the average over the 1996-2013 period is 85 per cent. In the 2013 ANUpoll, 67 per cent of the respondents said that they would definitely vote, and a further 21 per cent that they would probably vote.



'Would you vote in an election if voting was not compulsory?' Estimates combine 'definitely' and 'probably' would vote.

Sources: Australian Election Study, 1996-2010; ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

Fines for not voting

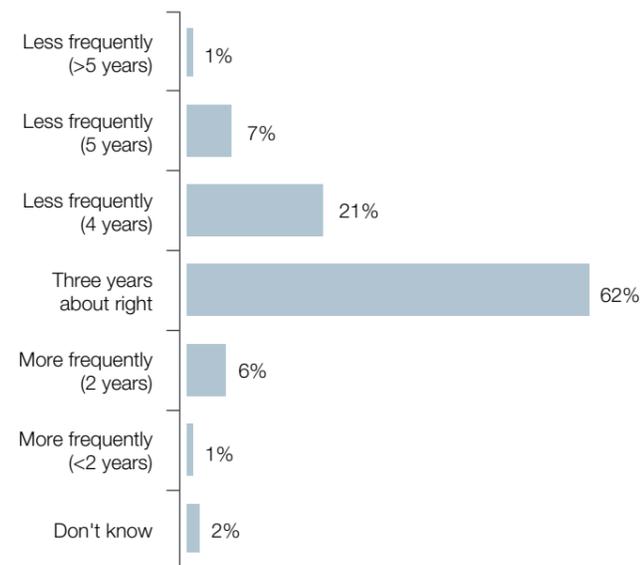
One aspect to attitudes towards compulsory voting is the level of the fine for not voting. Failure to vote without a valid reason can attract a fine of up to \$50, plus court costs. ANUpoll conducted an experiment, to see if there was public support for increasing the fine to \$100, and comparing the respondents to two other groups—young people and disadvantaged people. Just over one in three of the respondents supported increasing the fine to \$100 'for people such as yourself.' By contrast, a lower proportion, 31 per cent, supported increasing the fine for young people; just one in five supported an increase in the fine for disadvantaged groups. In general, most people are comfortable with the current fine for non-voting. There is some tolerance for an increase, but less so for certain groups.

THE FUNDING AND INTEGRITY OF ELECTIONS

Voting frequency

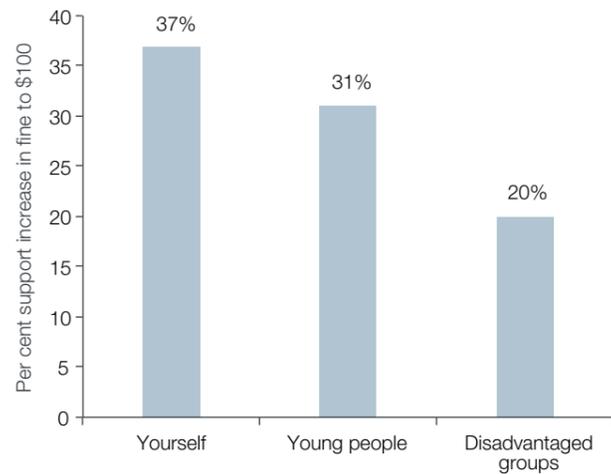
A final part of the act of voting is the frequency with which voters have to attend the polls. Citizens must vote about once in every three years in a federal election, and once every three or four years in a state or territory election, depending on the jurisdiction. In practice, this means that 95 per cent of the electorate participates in either a state or federal election around once every 18 months. This is a high level of electoral participation that has few parallels among the established democracies. A 1988 referendum which sought to increase Commonwealth parliamentary terms from three to four years was defeated.

Based on a question in the ANUpoll, it would appear that voters are still not open to longer Commonwealth parliamentary terms. Just under three in 10 support longer parliamentary terms, with most (21 per cent) supporting the 1988 referendum proposal for a four-year term. A majority of the voters support the status quo, with just seven per cent supporting more frequent elections. As in 1988, any attempt to change the current arrangements is likely to hinge on public opinion.



'At present, elections to the Commonwealth parliament are held every three years. Do you think Commonwealth elections should be held more frequently than three years, less frequently, or is three years about right?'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.



'Do you think the fines for non-voting should be increased to \$100 for people such as yourself/young people/disadvantaged groups?'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

Since it was introduced for federal elections in 1924, compulsory voting has become a standard part of Australia's electoral architecture. In contrast to the Netherlands, where the abolition of the system in 1967 was preceded by a lengthy debate, compulsory voting in Australia is relatively uncontroversial; a large majority of voters have consistently supported the system, and there is no organised move to replace it with voluntary voting. In part, this lack of controversy is attributable to the ease of enrolment and voting, and to the reluctance by the Australian Electoral Commission to use sanctions against non-voters, unless absolutely required.

Key points

- > A majority of the electorate disapproves of large private donations to political parties, regardless of their source.
- > Elections are generally regarded as being fairly conducted, although Australia ranks towards the bottom of the advanced democracies.
- > Internationally, Australia maintains a high level of public satisfaction with democracy, although the decline in satisfaction observed since 2007 has persisted.

Private funding

Few topics are more controversial than the funding of political parties. In Australia, the public funding of political parties was introduced in 1984 and the Australian Electoral Commission produces an annual list of political donors. The public funding initiative was designed to gradually wean the parties away from private donations, but in practice both public and private funding have grown in tandem. In May 2013 an agreement between the Labor and Liberal parties to increase public funding from \$2.48 to \$3.48 for each vote they won, backdated to April, was abandoned due to public disapproval.

In order to ascertain the public's views about the funding of political parties by different organisations, a sample was divided into three equally sized groups. Each group was asked how honest or corrupt it would be if a donation of \$100,000 was made to a political party by a citizen, a large business and a trade union. The results show that in each case a narrow majority believe that such a payment would be corrupt, ranging from 51 per cent for a trade union, to 55 per cent for a large business. Just one in three of the respondents considered such a payment to be honest. There is, then, broad public disapproval of large private donations being made to political parties, regardless of their source.

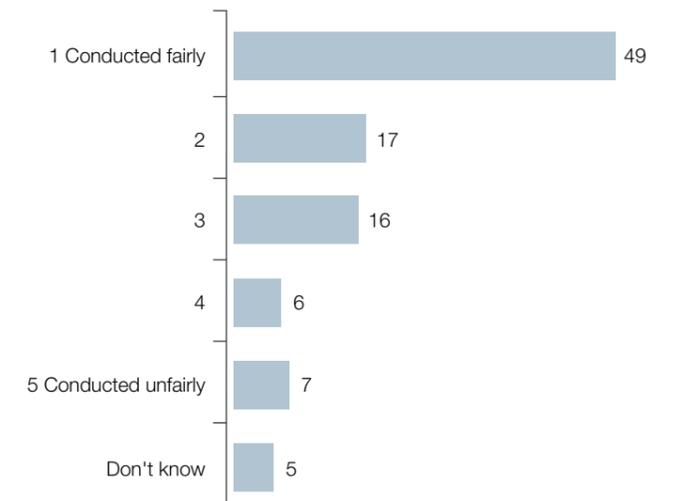
	Contribution to political party from:		
	Citizen	Large business	Trade union
Honest	15	13	17
Somewhat honest	17	23	19
Somewhat corrupt	27	30	30
Corrupt	25	25	21
Don't know	16	9	13
Total	100	100	100
(N)	(387)	(407)	(406)

'Generally speaking, what would you think if a citizen/large business/trade union contributed \$100,000 to a political party's campaign funds? Would you describe this as...'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

Fairness

Notwithstanding the public's views about financial contributions to the political parties, Australia usually ranks within the top half dozen least corrupt countries in the world, measured by Transparency International's annual rankings. Elections in Australia are also widely viewed as being fairly conducted and in many respects they represent international best practice. This positive view of the conduct of Australian elections is confirmed by the responses to a question about perceptions of the fairness of the previous election. Almost half of the respondents gave the previous election the top ranking for fairness; just 7 per cent regarded the election as having been unfair, at the opposite end of the scale.

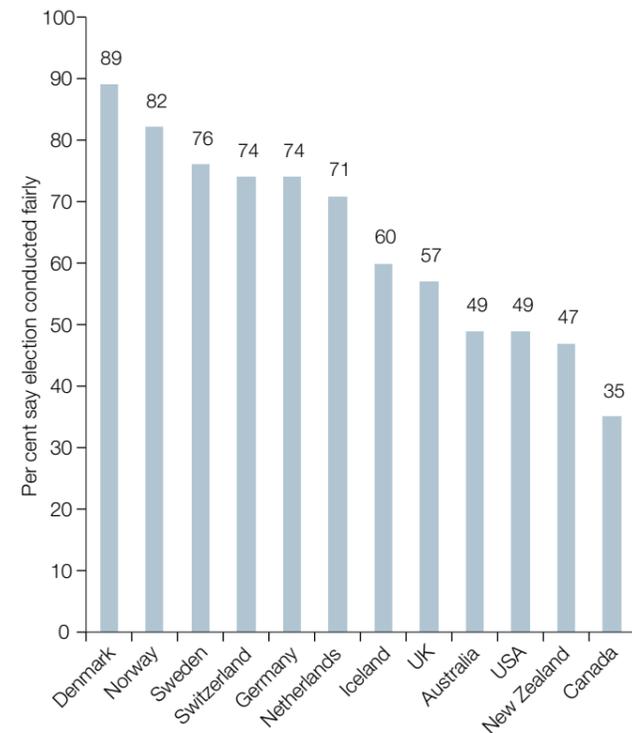


'In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the last election in Australia, where would you place it on a scale of 1 to 5, where ONE means that the last election was conducted fairly and FIVE means the last election was conducted unfairly?'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

MINORITY GOVERNMENT AND REPRESENTATION

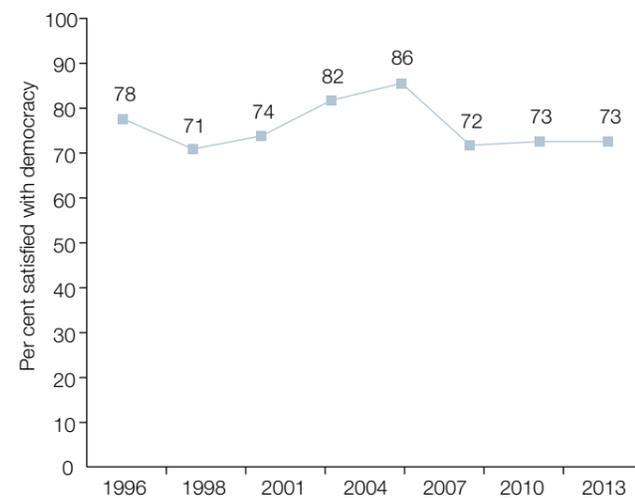
Placing these results within the context of 10 other advanced democracies shows that Australia comes near the bottom of the scale, with elections in Scandinavian countries being seen as the fairest, followed by Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. Australia ranks just behind the UK, on par with the US, and slightly ahead of New Zealand. Of course, many respondents will interpret the survey question in terms of the fairness of the outcome, rather in terms of the process of counting votes, and it is no surprise that the countries most highly ranked all use some form of proportional representation, while those at the lower end use majoritarian systems (the estimates for New Zealand relate to when it operated a first-past-the-post electoral system).



Sources: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems Survey Module 1; ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

Satisfaction with democracy

Finally, the survey asked the respondents how satisfied they were with how democracy works in Australia. Citizens' satisfaction with democracy in Australia has consistently been one of the highest in the world, after a short decline following the 1975 dismissal of the Whitlam Labor Government. More recently, there was a decline of 13 percentage points in satisfaction between the 2007 and 2010 elections, caused by a sense of dissatisfaction with the operation of minority government. This lower level of satisfaction persisted in 2011. In the current survey, the level of satisfaction is consistent with the 2010 and 2011 estimates, with just under three in 10 of the respondents reporting that they were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with democracy in Australia.



'On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in Australia?' Estimates are for 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied.

Sources: AES 1996-2010; ANUpoll on Government Services, 2011; ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

Public opinion concerning how democracy operates in Australia suggests that the system is in good health. Satisfaction with democracy has been consistently high, albeit with a decline since 2010. Views about the fairness of elections is on par with the other Westminster democracies that operate a majoritarian electoral system. Perhaps the one caveat is political finance, and the funding of political parties. There is a clear view among the public that large private donations to parties are dishonest. To date, the issue has not become a major one, but if it were ever to gain a high public profile it would have the capacity to undermine public satisfaction with the democratic system.

Key points

- > The public believes that a government formed by one party is best at providing stability, but opinions are divided on what is best to deliver other outcomes.
- > There is support for increasing the proportions of MPs who are women and from an Asian or Aboriginal background.
- > Almost nine out of 10 respondents believe that women and men will do a similar job as an MP.

One party or two?

Westminster systems based on majoritarian electoral systems are designed to ensure that one party wins a parliamentary majority following an election. The system of responsible party government is based on the notion that there is a clear line of accountability so that voters can reward or punish a party for their performance while in office. Accordingly, minority governments are relatively rare in the Westminster democracies. Britain had minority governments between 1931 and 1945 and since 2010, with briefer periods in the 1970s and 1990s. Australia has had only two experiences of minority government, between 1940 and 1943, and again since 2010.

The 'clarity of accountability' argument was tested in ANUpoll by asking the respondents if they preferred a government of one party or more than one party to deliver four specific outcomes. The results show that a plurality of the respondents favour one party for 'providing stability' and for 'making tough decisions.' In the case of 'keeping promises' the largest group takes the view that both scenarios would achieve that goal. And in terms of 'doing what people want' the largest group sees more than one party in government as most likely to deliver that outcome.

One party or multiple parties better at:				
	Providing stability	Making tough decisions	Keeping promises	Doing what people want
One party best	44	39	30	27
More than one party best	31	37	27	35
Both the same	20	20	38	33
Don't know	5	4	5	5
Total	100	100	100	100
(N)	(1200)	(1200)	(1200)	(1200)

'Generally speaking, do you think a government formed by one party, or a government formed by more than one party, is better at doing the following things?..'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

These results suggest a greater degree of public support for government formed by more than one party than might be expected from Australia's short history of minority government. Perhaps part of the reason rests in the fact that relatively few governments have had control of the Senate which, as one of the few powerful upper houses around the world, has the capacity to block government legislation. Since the late 1990s, there has been an increasing proportion of the public who believe that it is better when the government does not control both houses and who split their vote between the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Underrepresentation

A consistent criticism of political parties is that they tend to be unrepresentative of the populations from which they are drawn. In recent years people voicing this criticism have been particularly vocal with regards to the representation of women; among the established democracies, only Scandinavian political parties have managed to gain equal proportions of male and female elected representatives, and then only by the extensive use of quotas. In Australia, 29 per cent of the 2010 parliament were women.

In order to gauge public support for having more or less MPs from different backgrounds, ANUpoll asked the respondents if they favoured having more MPs who are women, who are of Asian or Aboriginal background, and who are independent. The results show that there is broad support for increasing the proportions of MPs from all four groups, ranging from 29 per cent for Asians, to 50 per cent for Aborigines. Relatively few wish to see fewer individuals elected from any of these groups; the largest proportion is just under one in five who want to see fewer independents elected.

More or fewer MPs who are:				
	Women	Asian	Aboriginal	Independent
Much more	11	5	15	10
More	34	24	35	25
About the same as now	29	31	27	31
Fewer	3	6	1	12
Much fewer	2	5	2	7
Don't know	21	29	20	15
Total	100	100	100	100
(N)	(1200)	(1200)	(1200)	(1200)

'Looking at the types of people who are MPs, do you think there should be more, fewer, or the same number as now who are...'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

KEY TRENDS: MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS AND POLITICAL MOOD

The results are also notable for the large proportions – around three in 10 – who opt either for the status quo in representation, or who express no opinion on the issue. The latter reaches 29 per cent in the case of views about electing MPs with an Asian background. This may reflect the relative absence of public debate about the representation of Asians in public life, at least compared to women.

The issue of gender and political representation has been an underlying theme throughout the 2010-13 period, with the election of Australia's first female prime minister, Julia Gillard. The survey asked the respondents if they believed that a man or a woman would perform better as an MP in representing their interests. The results show that the vast majority – 87 per cent – saw no difference in the job that a man or a woman would do. Men were slightly more likely to favour a man for the job than a woman, while women were equally divided. Overall, the differences were minor. Just one per cent of the respondents had no view on the question, reflecting the widespread debate about the issue of gender and politics over the past three years.

	All respondents	Male respondents	Female respondents
Man much better	3	4	3
Man better	4	3	4
Both the same	87	90	85
Woman better	3	1	5
Woman much better	2	1	2
Don't know	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100
(N)	(1200)	(592)	(609)

'In general, who do you think would do a better job representing your interests as an MP? Would you say a man, a woman, or do you think the sex of your elected official makes no difference at all?'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

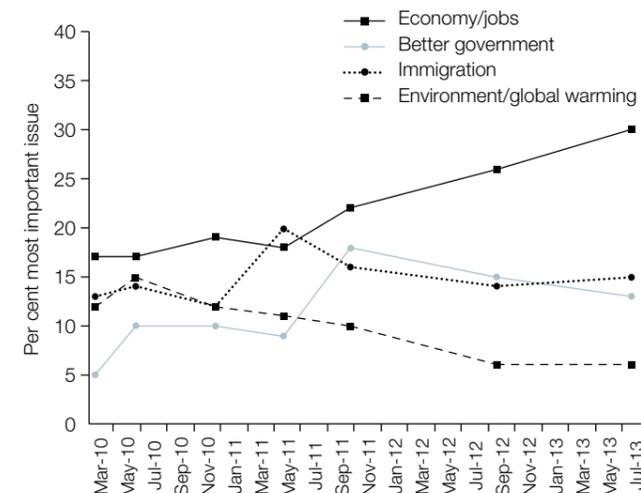
Key points

- > The economy and jobs are seen as the most important issues facing the country, almost doubling as a concern since 2010.
- > Immigration (including asylum seekers) is viewed as the second most important concern.
- > The political mood is generally positive, although there has been a 10 percentage point decline in overall satisfaction since the 2010 election.

Voters' priorities

Since the decline of the mining boom, the economy and jobs have become an increasing priority for voters. In mid-2010 the economy and jobs were mentioned by 17 per cent as the most important problem facing the country, increasing to 22 per cent in late 2011, and increasing again in the current survey, to 30 per cent. Taking into account the 21 per cent who mentioned it as the second most important issue, just over half of the survey respondents mentioned the economy and jobs as a priority. This approaches the level of public concern that ANUpoll recorded at the height of the global financial crisis, when around half of the respondents mentioned the economy as their first priority.

The second ranked concern is immigration (which includes asylum seekers), and was mentioned by 15 per cent of the respondents as the most important problem facing the country, and by a further 13 per cent as the second most important problem. Immigration has maintained a consistent presence as an issue among the public, varying between 12 and 20 per cent over the post-2010 election period.



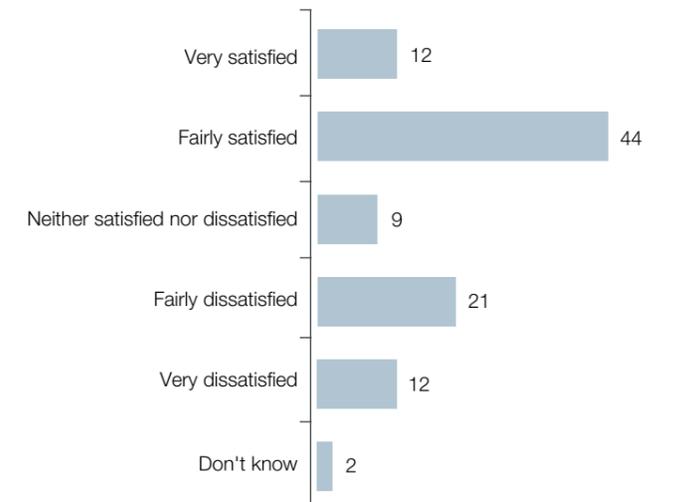
'What do you think is the most important problem facing Australia today?'

Sources: ANUpolls, March 2010-July 2013.

The third ranked issue is 'better government', which first emerged as a concern for the public in early 2010; it was mentioned by 13 per cent in the current survey, down from 18 per cent in late 2011. The fourth ranked issue was the environment and global warming, mentioned by six per cent. This represents a decline of about half since early 2010. No other issue mentioned by the respondents attracted more than five per cent of responses.

Political mood

The political mood remains generally positive, albeit with some decline over the past two years. In line with the other ANUpolls conducted over the past two years, 12 per cent say they are 'very satisfied' with the way the country is heading, and a further 44 per cent are 'fairly satisfied.' This proportion who are generally satisfied has remained constant since mid-2011. However, it represents a decline of around 10 percentage points from 2010, when almost two in every three considered themselves to be satisfied. This decline came at the time when 'good government' began to be mentioned as the most important problem facing Australia.



'All things considered, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the country is heading?'

Source: ANUpoll on Electoral Reform, 2013.

ANUPOLL QUESTIONS

All things considered, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the country is heading?

	Frequency	Per cent
Very satisfied	141	11.7
Satisfied	523	43.6
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	108	9
Dissatisfied	260	21.6
Very dissatisfied	148	12.3
Don't know/not sure	20	1.6
Refused	1	0.1
Total	1200	100

What do you think is the most important problem facing Australia today?

	Frequency	Per cent
Economy/jobs	363	30.3
Industrial relations	13	1.1
Interest rates	4	0.3
Housing affordability	13	1.1
Health care	43	3.6
Education	50	4.2
Defence/national security	1	0.1
Terrorism	3	0.2
Environment/global warming	67	5.6
Water management	3	0.3
Immigration	181	15.1
Indigenous affairs	4	0.3
Taxation	13	1.1
Better government	154	12.9
Law and order/crime/justice system	18	1.5
Ageing population	10	0.8
Values/morals/respect for others	44	3.6
Poverty/social exclusion/inequality	44	3.7
Carbon Tax	1	0.1
Trade balance/loss of jobs to overseas	12	1
Rural/farming issues	7	0.6
Social services (including aged care, the disabled, etc)	5	0.4
Infrastructure/planning/innovation	23	1.9
Alcohol and drug use	1	0.1
Young people's behaviour/attitudes	3	0.3
Foreign influence/Australia's position in world	5	0.4
Family/community/societal breakdown	2	0.2
Other	22	1.8
None/no other	13	1.1
Don't know/can't say	75	6.3
Refused	1	0.1
Total	1200	100

And what do you think is the second most important problem facing Australia today?

	Frequency	Per cent
Economy/jobs	236	21.2
Industrial relations	15	1.4
Interest rates	9	0.8
Housing affordability	21	1.9
Health care	70	6.3
Education	78	7.0
Defence/national security	6	0.5
Terrorism	3	0.3
Environment/global warming	55	4.9
Water management	3	0.3
Immigration	148	13.3
Indigenous affairs	6	0.5
Taxation	10	0.9
Better government	97	8.7
Law and order/crime/justice system	29	2.6
Ageing population	10	0.9
Values/morals/respect for others	60	5.4
Poverty/social exclusion/ inequality	42	3.8
Carbon Tax	14	1.2
Trade balance/loss of jobs to overseas	15	1.4
Rural/farming issues	6	0.6
Social services (including aged care, the disabled, etc.)	1	0.1
Infrastructure/planning/innovation	33	3.0
Alcohol and drug use	8	0.7
Young people's behaviour/attitudes	3	0.3
Foreign influence/Australia's position in world	8	0.7
Family/community/societal breakdown	4	0.3
Other	20	1.8
None/no other	17	1.6
Don't know/can't say	84	7.5
Total	1111	100

Do you think that voting at federal elections should be compulsory, or do you think that people should only vote if they want to?

	Frequency	Per cent
Voting should be compulsory	280	67.7
People should only vote if they want to	125	30.1
Don't know	9	2.2
Total	414	100

Do you think that voting at federal elections should be compulsory, or do you think that people who have different party preferences to you should only vote if they want to?

	Frequency	Per cent
Voting should be compulsory	265	69.5
People should only vote if they want to	108	28.4
Don't know	8	2.2
Total	381	100

Do you think that voting at federal elections should be compulsory, or do you think that people who don't know much about politics should only vote if they want to?

	Frequency	Per cent
Voting should be compulsory	268	66.4
People should only vote if they want to	129	32
Don't know	6	1.5
Refused	1	0.1
Total	404	100

Do you think the fines for non-voting should be increased to \$100 for people such as yourself?

	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	152	37.4
No	238	58.8
Don't know	15	3.8
Total	405	100

Note: Figures may not add up to total.

Do you think the fines for non-voting should be increased to \$100 for young people?

	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	125	30.5
No	267	65.4
Don't know	16	4
Total	409	100

Do you think the fines for non-voting should be increased to \$100 for disadvantaged groups?

	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	76	19.6
No	281	72.7
Don't know	23	6
Refused	7	1.7
Total	386	100

Would you vote in an election if voting was not compulsory?

	Frequency	Per cent
Yes, definitely would vote	805	67.1
Yes, probably would vote	250	20.8
No, probably would not vote	78	6.5
No, definitely would not vote	51	4.3
Don't know	15	1.3
Total	1200	100

At present, elections to the Commonwealth parliament are held every three years. Do you think Commonwealth elections should be held more frequently than three years, less frequently, or is three years about right?

	Frequency	Per cent
More frequently (less than every 2 years)	14	1.2
More frequently (every 2 years)	68	5.7
Three years is about right	746	62.2
Less frequently (every 4 years)	248	20.7
Less frequently (every 5 years)	91	7.6
Less frequently (more than every 5 years)	9	0.8
Refused	2	0.2
Don't know	21	1.8
Total	1200	100

In some countries, people believe their elections are conducted fairly. In other countries, people believe that their elections are conducted unfairly. Thinking of the last election in Australia, where would you place it on a scale of 1 to 5, where ONE means that the last election was conducted fairly and FIVE means the last election was conducted unfairly?

	Frequency	Per cent
1 Last election was conducted fairly	587	48.9
2	201	16.7
3	197	16.4
4	70	5.9
5 Last election was conducted unfairly	80	6.7
Don't know	62	5.2
Refused	3	0.3
Total	1200	100

Generally speaking, what would you think if a citizen contributed \$100,000 to a political party's campaign funds? Would you describe this as...

	Frequency	Per cent
Honest	60	15.5
Somewhat honest	66	17.1
Somewhat corrupt	104	26.9
Corrupt	95	24.6
Don't know	53	13.7
Refused	8	2.2
Total	387	100

Generally speaking, what would you think if a large business contributed \$100,000 to a political party's campaign funds? Would you describe this as...

	Frequency	Per cent
Honest	51	12.5
Somewhat honest	95	23.4
Somewhat corrupt	122	30.1
Corrupt	100	24.5
Don't know	37	9
Refused	2	0.4
Total	407	100

Generally speaking, what would you think if a trade union contributed \$100,000 to a political party's campaign funds? Would you describe this as...

	Frequency	Per cent
Honest	70	17.2
Somewhat honest	78	19.2
Somewhat corrupt	121	29.7
Corrupt	86	21.2
Don't know	47	11.6
Refused	5	1.1
Total	406	100

On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in Australia?

	Frequency	Per cent
Very satisfied	188	15.7
Fairly satisfied	685	57.1
Not very satisfied	204	17
Not at all satisfied	78	6.5
Don't know	40	3.4
Refused	5	0.4
Total	1200	100

Generally speaking, do you think a government formed by one party, or a government formed by more than one party, is better at doing the following things?...providing stability

	Frequency	Per cent
One party is best	529	44.1
More than one party is best	368	30.6
Both the same	241	20
Don't know	57	4.7
Refused	6	0.5
Total	1200	100

...Making tough decisions

	Frequency	Per cent
One party is best	470	39.2
More than one party is best	447	37.2
Both the same	238	19.8
Refused	7	0.6
Don't know	38	3.2
Total	1200	100

...Keeping promises

	Frequency	Per cent
One party is best	359	29.9
More than one party is best	318	26.5
Both the same	458	38.2
Don't know	53	4.4
Refused	12	1
Total	1200	100

...Doing what the people want

Frequency	Frequency	Per cent
One party is best	321	26.7
More than one party is best	421	35.1
Both the same	392	32.7
Don't know	53	4.4
Refused	14	1.1
Total	1200	100

Imagine that a party receives 15 per cent of the votes in an election. Regardless of whether you liked that party or not, do you think that party should get...

	Frequency	Per cent
About 15 per cent of the seats in parliament	665	55.4
Less than 15 per cent of the seats in parliament	238	19.8
No seats at all	137	11.5
Don't know	147	12.3
Refused	12	1
Total	1200	100

Looking at the types of people who are MPs, do you think there should be more, fewer, or the same number as now who are ... women

	Frequency	Per cent
Much more	136	11.3
More	413	34.4
About the same as now	348	29
Fewer	34	2.8
Much fewer	22	1.9
Don't know	212	17.7
Refused	35	2.9
Total	1200	100

...Asian

	Frequency	Per cent
Much more	62	5.1
More	292	24.3
About the same as now	371	30.9
Fewer	73	6.1
Much fewer	60	5
Don't know	300	25
Refused	44	3.6
Total	1200	100

...Aboriginal

	Frequency	Per cent
Much more	176	14.7
More	419	34.9
About the same as now	321	26.7
Fewer	24	2
Much fewer	18	1.5
Don't know	204	17
Refused	39	3.2
Total	1200	100

...Independent

	Frequency	Per cent
Much more	123	10.2
More	305	25.4
About the same as now	369	30.8
Fewer	149	12.4
Much fewer	77	6.4
Don't know	156	13
Refused	20	1.7
Total	1200	100

In general, who do you think would do a better job representing your interests as an MP? Would you say a man, a woman, or do you think the sex of your elected official makes no difference at all?

	Frequency	Per cent
Man much better	42	3.5
Man better	41	3.4
Both the same (No difference)	1051	87.6
Woman better	37	3.1
Woman much better	21	1.7
Don't know	7	0.6
Refused	2	0.2
Total	1200	100

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