A vintage-style map of Australia, showing various geographical features and place names. The map is rendered in a warm, yellowish-brown color palette. A dark teal rectangular box is centered over the map, containing the title text in white. The text is arranged in four lines: 'THE LOWY', 'INSTITUTE', 'POLL', and '2014'. The map background includes labels such as 'Derby', 'Fitzroy Crossing', 'GREAT SA...', 'Marble Bar DESE...', 'AUSTRALIA', 'SOUTH AUSTRALIA', 'Woolmer', and 'Gamb...'.

THE LOWY  
INSTITUTE  
POLL  
2014

ALEX OLIVER

LOWY INSTITUTE  
FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY

# PREFACE

This is the tenth annual Lowy Institute Poll on Australia and the world. In the decade since our first Poll was published in 2005, the Poll's findings have challenged preconceived notions about Australians' views on US foreign policy, on our relationships with China and Indonesia, and on issues from climate change to whaling. The Poll has probably had a larger effect on the discussion of Australian foreign policy than any of the Institute's other research products. It has helped to democratise international policy. Ten Lowy Institute Polls have taken the discussion of foreign policy away from the elites and included the rest of the Australian public in the conversation.

The 2014 Lowy Institute Poll continues this tradition. It adds interesting new questions to our established ones about the international challenges confronting our country. The rise of China has been a recurring theme in our decade of polling and this year we have found the usual complicated mix of results. There has been a warming in feelings towards our most important trading partner, and when we asked Australians about whom they see as Australia's best friend in Asia, we found that China has as much claim to that title as Japan. Yet perceptions of China as a military threat have also heightened. Faith in our ally across the Pacific, the United States, remains strong.

Among the most dramatic shifts in public sentiment over our decade of polling has been in Australians' views on climate change and global warming. After a high point in 2006, successive Polls revealed a steadily declining concern about climate change. But 2014 marks the second consecutive year that we have seen a rise in Australians' concern about climate change. The trend line has turned around.

This year's Poll also investigated attitudes to Australia's intelligence activities. Even though the revelations of NSA whistle-blower Edward Snowden have destabilised Australia's relations with Indonesia, it seems that many Australians are comfortable about spying on other countries – including neighbours such as Indonesia and allies such as the United States.

One of the most intriguing findings over the last few years of our polling has been Australians' seeming ambivalence

towards our democratic system of government. This year we probed these attitudes further, asking people why they have lost faith in Australia's democracy. The problem, it turns out, is not mere apathy, but genuine misgivings about the workings of Australian politics.

In 2014, we also revisit a question from our earlier polling asking Australians about the best target population for the nation in the future, and explore attitudes to Australia's immigration program.

In another first for the Poll, we asked Australians about their views on various world leaders and whether the emergence of more female leaders would make any difference to global security, peace or prosperity. It appears that Australians hold female leaders in high esteem, but they have no great hopes of their making a better world.

This Poll also explores Australians' assessment of some of the major threats to our vital interests, from terrorism to cyber attacks; it probes their preparedness to accept foreign investment across a range of sectors and industries, their high expectations of consular assistance, and their response to the government's decision to align more closely our aid program with our foreign policy objectives.

The line between international and domestic issues is more blurred than it has ever been. China's impact on our prosperity, the continuing threat posed by terrorism, and the challenge of climate change are just some of the international issues explored in this Poll that directly affect the daily lives of ordinary Australians. In the end, a successful foreign policy requires public support, so it is crucial that Australia's leaders understand their constituents' beliefs, fears and aspirations. The Lowy Institute Poll is one of the few tools that enable this, broadening and deepening the debate about Australia's foreign policy and its place in the world.

I commend it to you.

**Michael Fullilove**

Executive Director

June 2014

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Australia's best friend in Asia

In the 2014 Poll we asked Australian adults which of China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea is 'Australia's best friend in Asia'. In a statistically equivalent result, 31% of Australians say China and 28% say Japan is Australia's best friend in Asia.

## Views on China

Australians' feelings towards China warmed six degrees to 60° this year, its equal highest point in ten years of Lowy Institute polling. However, almost half the population (48%, up 7 points) say it is likely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years. A majority (56%) consider the Australian Government allows too much investment from China.

## Australia's intelligence practices

It seems many Australians are comfortable about the Australian Government spying on other countries, including our friends. Most (70%) believe it is acceptable to spy on governments of countries with which Australia does not have good relations. Half say this is acceptable even for countries with which Australia has good relations. For the majority, it is acceptable for Australia to spy on China (65%), Indonesia (62%), East Timor (60%), Japan (58%), the United States (54%), France (53%) and even New Zealand (51%).

## Relations with Indonesia: deteriorating but friendly

Forty per cent of Australians say relations with Indonesia are worsening, 24 points higher than in 2008. Only 7% see them as improving. However, a majority (57%) still describe Indonesia's relationship with Australia as 'friendly'. Regional security, terrorism and the issue of asylum seekers and people smuggling are seen as the most important policy priorities for the Australian and Indonesian governments to work on together. When forced to choose, more people cite the asylum seeker issue as the most important. Aid to Indonesia is seen as the most important issue by only 4% of Australians.

## Threats to our vital interests

For Australians, international terrorism is the foremost threat to Australia's vital interests in the next ten

years (65% seeing it as a critical threat), along with the 'possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers' (64% saying critical threat). However, the number seeing terrorism as a critical threat has dropped eight points since 2006. 'Cyber attacks from other countries' ranked fourth, after 'Iran's nuclear program'.

## Climate change and global warming

In 2014, 45% of Australians see global warming as a 'serious and pressing problem', up five points and the second consecutive increase in concern since 2012. A significant majority (63%) say that the government 'should be taking a leadership role on reducing emissions'. Only 28% believe 'it should wait for an international consensus before acting'.

## Asylum seeker policy

Australians strongly support the government's policy of turning back boats when safe to do so, with 71% in agreement. A majority (59%) support offshore processing of asylum seekers in places such as Nauru and Papua New Guinea. Temporary protection visas are more divisive, 48% agreeing with this policy idea against 49% disagreeing. Less than half (42%) agree that 'no asylum seeker coming to Australia by boat should be allowed to settle in Australia'.

## Australians and democracy

Confirming our previous Poll results, only 60% of Australian adults, and just 42% of 18-29 year-olds, say 'democracy is preferable to any other kind of government'. Only a small majority of the population (53%) choose 'a good democracy' over a 'strong economy'. For those who do not see democracy as the preferable form of government, the strongest reasons are that 'democracy is not working because there is no real difference between the policies of the major parties' (45% citing this as a major reason) and 'democracy only serves the interests of a few and not the majority of society' (42%).

## Foreign investment in Australia

A majority of Australians are in favour of allowing foreign investment in manufacturing and the financial sector, but there is significant opposition to allowing

foreign companies to invest in agriculture and ‘ports and airports’. Around half are against foreign investment in Qantas and the National Broadband Network.

### Population and immigration

Most Australians (76%) believe the best target population for Australia in the next 40 years is 30 million people or more. More than a third choose a population target of 40 million or more people, while only 4% say Australia’s population should be smaller than it is now. Asked about current migration levels, just less than half the population say it is ‘about right’, while 37% say that the number of migrants coming to Australia each year is too high. For those 37%, concern about migration is squarely focused on jobs.

### Aid and foreign policy

For 75% of Australians, ‘helping reduce poverty in poor countries’ is the most important objective of Australia’s overseas aid program. Only 20% believe that the most important goal is ‘promoting Australia’s foreign policy objectives’.

### World leaders

From a list of ten world leaders, Australians most admire US President Barack Obama and least admire Chinese President Xi Jinping. Three female leaders (Hillary Clinton, Aung San Suu Kyi and Angela Merkel) ranked in the top five behind Barack Obama.

*The 2014 Lowy Institute Poll reports the results of a nationally representative opinion survey of 1,000 Australian adults between 12 and 27 February 2014, and an additional 150 adults aged 18-29 years of age surveyed on the questions in tables 11-14, 17-21 and 27 at pages 22-28 of this report.*

# AUSTRALIA AND THE WORLD

## Who is Australia's best friend in Asia?

Shortly after becoming prime minister, Tony Abbott held talks with his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe, in which Mr Abbott described Japan as "Australia's best friend in Asia".<sup>1</sup> In April 2014, he concluded a free trade deal with Japan and announced new measures to deepen defence and security ties between the two nations.<sup>2</sup>

In the view of the Australian public however, China has as much of a claim to that title as Japan. Asked to choose between Japan, China, Indonesia, India, Singapore or South Korea, 31% of Australians say that China, Australia's largest trading partner, is 'Australia's best friend in Asia'. Twenty-eight per cent choose Japan as Australia's best friend in Asia, a statistically equivalent result. Next comes Singapore, with 12% seeing it as our best friend in Asia. Indonesia, our largest near neighbour, comes fourth (9%), followed by India (5%) and South Korea (5%).

## Views on China

Australians hold mixed views on China. This year's 'thermometer' (see p 15) recorded Australians' warmth towards China at 60°, its equal highest score in our

history of tracking, reinforcing our finding that many see China as Australia's best friend in Asia. However, not all aspects of the relationship with China are regarded so warmly.

### China as a military threat

Perceptions of the military threat posed by China have heightened this year. In the view of almost half the Australian population (48%), it is likely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years, a significant increase of 7 points from last year. Age and gender make little difference in Australians' perceptions of this threat.

An explanation for this rising sense of threat may lie in China's increased military activity in the region in the months prior to this Poll. In early February, Chinese warships conducted their first military exercises in the waters to Australia's north. In late November 2013, China unilaterally announced an air defence identification zone above the East China Sea, provoking strong responses from several nations including the United States, Japan and Australia.<sup>3</sup>

Fig. 1: Australia's best friend in Asia

In your personal opinion, which one of the following countries is Australia's best friend in Asia?

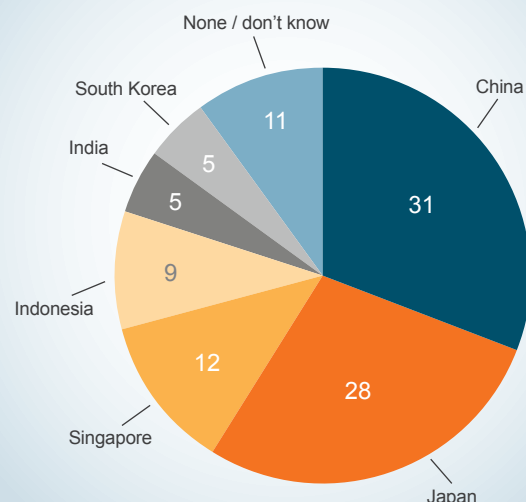
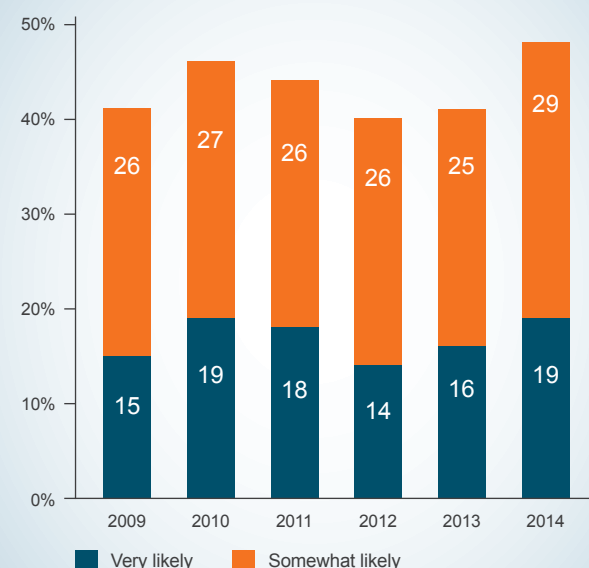


Fig. 2: China as a military threat

Do you think it is likely or unlikely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years?



## Chinese investment

Over the last six years of our polling, Australians have expressed a wariness of Chinese investment in Australia. In 2014, a majority (56%) considers that the Australian Government is allowing too much investment from China, compared with a much smaller 34% who say the amount of Chinese investment is about right. Only 4% say the government is not allowing enough investment from China.

## Australia's intelligence practices

The actions of Australia's intelligence agencies have been the focus of recent debate, with allegations that Australia has spied on some of Australia's neighbours and their political leaders in the past.

In response to a new Poll question this year, most Australians (70%) say that it is acceptable for the Australian Government to spy on governments of countries with which Australia does not have good relations. Exactly half say that this is acceptable even against countries with which Australia has good relations.

When canvassed about specific countries, a majority of Australians say it is acceptable for Australia to spy on China (65%), Indonesia (62%), East Timor (60%), Japan (58%), our treaty ally the United States (54%), France (53%) and even the neighbour for whom Australians hold the warmest feelings, New Zealand (51%).

## Relations with Indonesia: deteriorating but friendly

Repeating a question from earlier Lowy Institute polls, we asked Australians this year whether relations with Indonesia are improving, worsening or staying about the same.

Forty per cent of Australians say the relationship is worsening. This result is 24 points higher than in 2008, but lower than in 2006, at a time when the Schapelle Corby sentencing and a diplomatic row over Australia granting asylum to Papuans generated headlines. In a year which has again seen disruption in diplomatic relations between the two neighbours over allegations of Australian spying, only 7% now see the relationship as improving, considerably lower than the proportion who said this in 2008 and 2006 (26% and 19% respectively), confirming that significant challenges lie ahead for what Prime Minister Abbott has described as "in many respects our most important relationship".<sup>4</sup>

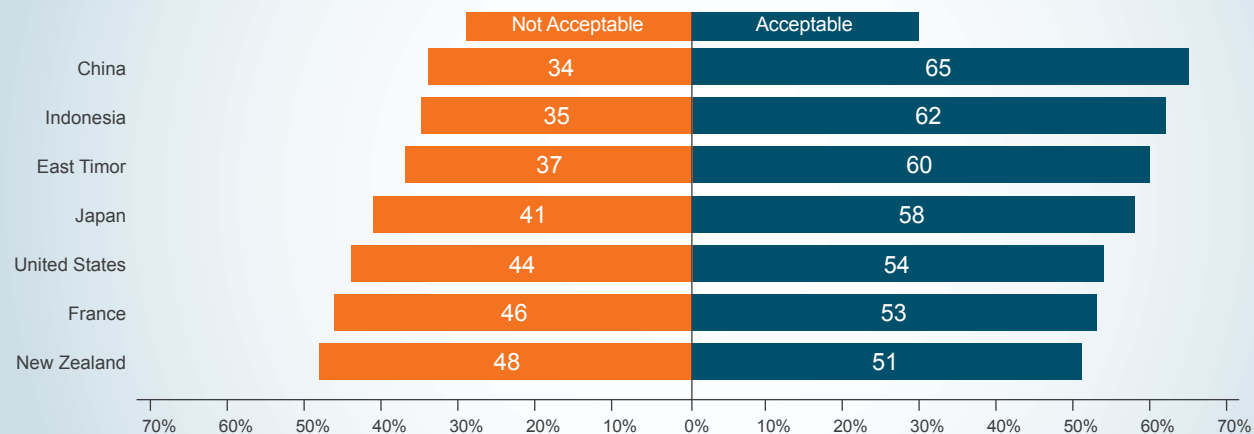
On a more positive note, although many see Australia's relationship with Indonesia deteriorating, a majority still describe Indonesia's relationship with Australia as 'friendly' (57%).

## Policy priorities for the Indonesia relationship

This year we sought to gauge Australians' views on what should be the policy priorities for Australia's relationship

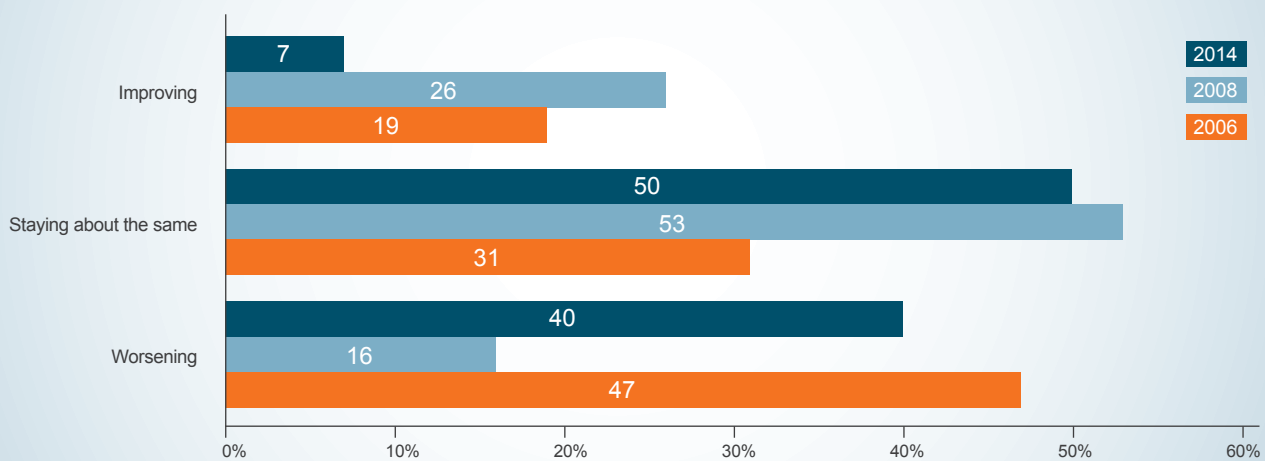
**Fig. 3: Spying on other countries**

I am now going to read you a list of countries. Please tell me whether you personally think it is acceptable or not acceptable for the Australian government to spy on each of the following countries:



**Fig. 4: Relations with Indonesia**

Now some questions about Indonesia. In your opinion are relations of Australia with Indonesia improving, worsening or staying about the same?



with Indonesia. Three clear priorities emerge. Around three-quarters of the population say 'security in the region' (75%), 'terrorism' (75%), and 'asylum seekers and people smuggling' (73%) are the most important areas for the Indonesian and Australian governments to be working on together. Considerably fewer identify 'trade and investment' (57%) and 'aid to Indonesia' (29%) as 'very important'. When forced to choose a single issue as most important, more people cited 'asylum seekers and people smuggling' (29%) as the most important priority for the two governments to be working on together, with terrorism and security in the region following close behind in importance. Very few (4%) cite 'aid to Indonesia' as the most important priority for the Australian and Indonesian governments.

### Threats to Australia's vital interests

Several times in our polling history, we have asked Australians to rate a list of possible threats to Australia's vital interests in the next ten years. We reintroduced this question in 2014, identifying a range of twelve potential threats. We included some from previous polls and added a number of new ones reflecting developments in Australia's security environment over the past few years.

'International terrorism' is the foremost threat in the minds of the Australian public today (65% seeing it as a

critical threat), along with 'the possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers' (64% saying critical threat). However, both threats have slipped somewhat in importance over the course of the past decade, with terrorism down eight points and the nuclear threat from unfriendly countries down six points since 2006.

Testing public perceptions of an emerging type of security challenge, we included 'cyber attacks from other countries' in this year's Poll, a question which was asked in the United States last year by the respected US polling organisation Pew Research. Australians ranked this fourth of the twelve threats we identified, with 51% seeing cyber attacks from other countries as a critical threat, and an overwhelming 88% seeing it as either a critical or important threat. This reflects similar concerns held in the United States, where 70% of Americans see the possibility of cyber attacks as a 'major threat', ranking it the second largest threat to that country behind Islamic extremist groups.<sup>5</sup>

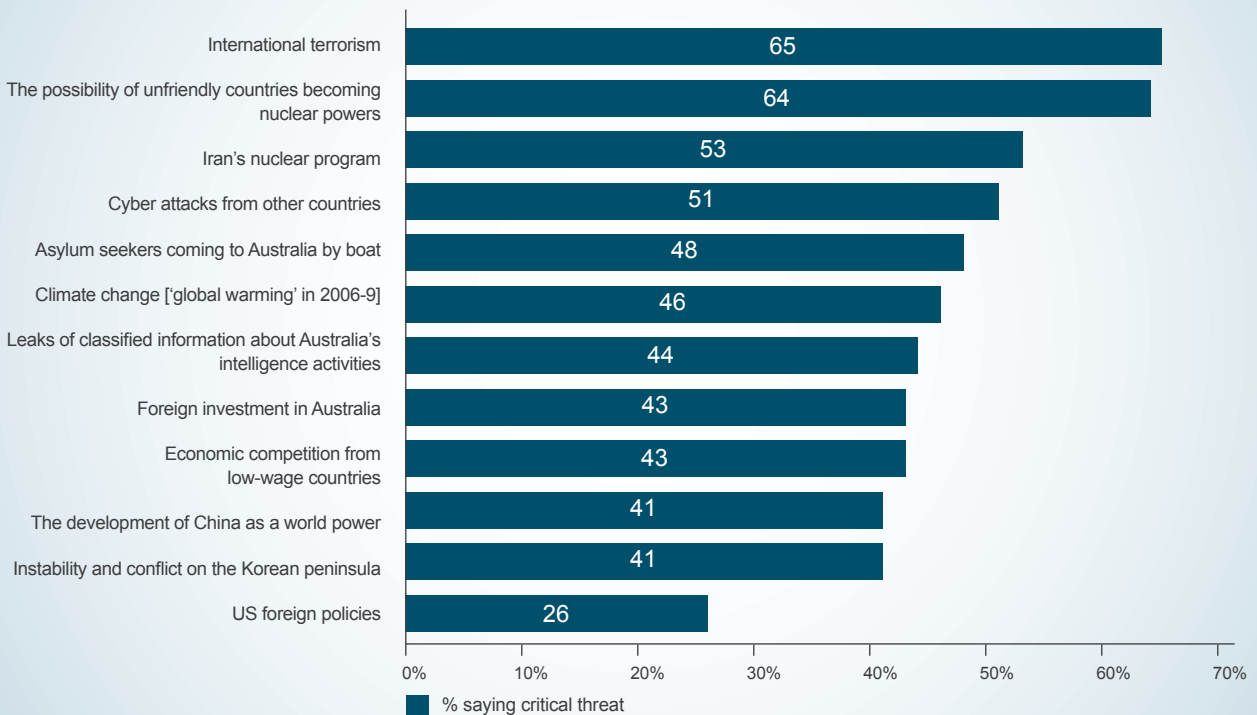
'Asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat' was ranked as the fifth greatest threat, with 48% saying it is a 'critical threat'.

Following revelations in late 2013 about the surveillance activities of Australia's intelligence agencies, we asked Australians if they saw 'leaks of classified information about Australia's intelligence activities' as a threat. It



**Fig. 5: Threats to Australia's vital interests**

I am now going to read out a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Australia in the next ten years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all.



seems Australians rate intelligence leaks as a threat of only moderate importance. With less than half the population (44%) regarding them as a 'critical threat', they rank seventh of all twelve threats.

In 2005, in a result that raised eyebrows at the time, our polling revealed that 57% of Australian adults were 'very' or 'fairly' worried about 'US foreign policies', ranking them equally with 'Islamic fundamentalism' as a potential threat from the outside world.<sup>6</sup> Australians now appear to have a much more positive view of US foreign policies. They rank them at the bottom of the list of potential critical threats (26% rating it a critical threat), well below 'the development of China as a world power' and 'instability and conflict on the Korean peninsula' (both 41%).

Another way of assessing Australians' perceptions of these threats is to examine the overall importance of particular threats (by adding those people who identify them as 'critical' threats to those who see them as 'important but not critical'). On this analysis, international terrorism and the nuclear threat from unfriendly countries again top

the list (respectively, 94% and 93% rating them as either critical or important). However, leaks of information about intelligence activities (76%) and the threat of asylum seekers (75%) lessen in relative importance, and are perceived as the least important threats overall to Australia's vital interests in the next ten years. This re-ordering of threat perceptions suggests that the lower-ranking threats such as asylum seekers and leaks about intelligence activities are of strong concern to parts of the community, but of lesser concern across the broader population.

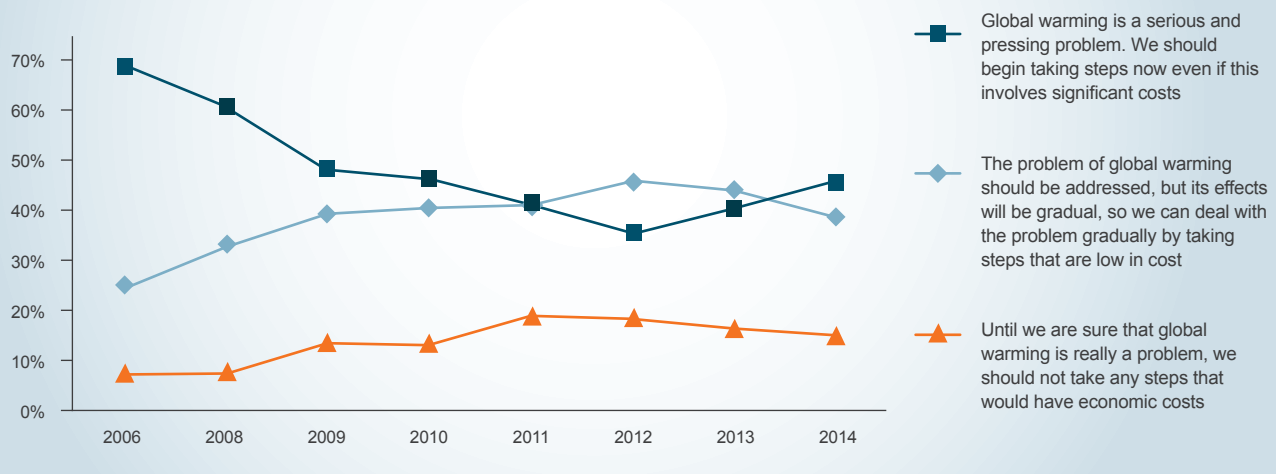
### Climate change and global warming

Last year's Poll saw the first rise in Australians' concern about climate change after five successive years of decline from the peak of concern in 2006. The 2014 Poll confirms that upward shift, recording the second consecutive increase in Australians' concern about global warming.

This year, 45% of the population now see global warming as a 'serious and pressing problem', up 5 points since

**Fig.6: Global warming**

Now about global warming. There is a controversy over what the countries of the world, including Australia, should do about the problem of global warming. I'm going to read you three statements. Please tell me which statement comes closest to your own point of view.



last year, while still considerably lower than the 68% who held this view in 2006. Thirty-eight per cent support the intermediate proposition that ‘the problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost’. Only 15% take the most sceptical view that ‘until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs’.

Concern about climate change differs across age-groups. Australians under 45 years are more likely to regard global warming as ‘a serious and pressing problem’ (51%) compared with 40% of those 45 years and older. Education is also a factor, with only 37% of those with Year 11 or lower education choosing the most serious option, compared with 50% of those with Year 12 or higher education.

**The Government’s role in reducing carbon emissions**

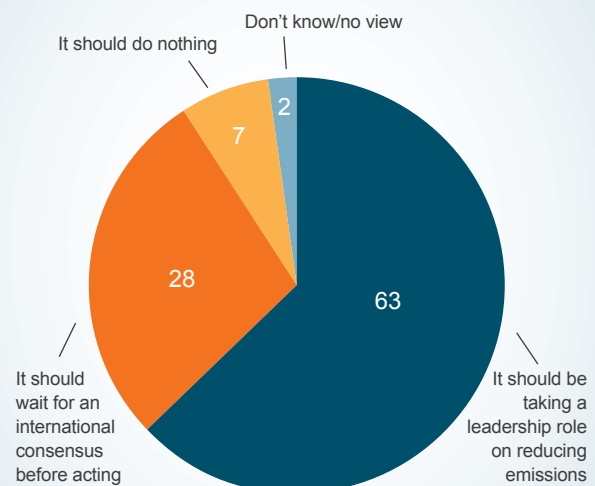
A significant majority of Australians (63%) say that the Australian Government ‘should be taking a leadership role on reducing emissions’ in response to a new question in this year’s Poll.

Only 28% think that Australia ‘should wait for an international consensus before acting’, and very few (7%) express the view that Australia ‘should do nothing’.

As with concerns about global warming, attitudes towards Australia’s leadership options on emissions reduction differ according to age. A very substantial 70% of adults aged 18-44 years say that Australia should take a leadership role, compared with 56% of those aged 45 and older.

**Fig. 7: Carbon emissions: leadership or consensus?**

Thinking now about international policy on the issue of global warming and carbon emissions, which ONE of the following comes closest to your own personal views on what the Australian government should be doing?



## Asylum seeker policy

The issue of how to deal with asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat has been a rapidly moving policy area provoking a range of complex policy responses. Prior to the 2013 election, the then Labor Government introduced a policy that asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat would be processed offshore and would not be allowed to settle in Australia.<sup>7</sup> Around the same time, the Coalition’s “Operation Sovereign Borders” policy proposed a number of measures, including turning back boats and reintroducing temporary protection visas which prevent permanent residency and family reunions.<sup>8</sup> In this year’s Poll, we tested the appeal of five propositions encapsulating this complex range of policy options.

Australians strongly support the government’s policy of turning back boats: 71% of the Australian public agree that ‘the government should turn back boats when it is safe to do so.’ Around the time of our polling fieldwork, the government’s success in turning back to Indonesia boats carrying asylum seekers had attracted considerable media attention.<sup>9</sup>

Riots broke out at the Manus Island detention centre part-way through our fieldwork, resulting in the death of an Iranian asylum seeker.<sup>10</sup> Yet the majority of Australians continue the support for offshore processing which they demonstrated in response to a similar question in last

year’s Poll.<sup>11</sup> Fifty-nine per cent of Australians this year say that ‘asylum seekers should be processed offshore in places such as Nauru and Papua New Guinea, before deciding whether they should be settled in Australia’.

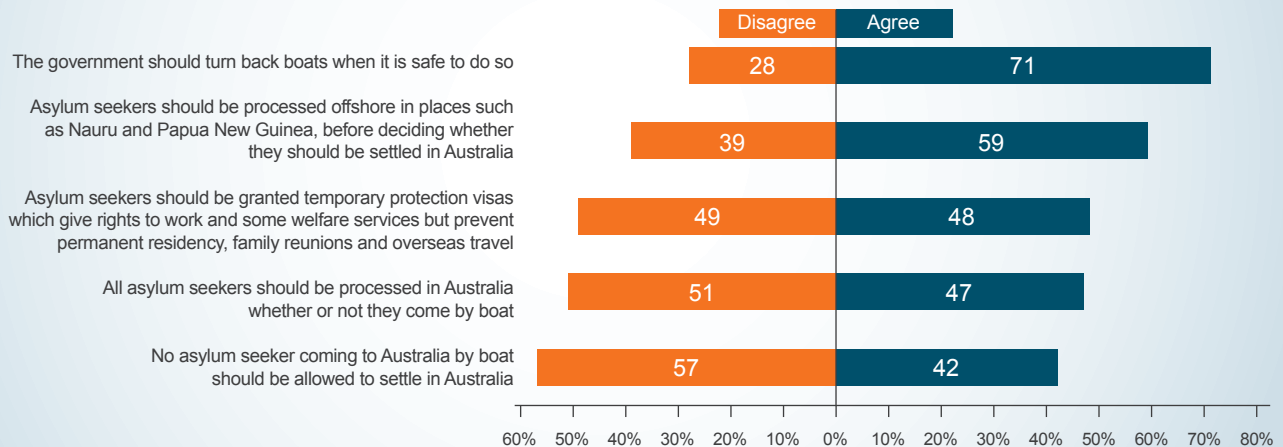
We also sought to test an idea sometimes urged by those opposed to offshore processing, that all asylum seekers should be processed onshore, whether or not they come by boat. Australians are quite divided on this: 47% agree and 51% disagree that ‘all asylum seekers should be processed in Australia whether or not they come by boat’. Younger Australians are more supportive, with a majority (56%) favouring all processing in Australia, compared with 38% of Australians 45 years and older.

The question of where asylum seekers should be eventually settled, as distinct from where their claims for asylum are processed, prompts a different response from Australians. When asked about the Rudd Government policy of not allowing *any* asylum seekers to settle in Australia if they come by boat, less than half (42%) of Australians agree.

Australians appear to be undecided about temporary protection visas, or TPVs. Approximately equal numbers of Australians agree (48%) as disagree (49%) with the policy of granting TPVs which give ‘rights to work and some welfare services, but prevent permanent residency, family reunions and overseas travel’.

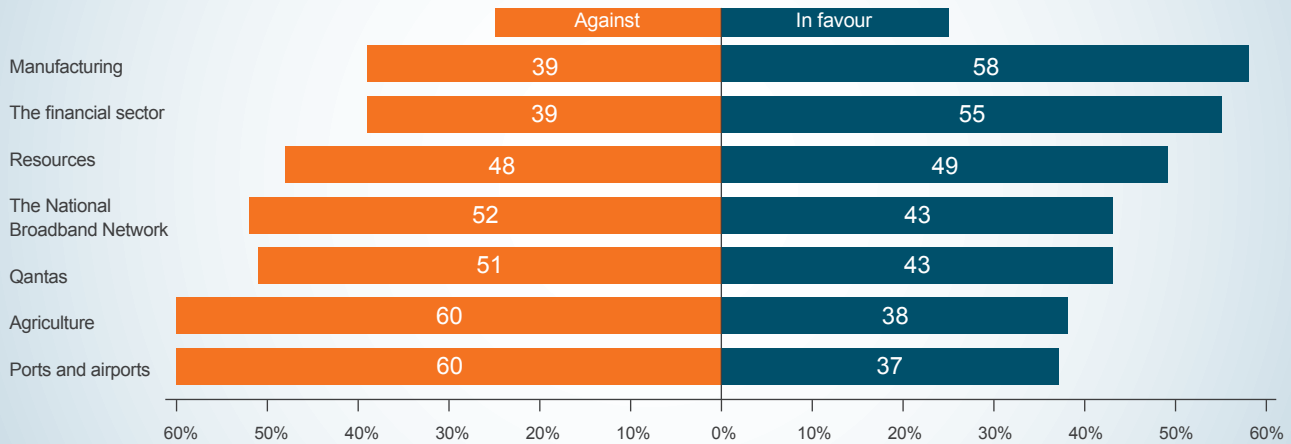
**Fig. 8: Asylum seeker policy**

Now about asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. I am going to read you some statements about asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. Please say whether you personally agree or disagree with the following policy ideas:



**Fig. 9: Foreign investment**

Now about foreign investment in Australia generally. Are you personally in favour or against the Australian government allowing foreign companies to invest in:



## Foreign investment

Foreign investment in Australian companies and agricultural land has been the topic of heated debate in Australia. In 2012, the majority of Australians (63%) were strongly against ‘the Australian government allowing foreign companies to buy Australian farmland to grow crops or farm livestock’, and a further (18%) were ‘somewhat against’ this.<sup>12</sup>

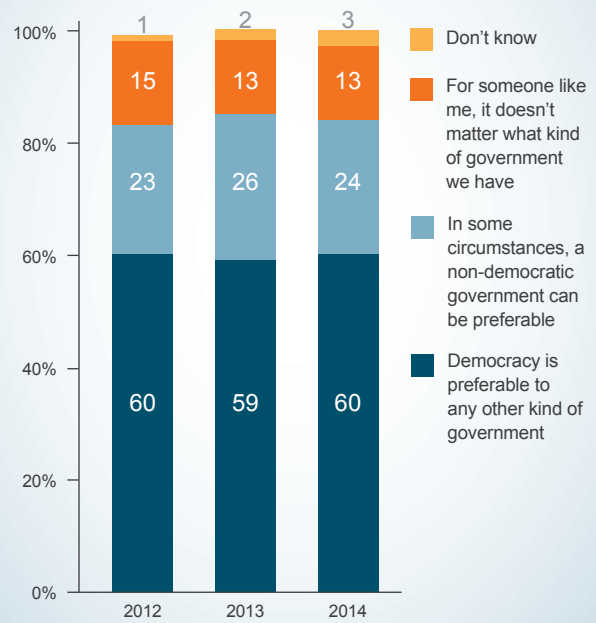
In late 2013 and early this year, the predicaments of companies such as Qantas, SPC Ardmona and Toyota’s Australian operations featured prominently in news headlines.<sup>13</sup> We asked Australians in our 2014 Poll their views on foreign investment across a range of sectors, from agriculture to manufacturing. While majorities are in favour of allowing foreign investment in manufacturing and the financial sector, the prospect of foreign companies investing in Australian agriculture, infrastructure projects such as ports and airports, and the National Broadband Network (NBN) provoked significant opposition. Sixty per cent of Australians are against the government allowing foreign companies to invest in both the agricultural sector and ports and airports. Slightly smaller majorities oppose investment in Qantas (51% against) and the NBN (52% against). Australians are effectively divided on foreign investment in the resources sector (49% in favour, 48% against).

## Australians and democracy

For the third year in a row, our Poll results have revealed a high number of Australians who are ambivalent about

**Fig. 10: Views on democracy**

Now a question about democracy. I am going to read you three statements about democracy. Please say which one of the three statements comes closest to your own personal views about democracy:



the value of democracy, despite Australia being one of the oldest continuous democracies in the world.<sup>14</sup>

Presented with three options and asked which one comes closest to your own personal views about democracy', a quarter of the population say 'in some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable' and a further 13% say 'for someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have'. Just 60% believe that 'democracy is preferable to any other kind of government'.

A surprising aspect of these findings over the years has been the large number of young Australians who reject the view that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. In 2014, to consolidate and probe these results further, we added an additional 150 interviews with 18-29 year-olds to provide a firmer basis for drawing reliable conclusions from the results.

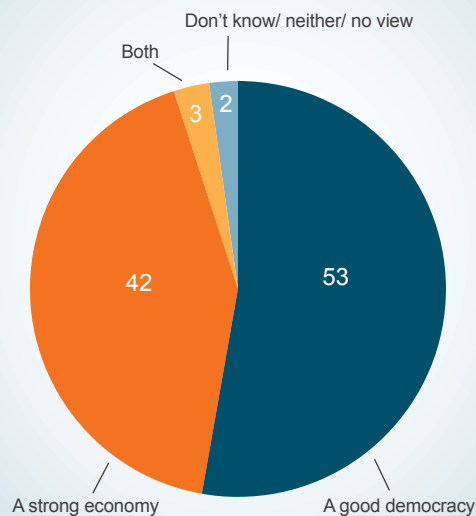
In 2014, confirming previous Poll findings, only 42% of 18-29 year-olds see democracy as preferable to any other kind of government, compared with 65% of those 30 years and over. A third (33%) of 18-29 year-olds say that 'in some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable', and nearly one in five (19%) say 'it doesn't matter what kind of government we have'.

### Democracy v prosperity

In a bid to better understand Australians' ambivalence about democracy, we adapted a question this year which has been asked by Pew Research over the past decade in 56 countries: 'If you had to choose between a good democracy or a strong economy, which one would you personally choose?' Only a small majority, 53%, choose 'a good democracy', with 42% opting for 'a strong economy'. Interestingly, only two-thirds (66%) of Australians who prefer democracy over any other kind of government choose 'a good democracy' over 'a strong economy'. The comparison between Australians' views on this question and populations of other nations is thought-provoking. Their views are similar to those of the British, 56% of whom said in 2009 that a good democracy was more important than a strong economy. In this, Australians and British citizens align closely with populations in Germany (58% opting

**Fig. 11: Democracy v prosperity**

Still on democracy, if you had to choose between a good democracy or a strong economy for Australia, which ONE would you personally choose?



in 2009 for a good democracy), Turkey (58% in 2012), India (56% in 2007) and Lebanon (53% in 2012). There was much stronger support for democracy in France (73% in 2009) and Spain (68% in 2009). Forty-nine per cent of Americans in 2009 supported democracy, but there were few Russians (19%, 2012), Malaysians (30%, 2007), Indonesians (32%, 2011) and Poles (36%, 2009) who said a good democracy was more important than a strong economy.<sup>15</sup>

### Democracy is not working

To explore the thinking of the 40% of Australians who do not agree that democracy is preferable to any other form of government, we presented them with five propositions, and asked them whether each was a 'major' or 'minor' reason for their views. The strongest response was for the proposition that 'democracy is not working because there is no real difference between the policies of the major parties', 45% citing this as a major reason for not preferring democracy. The second strongest response was that 'democracy only serves the interests of a few and not the majority of society', cited by 42% as a major reason.

Our results appear to dispel the notion that many Australians believe a different system of government might work better than our existing democratic system.

Only 21% cite as a major reason for not preferring democracy that 'a more authoritarian system where leaders can make decisions without the processes of democracy achieves better results'. For 36% of Australians, the proposition that 'I have become disillusioned with Australian politics and think another system might work better' is a major reason for not preferring democracy.

Similarly, it does not appear that Australians' equivocal support for democracy can be ascribed to mere apathy. Only 21% say that 'democracy is the usual form of government now and always will be, so I don't worry about it' is a major reason for their lack of support for democracy.

Our Poll results have repeatedly indicated that the 18-29 year-old age group is more dismissive of democracy than their elders. However, their reasons are very similar. When presented with the same five propositions about why they believe democracy is not the preferable form of government, the two most popular responses are 'democracy only serves the interests of a few and not the majority' (a major reason for 40%) and 'democracy is not working because there is no real difference between the policies of the major parties' (a major reason for 32%).

## Australia's population size

This year, we repeated a question from our 2010 Poll about what population target would be best for Australia in the next 40 years. Out of a range of population sizes, three-quarters (76%) of Australians choose a population target of 30, 40 or 50 million people. Around one in five (18%) think the population should be 'around the current size of 23 million people', 4 points lower than in 2010. Very few (4%) say it should be smaller than it is now.

What is not known or reflected in these results is the extent to which the Australian public comprehends current rates of population growth. While more than a third of all Australians favour a population of 40 million people or more, the projected Australian population in 2050 is somewhere between 38 million and 42 million people at around current rates of both natural increase (births and deaths) and migration.<sup>16</sup>

## Immigration

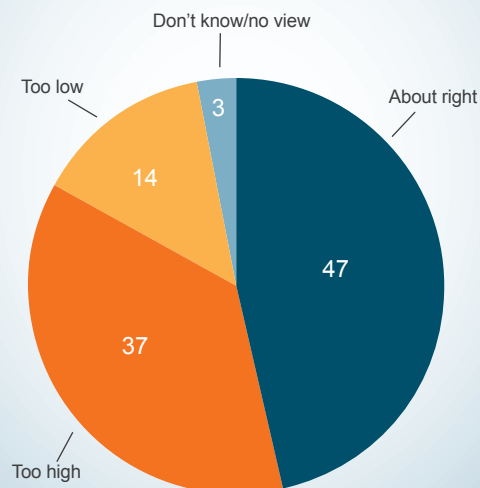
One of the factors in Australia's population size is the level of immigration. There have been numerous polls on attitudes to Australia's immigration intake since the middle of last century which show public sentiment fluctuating considerably. After a high point in opposition to immigration in the late 1980s, the 1990s and early 2000s saw significant reductions, while levels of opposition appear to have rebounded in the last few years.<sup>17</sup>

Drawing from a number of other surveys, we asked Australians in our 2014 Poll whether they thought the 'total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is too high, too low, or about right'.<sup>18</sup> The results were remarkably consistent with those of similar polls in recent years,<sup>19</sup> with 37% of Australians saying the total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is too high, compared with only 14% saying it is too low. Almost half (47%) say the migrant intake is about right.

To those people who said the number of migrants each year is too high, we proposed a number of possible reasons for their views, and asked them whether each was a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason driving their views about the level of immigration.

Fig. 12: Immigration

Thinking now about Australia's immigration program. Do you personally think that the total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is too high, too low, or about right?



For these Australians (just over a third of the adult population), concern about immigration is squarely focused on jobs. Of the five reasons we proposed, the most popular responses were ‘we should train our own skilled people, not take them from other countries’ (88% saying this was a major reason) and ‘having more people could make unemployment worse’ (87% saying major reason).

Slightly less important were concerns about the environment and overcrowded cities. Fewer Australians said that ‘Australia’s cities are already too crowded’ (72%), and fewer again that ‘the natural environment is stressed by the numbers we already have’ (68%).

Cultural diversity does not appear to be a primary driver of anti-immigration sentiment. Only 50% of those concerned about the level of immigration say that ‘we have too much cultural diversity already’ is a major reason for their concern about the number of migrants coming to Australia each year.

### Australia’s alliance with the United States

Australians’ support for the ANZUS alliance, signed in 1951, remains very strong. Support has slipped marginally

this year, with the proportion saying the alliance is very or fairly important for Australia’s security down four points to 78%. Nevertheless, support for the alliance remains well above the levels seen in the mid-2000s during George W. Bush’s presidency, when support dropped as low as 63%.

### Reliability of the ANZUS security guarantee

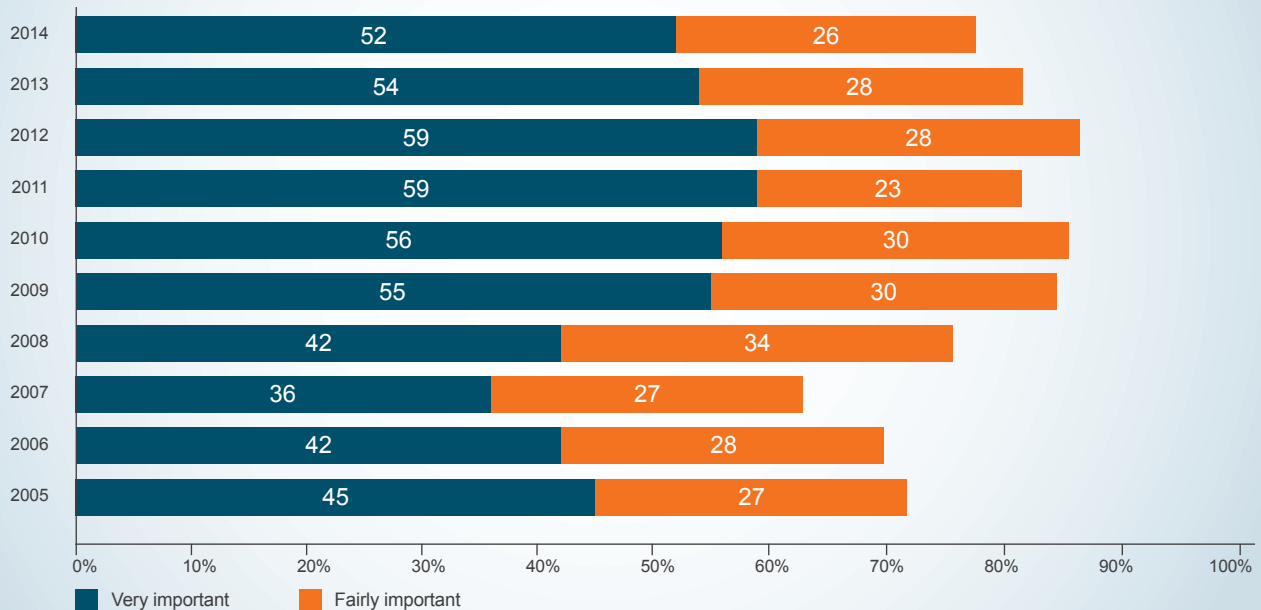
To gauge Australians’ sense of the continuing relevance and durability of the US alliance for our nation’s security, we revisited a question from our 2009 Poll and asked whether Australia will still be able to rely on the implicit security guarantee provided by the ANZUS Treaty in 5, 10 and 20 years’ time.

A very convincing 85% of Australians believe it likely that Australia will still be able to rely on the US security guarantee in five years’ time. Slightly fewer, 78%, think it likely to be reliable in 10 years’ time, and two thirds (66%) think this likely in 20 years’ time.

There is a strong positive correlation between support for the alliance and confidence in the reliability of the alliance. Confidence in the alliance increases with age. Nearly half (44%) of Australians 60 years and over believe

Fig. 13: Importance of the US alliance

And now about Australia’s alliance relationship with the United States. How important is our alliance relationship with the United States for Australia’s security?



it is very likely that Australia will be able to rely on the alliance in 20 years' time, compared with only 27% of those aged 18-29 years.

## Feelings towards other countries

The Lowy Institute's annual 'feelings thermometer' measures Australians' feelings towards a range of other countries. It uses a thermometer scale where 100° is a very warm favourable feeling, and 0° is a very cold, unfavourable feeling. Twenty-one countries were included in this year's thermometer, with New Zealand at 84° again the country most warmly regarded by Australians, as it has been on each occasion it has appeared on our thermometer.

North Korea maintains its place at the bottom of the scale, with Australians' sentiments steadily cooling from an already cold 37° in 2010 to a decidedly frosty 29° this year, its lowest point in our polling history.

Cold, but slightly less cool than North Korea, were feelings towards Afghanistan and Iran at 38° and 39° respectively, consistent with previous years' results. Feelings towards Papua New Guinea were lukewarm, registering below 60° for the second time since 2006.

The United States, our security alliance partner since 1951, continues to receive our high regard. Australians' feelings towards the United States are warm at 71°, considerably higher than their low point of 60° in 2007 towards the end of the Bush presidency.

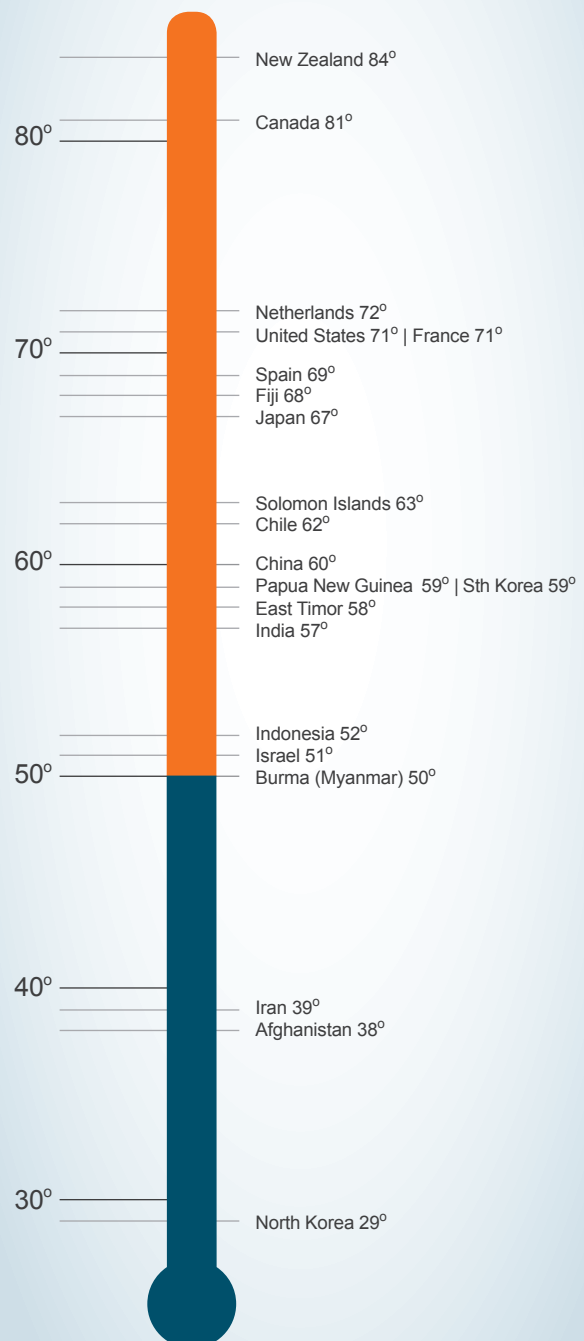
The most striking temperature shift this year was the six degree warming of sentiments towards China to a warmish 60°, its equal highest score in our history of tracking.

Feelings towards Fiji have also warmed four degrees to 68° since the last Lowy Institute Poll. In February 2014, part-way through our fieldwork, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop announced moves to normalise Australia's relationship with Fiji after several years of sanctions and constraints on diplomatic and political relations.<sup>20</sup>

On a lighter note, Australia's competitors in the first round of the FIFA World Cup – Spain, Netherlands and

Fig. 14: Feelings thermometer

Please rate your feelings towards some countries, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred: the higher the number the more favourable your feelings are toward that country. If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country, please say so.





Chile – were included in the thermometer for the first time this year. Feelings towards them are, for now, warm (69°, 72° and 62° respectively).

### The republic and Australia’s international standing

We asked this year whether an Australian republic with an Australian head of state would strengthen, weaken or make no difference to Australia’s standing in the world. Fifty-five per cent of Australians say that becoming a republic would make no difference to Australia’s standing in the world. Around one in five (19%) say that it would strengthen Australia’s standing, and approximately the same number say it would weaken it.

### Australia’s international policy activities

#### Importance of Australia’s international agencies

In a policy environment characterised by frequent debate about the roles and importance of the various arms of government involved in Australia’s international relations – the Australian Defence Force, our diplomatic service, intelligence agencies and aid program – we sought to discover Australians’ views of the relative importance of these key arms of government. In response, most Australians (83%) say the Australian Defence Force is ‘very important’, well ahead of those who say the diplomatic service and intelligence agencies are very important (both 63%). Less than half (49%) ascribe the same level of importance to Australia’s aid program.

#### Aid and foreign policy

Shortly after gaining office, Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced his intention to absorb AusAID, Australia’s aid agency, into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), “enabling the aid and diplomatic arms of Australia’s international policy agenda to be more closely aligned”.<sup>21</sup>

In this context, we asked Australians this year whether ‘promoting Australia’s foreign policy objectives’ or ‘helping reduce poverty in poor countries’ was the most

Fig. 16: Objectives of Australia’s aid program

Now about possible objectives for Australia’s overseas aid program. Which ONE of the following do you yourself think is the most important objective of Australia’s overseas aid program?

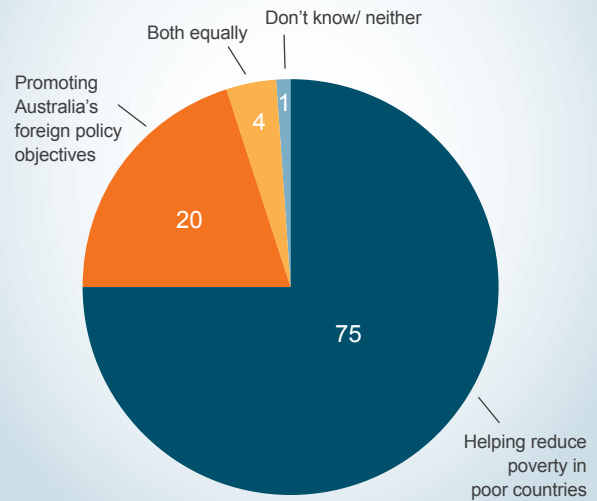


Fig. 15: Importance of Australia’s international agencies

Thinking now about the arms of the Australian government involved in international relations and how important they are. For each of these arms of the government please say if you personally think they are very important, somewhat important or not important.

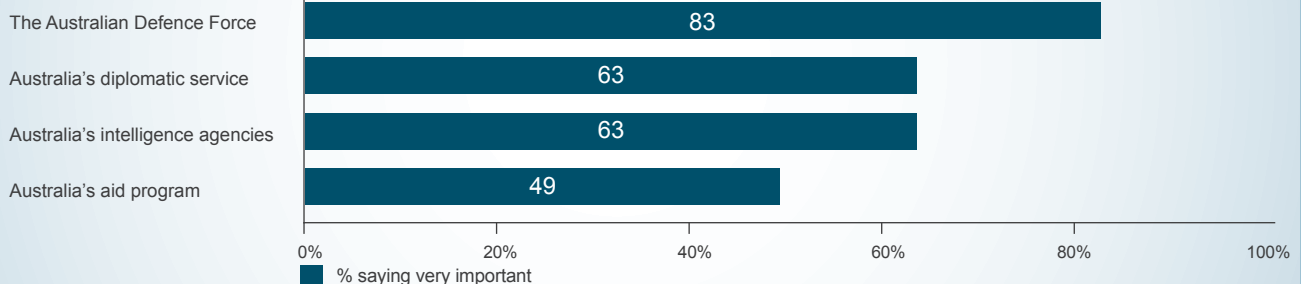
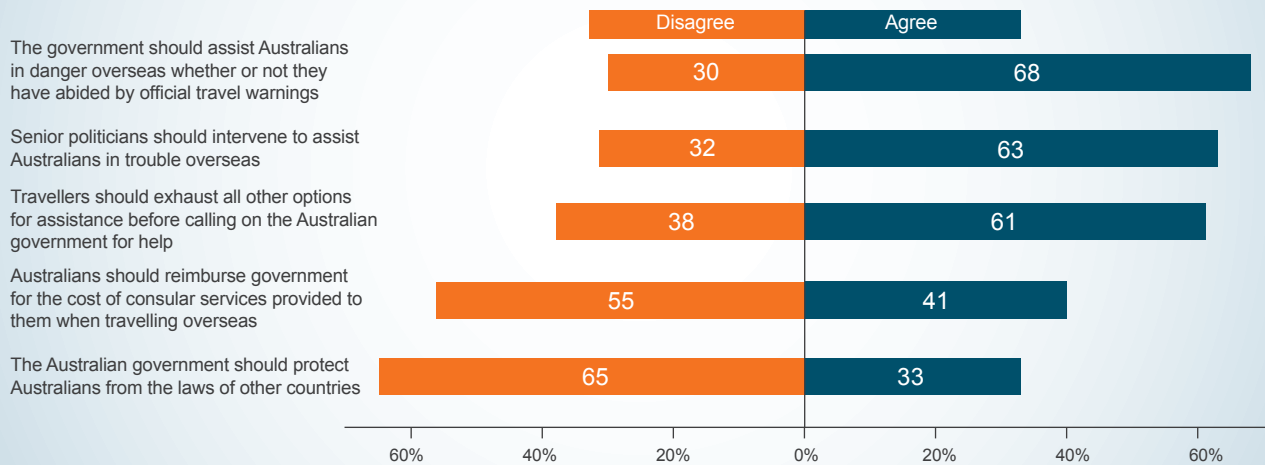


Fig. 17: Consular assistance

Now on the consular support the Australian government gives travellers when they encounter difficulty overseas. I am going to read out some statements other people have made about the consular support government gives to Australian travellers in difficulty overseas. For each one please say whether you personally agree or disagree:



important objective of Australia's overseas aid program. A large majority of Australians (75%) say 'helping reduce poverty in poor countries' is the most important objective. Few Australians (20%) identify 'promoting Australia's foreign policy objectives' as the most important objective of the program.

### Australia's consular service

A number of high-profile cases have raised awareness of the consular service which the Australian Government provides when Australians encounter difficulty overseas. DFAT has recently conducted a public consultation on the delivery of consular services in preparing a new consular strategy at the request of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop.<sup>22</sup>

Australians have high expectations of the consular assistance they should receive from government, according to a new question in this year's Poll. Presented with five statements about consular assistance, a significant majority (68%) agree that government should assist Australians in danger overseas regardless of whether they have abided by official travel warnings, and 63% say that 'senior politicians should intervene to assist Australians in trouble overseas'. A majority (55%) rejects any obligation to reimburse government for the cost of consular services provided to them when travelling overseas. This high degree of reliance on government

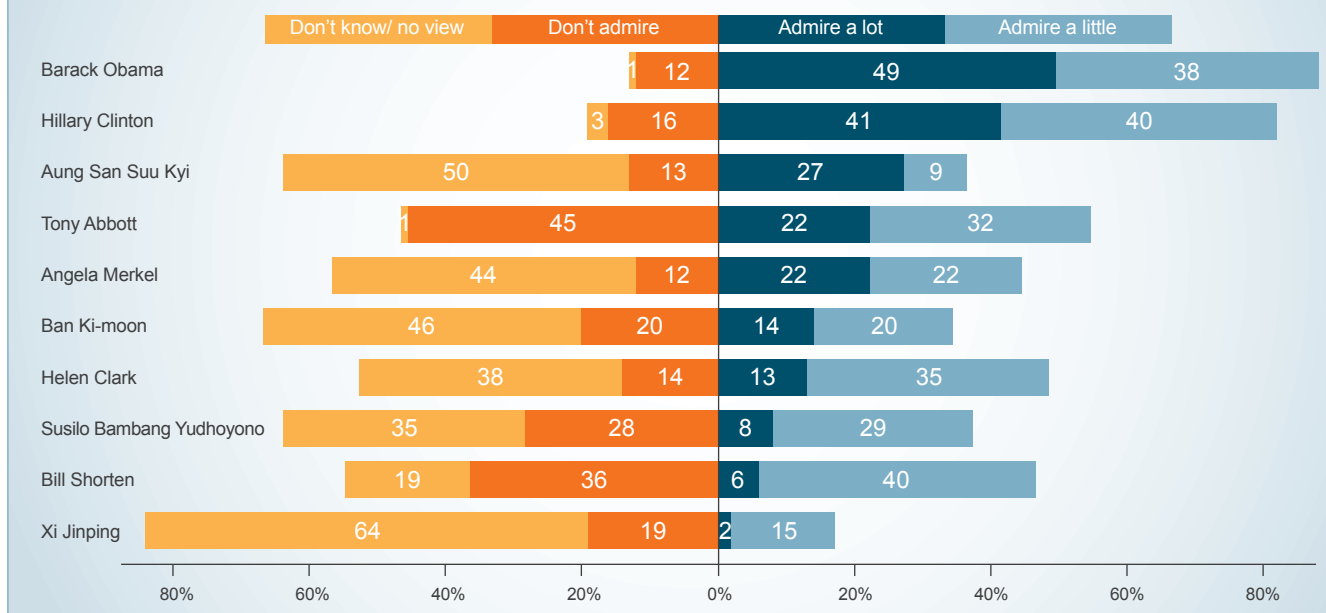
tends to undermine the views they express on the other propositions we posed. A significant majority (61%) say that 'travellers should exhaust all other options for assistance before calling on the Australian Government for help', and only a third (33%) agree that the government 'should protect Australians from the laws of other countries'. However, these sentiments do not sit neatly with their expectations of government assistance even when they have disregarded official travel warnings, and their reliance on political intervention when Australians encounter trouble overseas.

### World leaders

In a new question this year, we sought the views of Australian adults on some of the world's political leaders, both men and women. We put forward a list of ten leaders, and asked whether Australians 'admire them a lot, admire them a little or ... don't admire them'. The list comprised Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, UN Development Programme Administrator and former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, US President Barack Obama, Opposition Leader Bill Shorten and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

Fig. 18: World political leaders

Now some questions about world political leaders. For each of the following leaders, please say whether you personally admire them a lot, admire them a little or you don't admire them.



The most admired leader is US President Barack Obama, followed by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Three of the top five leaders admired most by the Australian public are women: Hillary Clinton, Aung San Suu Kyi and Angela Merkel. Prime Minister Tony Abbott rounds out the top five.

Among the least admired are the Indonesian and Chinese leaders. Very few Australians express a high level of admiration for Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (8% admire him 'a lot'). Only 2% admire Chinese President Xi Jinping 'a lot', with a majority of Australians (64%) holding no view on him.

Men are more likely than women to admire Angela Merkel (49% of men admiring her overall, and 40% of women). Women are more likely to admire Hillary Clinton than men, though she is widely admired by both (86% of women and 76% of men admire her).

The two Australian leaders on our list provoke different responses. Significantly more Australians admire Prime Minister Tony Abbott 'a lot' (22%) compared with Bill Shorten (6%). But in terms of overall admiration (admired either 'a lot' or 'a little'), the gap is narrower and more

along the lines of the typical 'two-party-preferred' vote. Bill Shorten is admired by 46% of Australians, while Tony Abbott is admired by the majority (54%). On this measure, the Australian Prime Minister ranks third on our list overall, behind only Barack Obama (87%) and Hillary Clinton (81%).

#### What if there were more female political leaders in the world?

Most Australians (60%) think that it would make no difference if the world had more female political leaders. However, almost a third say 'things would be better' if the world had more female political leaders, while only 7% say 'things would be worse'.

The notion that having more females in leadership roles might make the world a more just, peaceful or prosperous place was rejected by most Australians participating in this Poll. Less than half of Australians agreed the world would be more just (42%). Even fewer Australians agreed that 'the world would be more peaceful' (38%). Less than a third (31%) agreed 'the world would be more prosperous'.

# TABLES OF RESULTS

Please note that totals may not add to 100% due to rounding. Each response option has been rounded individually and grouped responses (e.g. those who 'somewhat agree' plus 'strongly agree') have not been rounded at the group level. In every case, responses of 'don't know', 'no view', 'none' and similar were recorded if given by respondents, but not offered. Throughout the tables, an '\*\*' represents a response given by less than 0.5% of people.

## Australia's best friend in Asia

**Table 1:** Now about Australia's relations in Asia. In your personal opinion, which one of the following countries is Australia's best friend in Asia?

China	31%
Japan	28%
Singapore	12%
Indonesia	9%
India	5%
South Korea	5%
None/Don't know	11%

## China as a military threat

**Table 2:** Do you think it is likely or unlikely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years? IF LIKELY - Is that very likely or somewhat likely? IF UNLIKELY - Is that very unlikely or somewhat unlikely?

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Very likely	19%	16%	14%	18%	19%	15%
Somewhat likely	29%	25%	26%	26%	27%	26%
<b>Total likely</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>41%</b>
Somewhat unlikely	32%	36%	39%	35%	36%	38%
Very unlikely	18%	18%	19%	20%	16%	19%
<b>Total unlikely</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>57%</b>
Don't know	2%	4%	3%	1%	2%	3%

## Chinese investment

**Table 3:** And now about Chinese investment in Australia. Overall, do you think the Australian government is:

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Allowing too much investment from China	56%	57%	56%	57%	57%	50%
Allowing about the right amount of investment from China	34%	33%	37%	35%	34%	42%
Not allowing enough investment from China	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Don't know	5%	6%	4%	5%	6%	5%

## Australia's intelligence activities

**Table 4:** Now about Australia's intelligence activities. In your personal view do you think it is acceptable or not acceptable for the Australian government to spy on the governments of each of the following types of countries? Firstly: Is it acceptable or not acceptable to spy on the governments of countries with which ...?

	Australia has good relations	Australia does not have good relations
Acceptable	50%	70%
Not acceptable	48%	28%
Don't know/no view	2%	2%

**Table 5:** I am now going to read you a list of countries. Please tell me whether you personally think it is acceptable or not acceptable for the Australian government to spy on each of the following countries:

[This question was not asked of those who answered either 'acceptable' or 'not acceptable' to both responses in table 4 above. The following table is based on adding the responses of those who said it is acceptable to spy both on the governments of countries with which Australia has good relations and on those with which it does not have good relations, to the responses for each of the following countries asked of the remaining respondents].

<i>Ranked L-R by % saying 'acceptable'</i>	China	Indonesia	East Timor	Japan	United States	France	New Zealand
Acceptable	65%	62%	60%	58%	54%	53%	51%
Not acceptable	34%	35%	37%	41%	44%	46%	48%
Don't know/no view	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%

## Indonesia

**Table 6:** Now some questions about Indonesia. In your opinion are relations of Australia with Indonesia improving, worsening or staying about the same?

	2014	2008	2006
Improving	7%	26%	19%
Worsening	40%	16%	47%
Staying about the same	50%	53%	31%
Don't know	3%	5%	3%

**Table 7:** Which one of the following two words do you personally think best describes Indonesia's relationship with Australia? Would you say ... ?

Friendly	57%
Unfriendly	36%
Neither	4%
Don't know/no view	3%

\*the option "neither" was not read out

**Table 8:** And which word do you think Indonesians would choose for the relationship with Australia? Would you say...?

Friendly	42%
Unfriendly	51%
Neither	2%
Don't know/no view	6%

\*the option "neither" was not read out

## Indonesia – policy priorities

**Table 9:** Thinking now about the issues the Indonesian and Australian governments should be working on together. For each of the following issues do you personally think it is a very important, somewhat important or, not an important issue for the Indonesian and Australian governments to be working on together?

<i>Ranked by % saying 'very important'</i>	Very important	Somewhat important	<b>Total important</b>	Not important	Don't know
Security in the region	75%	20%	<b>95%</b>	3%	1%
Terrorism	75%	19%	<b>94%</b>	5%	1%
Asylum seekers and people smuggling	73%	20%	<b>93%</b>	6%	1%
Trade and investment	57%	38%	<b>95%</b>	5%	1%
Aid to Indonesia	29%	51%	<b>80%</b>	19%	1%

**Table 10:** [Asked if two or more issues were rated equally important in table 9 above] And which ONE of these issues do you personally think is the most important?

<i>Ranked by % saying 'most important'</i>	Most important
Asylum seekers and people smuggling	29%
Terrorism	22%
Security in the region	19%
Trade and investment	14%
Aid to Indonesia	4%
None/don't know	2%

## Threats to Australia's vital interests

**Table 11:** I am now going to read out a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Australia in the next ten years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all.

2014					
	Critical threat	An important but not critical threat	Total: important threat	Not an important threat at all	Don't know
<i>Ranked by % saying 'a critical threat'</i>					
International terrorism	65%	29%	<b>94%</b>	6%	1%
The possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers	64%	29%	<b>93%</b>	6%	1%
Iran's nuclear program	53%	34%	<b>87%</b>	11%	3%
Cyber attacks from other countries	51%	37%	<b>88%</b>	10%	3%
Asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat	48%	27%	<b>75%</b>	24%	1%
Climate change ['global warming' in 2006-9]	46%	35%	<b>81%</b>	18%	1%
Leaks of classified information about Australia's intelligence activities	44%	32%	<b>76%</b>	21%	2%
Foreign investment in Australia	43%	43%	<b>86%</b>	11%	3%
Economic competition from low-wage countries	43%	38%	<b>81%</b>	16%	3%
The development of China as a world power	41%	44%	<b>85%</b>	14%	1%
Instability and conflict on the Korean peninsula	41%	42%	<b>83%</b>	12%	5%
US foreign policies	26%	56%	<b>82%</b>	15%	3%

**Table 12:**

Percentage saying 'a critical threat'				
<i>Ranked by % saying 'a critical threat'</i>	2014	2009	2008	2006
International terrorism	65%	68%	66%	73%
The possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers	64%	69%	62%	70%
Iran's nuclear program	53%			
Cyber attacks from other countries	51%			
Asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat	48%			
Climate change ['global warming' in 2006-9]	46%	52%	66%	68%
Leaks of classified information about Australia's intelligence activities	44%			
Foreign investment in Australia	43%			
Economic competition from low-wage countries	43%	35%	40%	34%
The development of China as a world power	41%	40%	34%	25%
Instability and conflict on the Korean peninsula	41%	45%	26%	34%
US foreign policies	26%			

## Dealing with global warming

**Table 13:** Now about global warming. There is a controversy over what the countries of the world, including Australia, should do about the problem of global warming. I'm going to read you three statements. Please tell me which statement comes closest to your own point of view.

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2006
Global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs	45%	40%	36%	41%	46%	48%	60%	68%
The problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost	38%	44%	45%	40%	40%	39%	32%	24%
Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs	15%	16%	18%	19%	13%	13%	8%	7%
Don't know/refused	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	*	1%

## The Government's role in reducing carbon emissions

**Table 14:** Thinking now about international policy on the issue of global warming and carbon emissions, which ONE of the following comes closest to your own personal views on what the Australian government should be doing?

It should be taking a leadership role on reducing emissions	63%
It should wait for an international consensus before acting	28%
It should do nothing	7%
Don't know/no view	2%

## Asylum seeker policy

**Table 15:** Now about asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. I am going to read you some statements about asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. Please say whether you personally agree or disagree with the following policy ideas:

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ no view
<i>Ranked by % saying 'agree'</i>			
The government should turn back boats when it is safe to do so	71%	28%	1%
Asylum seekers should be processed offshore in places such as Nauru and Papua New Guinea, before deciding whether they should be settled in Australia	59%	39%	2%
Asylum seekers should be granted temporary protection visas which give rights to work and some welfare services but prevent permanent residency, family reunions and overseas travel	48%	49%	3%
All asylum seekers should be processed in Australia whether or not they come by boat	47%	51%	3%
No asylum seeker coming to Australia by boat should be allowed to settle in Australia	42%	57%	1%



## Foreign investment

**Table 16:** Now about foreign investment in Australia generally. Are you personally in favour or against the Australian government allowing foreign companies to invest in:

<i>Ranked by % saying 'in favour'</i>	In favour	Against	Don't know/ no view
Manufacturing	58%	39%	3%
The financial sector	55%	39%	6%
Resources	49%	48%	3%
The National Broadband Network	43%	52%	6%
Qantas	43%	51%	5%
Agriculture	38%	60%	2%
Ports and airports	37%	60%	4%

## Democracy

**Table 17:** Now a question about democracy. I am going to read you three statements about democracy. Please say which one of the three statements comes closest to your own personal views about democracy:

		2014	2013	2012
1*	Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government	60%	59%	60%
2*	In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable	24%	26%	23%
3*	For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have	13%	13%	15%
4*	Don't know	3%	2%	1%

\*Number not read out to respondent. See tables 20-21.

**Table 18:** Preference for democracy, 18-29 year-olds (sample 364)

		2014	2013	2012
1*	Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government	42%	48%	39%
2*	In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable	33%	27%	37%
3*	For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have	19%	21%	23%
4*	Don't know	7%	5%	1%

\*Number not read out to respondent. See tables 20-21.

**Table 19:** Still on democracy, if you had to choose between a good democracy or a strong economy for Australia, which ONE would you personally choose?

A good democracy	53%
A strong economy	42%
Both*	3%
Don't know/neither/no view*	2%

\*Answer not offered to respondents, but recorded where volunteered.

**Table 20:** Asked only of those who answered (2) or (3) to question in tables 17-18 above. Based on sample 18 years and over (sample 387).

Still on democracy, you just said that [In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable OR For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have]. For each of the following please say whether it is a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason why you personally think that [In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable OR For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have]:

	Major reason	Minor reason	Total major and minor reason	Not a reason	Don't know
<i>Ranked by 'major reason'</i>					
Democracy is not working because there is no real difference between the policies of the major parties	45%	29%	<b>74%</b>	23%	4%
Democracy only serves the interests of a few and not the majority of society	42%	34%	<b>76%</b>	19%	5%
I have become disillusioned with Australian politics and think another system might work better	36%	28%	<b>64%</b>	33%	3%
Democracy is the usual form of government now and always will be, so I don't worry about it	21%	42%	<b>63%</b>	35%	3%
A more authoritarian system where leaders can make decisions without the processes of democracy achieves better results	21%	39%	<b>60%</b>	35%	5%

Table 21: Based on sample 18-29 years old (sample 171)

<i>Ranked by 'major reason'</i>	Major reason	Minor reason	<b>Total major and minor reason</b>	Not a reason	Don't know
Democracy only serves the interests of a few and not the majority of society	40%	36%	<b>76%</b>	19%	6%
Democracy is not working because there is no real difference between the policies of the major parties	32%	38%	<b>70%</b>	26%	4%
I have become disillusioned with Australian politics and think another system might work better	29%	36%	<b>65%</b>	30%	5%
Democracy is the usual form of government now and always will be, so I don't worry about it	20%	48%	<b>68%</b>	32%	1%
A more authoritarian system where leaders can make decisions without the processes of democracy achieves better results	22%	40%	<b>62%</b>	33%	5%

## Australia's population size

Table 22: Now about the size of Australia's population in the next 40 years or so. Which one of the following do you personally think would be the best target population for Australia in the next 40 years?

	2014	2010
Less than the current size of 23 million people <sup>#</sup>	4%	4%
Around the current size of 23 million people <sup>#</sup>	18%	22%
30 million people	42%	43%
40 million people	25%	23%
50 million people or more	9%	6%
<b>Total: 30, 40 OR 50 million</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>72%</b>
Don't know/none of these	2%	1%

<sup>#</sup>In 2010, this was asked as 22 million, which was then the estimated population size.

## Immigration

Table 23: Thinking now about Australia's immigration program. Do you personally think that the total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is too high, too low, or about right?

Too high	37%
Too low	14%
About right	47%
Don't know/no view	3%

**Table 24:** *Asked only of those who answered 'too high' to question 23 above (sample 295):*

I am now going to read out some reasons other people have given as to why the total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is too high. Please say whether each of the following is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason as to why you personally think there should be fewer migrants coming to Australia:

<i>Ranked by 'major reason'</i>	Major reason	Minor reason	Not a reason	Don't know
We should train our own skilled people, not take them from other countries	88%	8%	3%	1%
Having more people could make unemployment worse	87%	7%	6%	0%
Australia's cities are already too crowded	72%	19%	8%	1%
The natural environment is stressed by the numbers we already have	68%	20%	10%	1%
We have too much cultural diversity already	50%	26%	24%	*

## The US alliance

**Table 25:** *And now about Australia's alliance relationship with the United States. How important is our alliance relationship with the United States for Australia's security?*

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Very important	52%	54%	59%	59%	56%	55%	42%	36%	42%	45%
Fairly important	26%	28%	28%	23%	30%	30%	34%	27%	28%	27%
<b>Total: very and fairly important</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>72%</b>
Somewhat important	17%	16%	12%	15%	12%	12%	20%	27%	22%	20%
Not at all important	4%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%	4%	9%	8%	7%
Don't know	*	*	*	*	*	*	-	1%	1%	1%

## Reliability of US alliance

**Table 26:** *The United States currently helps guarantee the security of Australia under the ANZUS alliance. Do you think it is likely or unlikely that Australia will still be able to rely on the United States to provide this security guarantee in 20 years' time? In 10 years' time? In 5 years' time? IF LIKELY – Is that very likely or somewhat likely? IF UNLIKELY – Is that very unlikely or somewhat unlikely?*

	In 5 years' time	In 10 years' time	In 20 years' time	
	2014	2014	2014	2009
Very likely	62%	47%	34%	37%
Somewhat likely	23%	31%	32%	33%
<b>Total: likely</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>70%</b>
Somewhat unlikely	8%	12%	18%	19%
Very unlikely	5%	8%	11%	7%
<b>Total: unlikely</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>26%</b>
Don't know	2%	2%	5%	4%

## Feelings towards other countries

**Table 27:** Please rate your feelings towards some countries, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred: the higher the number the more favourable your feelings are toward that country. If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country, please say so.<sup>#</sup>

Country	2014 Mean°	2013 Mean°	2012 Mean°	2011 Mean°	2010 Mean°	2009 Mean°	2008 Mean°	2007 Mean°	2006 Mean°
New Zealand	84	n/a	85	85	84	83	n/a	81	n/a
Canada	81	n/a	n/a	n/a	82	80	n/a	n/a	n/a
Netherlands	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
France	71	n/a	n/a	n/a	70	n/a	69	n/a	n/a
United States	71	70	71	70	68	67	64	60	62
Spain	69	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fiji	68	64	68	66	n/a	63	67	n/a	n/a
Japan	67	65	70	67	64	66	64	63	64
Solomon Islands	63	n/a	n/a	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Chile	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
China	60	54	59	53	54	53	56	56	61
Papua New Guinea	59	60	64	n/a	62	n/a	60	57	63
South Korea	59	n/a	61	57	n/a	53	50	n/a	56
East Timor	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50	56	54	57
India	57	55	58	56	55	56	57	55	62
Indonesia	52	53	54	51	54	49	50	47	50
Israel	51	53	n/a	n/a	49	n/a	n/a	50	55
Burma (Myanmar)	50	50	50	n/a	n/a	46	n/a	n/a	n/a
Iran	39	38	38	35	38	38	38	34	43
Afghanistan	38	n/a	38	37	40	37	n/a	n/a	n/a
North Korea	29	31	33	34	37	30	n/a	n/a	43

<sup>#</sup> In 2006, this question asked respondents about their feelings towards 'countries *and* peoples'.

## Republic

**Table 28:** Now about the possibility of Australia becoming a republic. If Australia became a republic with an Australian head of state, do you personally think ...

It would strengthen Australia's standing in the world	19%
It would weaken Australia's standing in the world	22%
It would make no difference	55%
Don't know/no view	4%

## Importance of Australia's international agencies

**Table 29:** Thinking now about the arms of the Australian government involved in international relations and how important they are. For each of these arms of the government please say if you personally think they are very important, somewhat important or not important.

<i>Ranked by % saying 'very important'</i>	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know/ no view
The Australian Defence Force	83%	15%	1%	0%
Australia's diplomatic service	63%	33%	3%	2%
Australia's intelligence agencies	63%	32%	4%	1%
Australia's aid program	49%	43%	8%	0%

## Aid

**Table 30:** Now about possible objectives for Australia's overseas aid program. Which ONE of the following do you yourself think is the most important objective of Australia's overseas aid program?

Helping reduce poverty in poor countries	75%
Promoting Australia's foreign policy objectives	20%
Both equally	1%
Neither/don't know	4%

## Consular assistance

**Table 31:** Now on the consular support the Australian government gives travellers when they encounter difficulty overseas. I am going to read out some statements other people have made about the consular support government gives to Australian travellers in difficulty overseas. For each one please say whether you personally agree or disagree:

<i>Ranked by % saying 'agree'</i>	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ no view
The government should assist Australians in danger overseas whether or not they have abided by official travel warnings	68%	30%	3%
Senior politicians should intervene to assist Australians in trouble overseas	63%	32%	5%
Travellers should exhaust all other options for assistance before calling on the Australian government for help	61%	38%	1%
Australians should reimburse government for the cost of consular services provided to them when travelling overseas	41%	55%	5%
The Australian government should protect Australians from the laws of other countries	33%	65%	3%

## World leaders

**Table 32:** Now some questions about world political leaders. For each of the following leaders, please say whether you personally admire them a lot, admire them a little or you don't admire them.

<i>Ranked by 'admire a lot'</i>	Admire a lot	Admire a little	<b>Total admire</b>	Don't admire	Don't know/ no view
Barack Obama	49%	38%	<b>87%</b>	12%	1%
Hillary Clinton	41%	40%	<b>81%</b>	16%	3%
Aung San Suu Kyi	27%	9%	<b>36%</b>	13%	50%
Tony Abbott	22%	32%	<b>54%</b>	45%	1%
Angela Merkel	22%	22%	<b>44%</b>	12%	44%
Ban Ki-moon	14%	20%	<b>34%</b>	20%	46%
Helen Clark	13%	35%	<b>48%</b>	14%	38%
Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono	8%	29%	<b>37%</b>	28%	35%
Bill Shorten	6%	40%	<b>46%</b>	36%	19%
Xi Jinping	2%	15%	<b>17%</b>	19%	64%

## Female leaders

**Table 33:** If the world had more female political leaders, do you personally think things would be better, things would be worse, or, would it make no difference?

Things would be better	32
Things would be worse	7
Make no difference	60
Don't know/no view	1

**Table 34:** If the world had more female political leaders, please say whether you personally agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Agree	Disagree	Makes no difference	Don't know/ no view
The world would be more just	42%	45%	10%	3%
The world would be more peaceful	38%	50%	11%	1%
The world would be more prosperous	31%	53%	12%	4%

# NOTES

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# ABOUT THE LOWY INSTITUTE POLL

The Lowy Institute Poll was conducted in Australia between 12 and 27 February 2014. A number of the questions in the Poll were first asked in previous Lowy Institute polls, or have been adapted from questions asked in those years. Repeating questions in successive years allows us to compare public opinion on a single issue over time, building trend data on important international policy issues.

Some of our questions this year are identical to questions asked previously by other survey organisations, which has allowed for the comparison of public opinion internationally.

The order of questions in the questionnaire was different from the order presented in this report.

## Methodology

For this opinion poll, the market research company I-view conducted a total of 1,150 interviews. Survey interviews were conducted by fixed and mobile telephone. One thousand interviews were conducted with a sample designed to be nationally representative of all Australians 18 years and older. Quotas were set for each state and territory, with broad age-group and gender quotas. Interviewers continued making calls until each quota was filled. An additional 150 interviews were conducted with 18-29 year-olds, giving a total sample of 1,150 interviews for questions presented in tables 11-14, 17-21 and 27 in this report.

Within each geographic area, telephone numbers were randomly selected from a regularly updated active residential and mobile phone number database. The results were then weighted to reflect the demographic profile of the Australian population aged 18 years and over, using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

These weights were used in the production of all the tables for this report. On a truly random sample of 1,000 the margin of error is 3.1%, which means there is a 95% chance that responses from the sample fall within a range of 3.1% either side of the notional collective response of the whole population. Since this sample was stratified (by state/territory, age-group and sex), the error figure is a guide only. Where the results for a sub-sample are reported, the margin of error is greater.

## Acknowledgements

Several of the questions in this survey were modelled on those developed over the last thirty years by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, a world leader in foreign policy opinion polling. Other questions in this year's survey drew from work of the Pew Research Center, and polling on immigration by the Scanlon Foundation, the Australian National University, Newspoll and *The Australian* newspaper. The fieldwork for the Lowy Institute Poll was managed by David Morris of market research company I-view. Sol Lebovic, Research Consultant, provided technical support, reviewed the questionnaire and helped interpret the data. The survey was funded entirely by the Lowy Institute for International Policy.

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