

Monday, 27 February 2017

## Australians divided on whether asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru should be brought here to Australia

A special snap SMS Morgan Poll last weekend shows Australians are evenly divided as to whether asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru should be brought to Australia (50%) or not (50%). This special SMS Morgan Poll was conducted last weekend (February 17-19, 2017) with a cross-section of 1,266 Australians aged 18+.

**Respondents were asked:** *“Do you think asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru should be brought here to Australia or not?”*

### Analysis by Voting Preference (Electors)

- L-NP voters: Yes (23%) cf. no (77%);
- ALP voters: Yes (68%) cf. no (32%);
- Greens voters: Yes (93%) cf. no (7%);
- Independent/ Others voters: Yes (44%) cf. no (56%);
- Can't say: Yes (49%) cf. no (51%).

### Analysis by Gender

- Women: Yes (58%) cf. no (42%);
- Men: Yes (41%) cf. no (59%).

### Analysis by Age

- 18-24yr olds: Yes (58%) cf. no (42%);
- 25-34yr olds: Yes (54%) cf. no (46%);
- 35-49yr olds: Yes (52%) cf. no (48%);
- 50-64yr olds: Yes (43%) cf. no (57%);
- 65+yr olds: Yes (45%) cf. no (55%).

### Analysis by State

- New South Wales: Yes (51%) cf. no (49%);
- Victoria: Yes (52%) cf. no (48%);
- Queensland: Yes (47%) cf. no (53%);
- Western Australia: Yes (43%) cf. no (57%);
- South Australia: Yes (46%) cf. no (54%);
- Tasmania: Yes (58%) cf. no (42%).

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**Michele Levine, Chief Executive Officer, Roy Morgan Research, says:**

*"This special SMS Morgan Poll completed to coincide with my appearance on ABCTV's Q&A \* on Monday February 20, 2017 shows Australians are split down the middle on how to handle the asylum seekers currently housed on Manus Island and Nauru – 50% of Australians think they should be brought to Australia and an equal counterweight, 50% of Australians, say they shouldn't.*

*"Unsurprisingly, these results fall heavily on party lines – 77% of L-NP voters say that the asylum seekers shouldn't be brought to Australia, while huge majorities of ALP voters (68%) and Greens voters (93%) say they should be brought to Australia.*

*"In addition – there is also a clear gender split – 58% of women say the asylum seekers should be brought to Australia while a majority of men (59%) say the asylum seekers shouldn't be brought to Australia.*

*"The main reasons Australians give for supporting bringing these asylum seekers to Australia is the humanitarian reason and because of Australia's moral and ethical obligations to help people in need. Despite the clear differences, even Australians that don't want to bring the asylum seekers to Australia sympathise with the plight the asylum seekers are in on Nauru and Manus Island.*

*"In addition, those opposed say that bringing these people to Australia will encourage more refugees to risk their lives to come to Australia and because Australia has enough problems already and can't support more immigrants putting more strain on Australian infrastructure and adding to housing pressures.*

*"Comparing attitudes today with those in Australia over several decades reveals that each new wave of immigration to Australia is contentious in its own right and Roy Morgan surveys over the last 75 years show Australians have always held concerns about the question marks that surround each batch of 'new' migrants.*

*"In May 1947 a clear majority of Australians (58%) opposed Australia joining in a world-wide plan to take in some of the homeless Jews of Europe following World War II while 37% said Australia should take part and 5% were undecided.*

*"The very next year, in September 1948, Australians were calling for a restriction on immigration of Europeans – 64% said it should be limited; 16% said it should be stopped altogether while only 15% said it should be unrestricted while a majority of Australians (57%) were opposed to any colored immigration at all compared to 35% who favored limiting it and only 4% who said it should be unrestricted. A common reason given was 'We haven't enough homes for our own' – a Lambton coal-miner."*

*Finding No. 7159 – This special snap SMS Morgan Poll was conducted with a representative cross-section of 1,266 Australians over the weekend, Friday February 17 – Sunday February 19, 2017. \*This research was not paid for by the ABC. Respondents were asked "Do you think the asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru should be brought here to Australia or not?" Respondents were then asked "And why do you say that?"*

## Respondents who answered 'Yes' provided these responses:

**Q2:** Respondents answering 'Yes' mentioned Australia's legal and moral obligations, the inhumanity of indefinite detention, because it was the decent thing to do, and because these people are refugees fleeing persecution, not criminals.

*"Australia has legal and moral obligations to treat asylum seekers fairly and humanely".*

*"It is inhumane to leave them there with no future".*

*"Their treatment on Manus and Nauru is inhumane and it is Australia's moral and legal obligation to accept asylum seekers".*

*"The detention of refugees in utterly inhumane conditions is unforgivable".*

*"It is cruel keeping people in detention centres. A violation of human rights".*

*"Any kind of human decency demands we look after these people. If they are genuine refugees and that is acknowledged by the system then they should be resettled here. Especially if they already have family members here. All the deal to send them to the USA achieves is political face-saving".*

*"These refugees have suffered enough. The Australian Government put them there and its time we took responsibility for them".*

*"Detention on Manus Island and Nauru is inhumane and a very poor reflection on Australia. What threat do these people pose? Detainees should be processed in Australia as soon as possible. Politicians from both sides should hang their heads in shame".*

*"Because they are fellow humans who came here looking for asylum and they have been locked up. They are certainly not Americas' problem".*

*"The conditions on Manus and Nauru are appalling".*

*"Because their mistreatment has gone on long enough".*

*"It is the right thing to do legally, morally, and for humanitarian reasons. Offshore detention is cruel".*

*"If they haven't been deported they must have been assessed as legitimate refugees by now".*

*"Upholding basic human rights and we have a national responsibility to protect refugees".*

*"No one deserves to be locked up indefinitely just for seeking a better life elsewhere".*

*"If they are genuine refugees, why are we making them suffer so much?"*

*"We need to take care of refugees and give them a safe place to live".*

*"They are not criminals".*

*"It would be cheaper to process them here".*

*"I feel they are our responsibility and we should not expect other countries to take them".*

*"My father and all of us are migrants. My father is a displaced person from Latvia."*

*"We spend far too much money on housing asylum seekers in other countries that don't comply with standards when we can do it better and cheaper in Australia."*

## Respondents who answered 'No' provided these responses

**Q2.** Respondents answering 'No' also mentioned concerns about the conditions on Manus Island and Nauru and about the need to provide a deterrence to other refugees which would reduce drownings at sea but also referred to these people are 'queue jumping', the illegality of what these refugees have been doing, that we have enough people in Australia already and that our infrastructure can't cope and the lack of jobs for new immigrants as it is.

*"They should be treated with dignity and human rights, and transferred to another country for sure, but it's important to not seem to allow more super dangerous boats. I hope the US can take them, or NZ".*

*"There are many legitimate refugees in UN camps that deserve our attention. Queue jumpers should not get preference".*

*"We have a proper immigration system and these people are just jumping the queue".*

*"I empathise strongly with their situation and it is very difficult in so many different aspects. The people smugglers are the guilty ones in it for a profit and they are the meat in the sandwich. It isn't fair for the ones who go and try the legal way and who maybe refused for some reason. The whole situation breaks my heart, maybe they should be allowed in?"*

*"It will only encourage more people. We take in too many as it is. Most never assimilate. If they are Muslims they despise us anyway".*

*"I think that we have a hard policy regarding entry or we will have lots of people drowning at sea like the Syrian refugees trying to cross to Europe".*

*"Our facilities for asylum seekers in Australia are already overcrowded and processing them with interminable delays here is inhumane. Manus Island and Nauru are marginally safer than sending them back from whence they came".*

*"My understanding of the situation is that those people paid to enter Australia through illegal methods and have since been found unsuitable for legitimate asylum claims. Whilst I empathise with their position, and whilst I don't feel the camps on Manus and Nauru are suitable living environments, I believe there were legal methods for them to enter the country that they ignored".*

*"Because we know what happens when irregular arrivals are brought to the mainland – it revives the people smuggling trade and we end up with hundreds of people drowning. Keeping people on Manus Island and Nauru is awful, but it's the lesser of two evils".*

*"With this group we need to stick to the current policy no matter how difficult. A consistent approach is necessary until the message is clear".*

*"No, but if they are genuine refugees we should consider their applications".*

*"Discourage people arriving by boat which is dangerous".*

*"The policy is cruel, but stopping drownings means no more on Manus or Nauru in the future".*

*"Although I am in favour of a generous refugee program, I believe it was important to stop the boats and these refugees were boat people".*

*"Would encourage more people to try and come on boats".*

*"Safely screen them offshore and deter more from coming".*

*"We have enough refugees at the moment".*

*"Refugee places should be for those taking the legal way".*

*"These people attempted to enter Australia illegally and paid criminals money to enable this illegal act".*

*"There are not enough funds to support people here. There is too much poverty without more people".*

*"They tried to come in through the back door".*

*"We have enough refugees at the moment".*

*"Everyone should come through the proper channels".*

*"Where are they going to settle? Our young ones can't afford a house as it is."*

*"Lack of conditions and regulations in place for society to support".*

*"We should be looking after the thousands of homeless people in Australia".*

*"We have enough homeless here that should be helped in some way first. Including the unemployed."*

*"Lack of jobs, infrastructure and issues with assimilation and wanting to change our way of life".*

*"Our infrastructure isn't supporting the population that we have. Our hospitals are struggling."*

**Questions:**

**1,266 Australians were asked (February 17-19, 2017):**

**Q1:** “Do you think the asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru should be brought here to Australia or not?”

	Total	Electors	L-NP	ALP	Greens	Other	Can't say	Non Electors
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	50	50	23	68	93	44	49	49
No, not	50	50	77	32	7	56	51	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>							

	Total	Gender		Age				
		Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	50	41	58	58	54	52	43	45
No, not	50	59	42	42	46	48	57	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>							

	Total	State						Region	
		NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	City	Country
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	50	51	52	47	43	46	58	52	46
No, not	50	49	48	53	57	54	42	48	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>								

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## Morgan Poll Accuracy — Recent Elections State & Federal (2006 – 2016)

The Morgan Poll has proven to be consistently the most accurate regular poll in recent Australian Elections — including the 2013 Federal Election, 2010 Federal Election, 2007 Federal Election, 2010 Victorian State Election & 2012 Queensland State Election.

The Morgan Poll was the most accurate of all polling companies at [the 2013 Federal Election](#) for the two-party preferred vote (L-NP: 53.5% cf. ALP 46.5%) (sample 4,937 electors).

The Morgan Poll was the most accurate of all polling companies at [the 2007 Federal Election](#) for both primary vote and two-party preferred predictions (sample 2,115 electors).

The Morgan Poll accurately predicted [that the ALP would win the 2006 Queensland Election with a reduced majority](#) (sample 604 electors).

The Morgan Poll accurately predicted [that the ALP would win the 2006 Victorian Election with a reduced majority](#) (sample 956 electors). The Morgan Poll was also the most accurate on the primary vote of the major parties for the Victorian election.

**Note:** The [discussion on Possum Pollytics](#) regarding Morgan and Newspoll is well worth reading.

The following included comment says it all: “I find it interesting that for the only poll in the last five years for which there is any ‘real’ figure with which to compare, i.e. the polls immediately before the 2004 election, Morgan (45.5%) was closer to the actual Coalition Primary (46.7%) than Newspoll (45%) or Nielsen (49%), and Morgan (38.5%) was also closer to the ALP actual primary (37.6%) than Newspoll (39%), and only marginally further away than Nielsen (37%). Since we have no idea of how far away the ongoing polls are from ‘reality’ (whatever that means), surely we should just go with what we know, that in the most recent testable case, Morgan was better at forecasting the actual primary vote than Newspoll. On what possible basis should we decide that the Newspoll or Nielsen primary vote estimate is ‘better’ than Morgan’s.”

[View Federal Voting Intention Trend](#)

### Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. The following table gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. The figures are approximate and for general guidance only, and assume a simple random sample. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
1,000	±3.2	±2.7	±1.9	±1.4