Australians’ Concerns

New in-depth research exploring the concerns of Australians both in Australia and globally found Australians are concerned about war and terrorism on the global front, but at home it’s all, about the economy – especially unemployment, and housing affordability.

Most important problems facing Australia

Quantified thematic analysis of the verbatim responses of a nationally representative sample of 642 Australians found the economy and things economic to be the biggest single theme to emerge. Economic Issues including Unemployment, Housing affordability, the Economy in general, Poverty and the gap between the rich and poor were mentioned by 38% of Australians as the most important problems facing Australia.

Three further themes emerged:

- Religion, Immigration and Human Rights issues were mentioned by just over 13% of Australians;
- Government, Politics and Leadership issues were mentioned by a further 12%; and
- Environmental issues were mentioned by 10% of Australians.

Most important issues facing the World

When considering the wider World, the largest theme to emerge was about concerns related to War & Terrorism. These issues including the more general fears about safety and security were mentioned by 31% of Australians.

The second biggest theme was the Environment mentioned by 21% of Australians as the biggest issue facing the World.

The charts below show the quantified thematic analysis of Australians’ concerns. Respondents were asked: “What do you think is the most important problem facing the World today?” and then “What do you think is the most important problem facing Australia today?”

**Source:** Roy Morgan interviewed a representative cross-section of 648 Australians in May 2017.
Unemployment is the single biggest issue facing Australia and terrorism is the single biggest issue facing the world

Single issue analysis of the responses shows the specific issue of greatest concern for Australia is unemployment mentioned by almost 9% of Australians. This is more than any other single issue. The next two most often mentioned single issues were:

- Climate change and global warming – mentioned by 8% of Australians; and
- Politics and the Political system – also mentioned by 8% of Australians.

![Bar chart showing the most important problems facing Australia and the World](chart.png)


War & Terrorism and Climate change/ Global warming clearly the top World problems

The single biggest World problems are Terrorism and Climate change/ Global warming with both issues mentioned by just under 17% of respondents – more than double the next most mentioned issue of War & Conflicts – mentioned by just over 8% of respondents.

The largest Economic problem facing the World is Poverty and the gap between rich and poor which was mentioned by 7% of respondents while just under 4% of respondents mentioned US President Donald Trump as the single biggest problem the World faces.

Michele Levine, CEO Roy Morgan, says:

“The Economy dominates discussion in Australia and this latest research shows there’s good reason for that with 38% of Australians raising an Economic Issue as what they considered to be the most important problem facing Australia. Other significant issues mentioned include ‘Climate change and Global warming’ and ‘Politics and the Political system’ with both mentioned by 8% of respondents.

“According to Australians the largest single issue is Unemployment which was specifically mentioned by 9% of respondents.

“Housing affordability was raised by 6% of Australians. This is the highest ever national figure for Housing affordability and the increase is concentrated in Australia’s capital cities (mentioned by 8%) rather than regional Australia (mentioned by just 2%). Unsurprisingly, Sydney is the most impacted with Housing affordability mentioned by 12% of respondents cf. Melbourne (7%) cf. Brisbane (10%).

“However on the world front terrorism, war and threats to safety and security and world peace are top of mind for Australians.

“In the coming weeks Roy Morgan will be releasing more detailed analysis of this important survey including the verbatim responses given by those surveyed outlining exactly what problems they see facing Australia and the World in mid-2017.”

The research was conducted in Australia, during May 22-24, 2017 with a nationally representative sample of 648 men and women aged 14 or over. Respondents were asked: “What do you think is the most important problem facing the World today?” and “What do you think is the most important problem facing Australia today?”
These findings come from a special Roy Morgan study of Australians’ attitudes towards issues facing Australia and the World in the future. The research conducted was both qualitative (in that people were asked to use their own words) and quantitative (in that the ‘open-ended’ responses were analysed and ‘coded’ so that the results could be counted and reported as percentages).

For further information:

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**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.

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<tr>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Percentage Estimate</th>
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<td>40%-60%</td>
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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]