

Polling - Should income tax cuts be brought forward?

September 2020

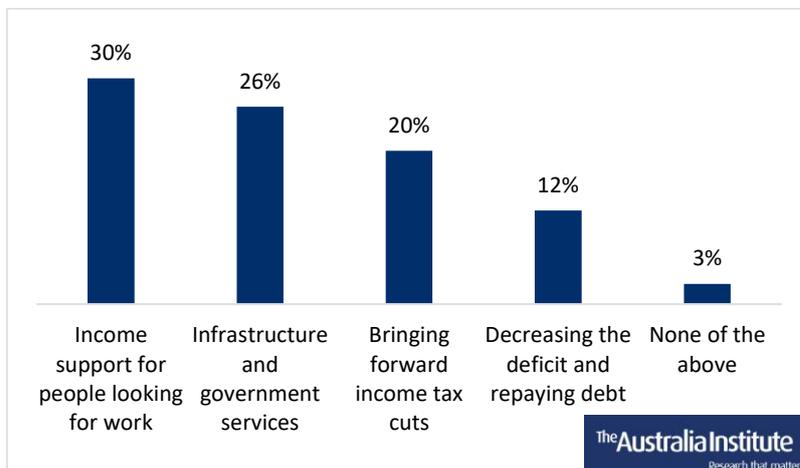
Key results

The Australia Institute surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,017 Australians about their priorities for government spending.

Respondents were told that the federal government is considering bringing forward its personal income tax cuts. They were then asked which was their preferred funding priority, out of bringing forward income tax cuts, decreasing the deficit, spending on infrastructure and government services, or income support for jobseekers.

- Income support for people looking for work was the single most popular priority, chosen by three in 10 Australians (30%).
- Spending on infrastructure and government services like health and education was the second most popular priority, chosen by one in four Australians (26%).
- Bringing forward income tax cuts was the third most popular priority, chosen by one in five Australians (20%).
- Decreasing the deficit was least popular, chosen by one in 10 (12%).
- 3% of Australians chose none of the above (9% didn't know).

Figure 1: Priority for government spending



- Although men receive most of the benefit of the personal income tax cuts, they were no more likely than women to choose bringing the tax cuts forward as the priority (20% men, 21% women).
- Women are somewhat more likely to prioritise income support for people looking for work (33% women, 26% men).
- Younger Australians are more likely to prefer income support for people looking for work, and older Australians are more likely to prefer spending on infrastructure and government services.
- Although debt is sometimes presented as a burden for future generations, decreasing the deficit is the least preferred priority in every age group.
- Of the large states, income support for people looking for work was the most popular priority in NSW, Victoria and Western Australia. Spending on infrastructure and government services was the most popular in Queensland.

Figure 2: Priority for government spending, by gender

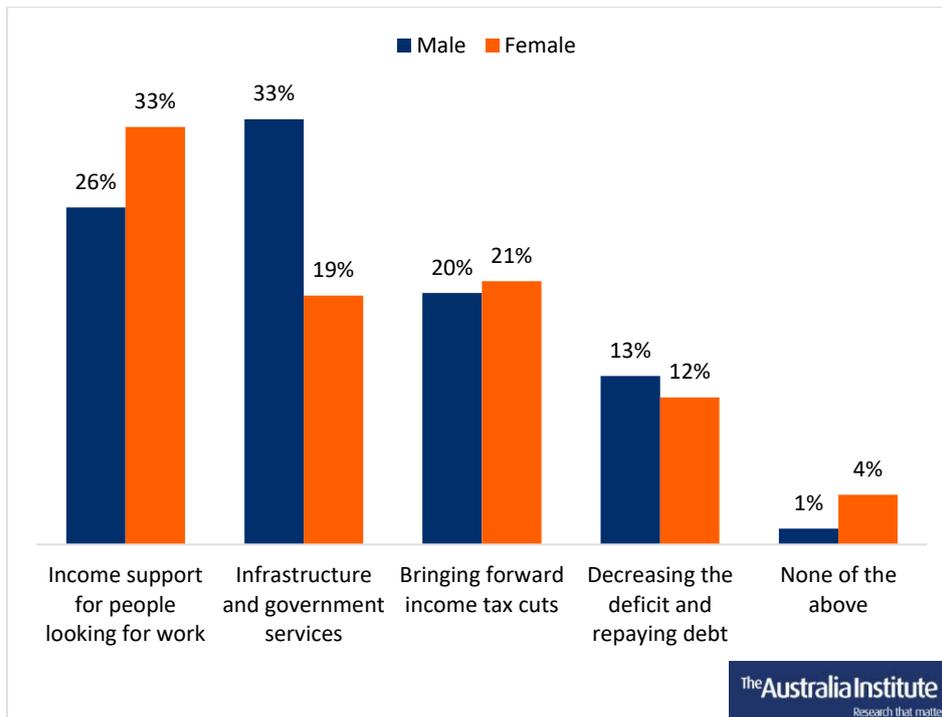
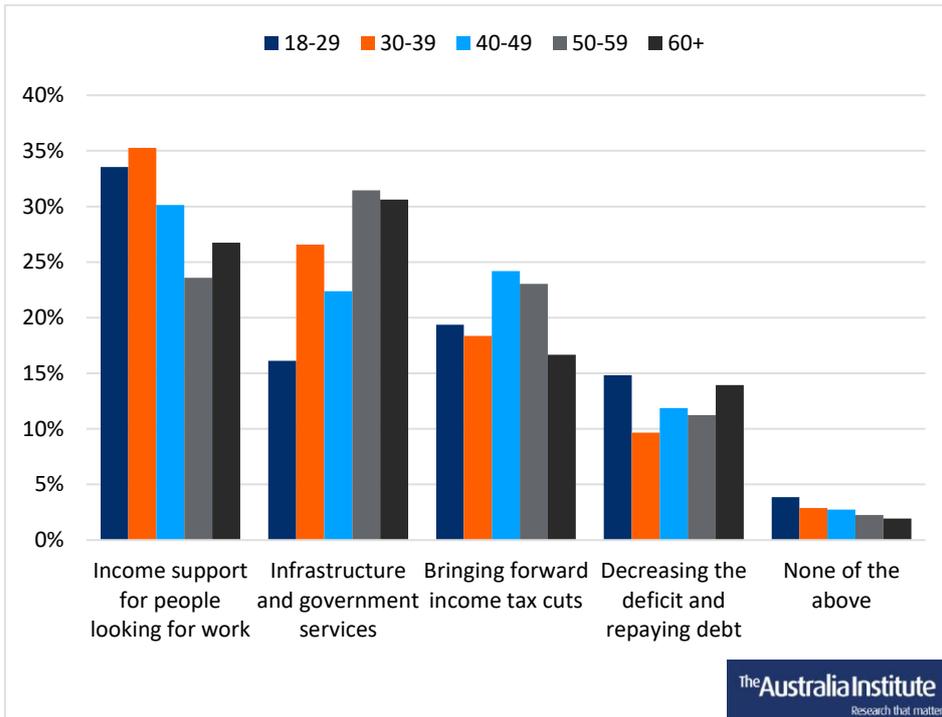
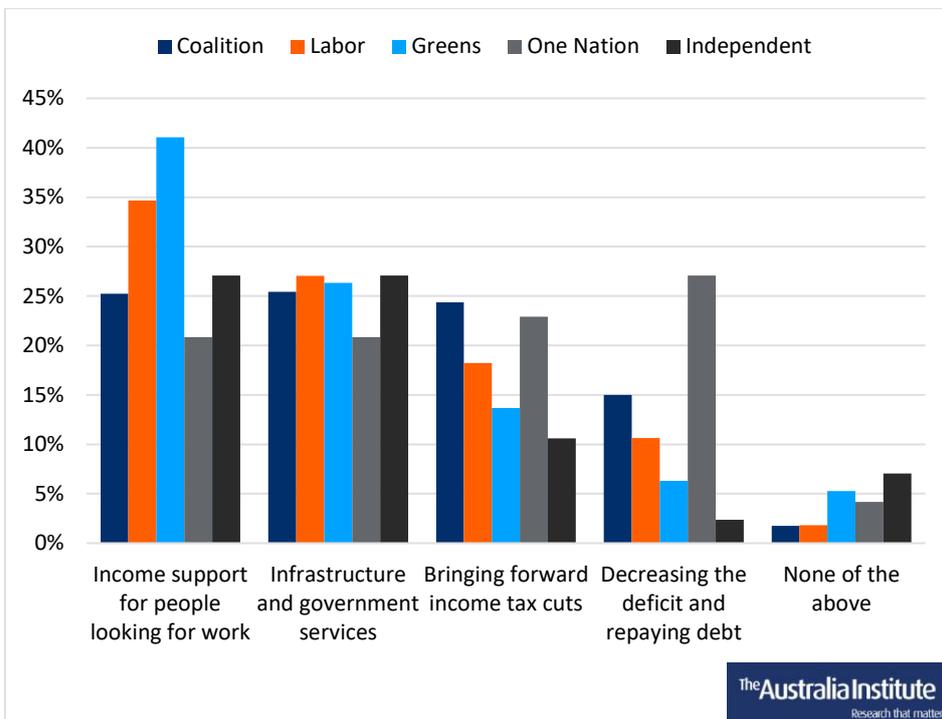


Figure 3: Priority for government spending, by age group



- Income support for people looking for work is the most preferred priority for Labor (35%) and Greens voters (41%), followed by spending on infrastructure and government services (27% and 26% respectively).
- Coalition voters are roughly evenly divided between preferring income support for people looking for work (25%), spending on infrastructure and government services (25%) and bringing forward income tax cuts (24%).
- Decreasing the deficit and repaying debt is the least popular priority among all voting intentions except One Nation, where it is the single most popular priority at 27%, ahead of bringing forward income tax cuts on 23%.

Figure 4: Priority for government spending, by voting intention



Method

The Australia Institute surveyed 1,017 people on 10–11 September 2020, online through Dynata’s Rapid Results polling, with nationally representative samples by gender, age and region.

The margin of error (95% confidence level) for the national results is 3.1%.

Results are shown only for larger states.

Voting crosstabs show voting intentions for the House of Representatives. Those who were undecided were asked which way they were leaning; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs. “Coalition” includes separate responses for Liberal and National. “Other” refers to Independent/Other.

Detailed results

The government is considering whether to bring forward its legislated personal income tax cuts.

During the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, which would you prefer government spending to prioritise?

The order of responses 1–4 was randomised.

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>NSW</i> | <i>Vic</i> | <i>Qld</i> | <i>WA</i> |
|---|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Income support for people looking for work | 30% | 26% | 33% | 30% | 35% | 21% | 25% |
| Spending on infrastructure and government services like health and education | 26% | 33% | 19% | 27% | 23% | 31% | 23% |
| Bringing forward income tax cuts | 20% | 20% | 21% | 20% | 22% | 22% | 17% |
| Decreasing the deficit and repaying debt | 12% | 13% | 12% | 13% | 10% | 12% | 17% |
| None of the above | 3% | 1% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 1% |
| Don't know / Not sure | 9% | 6% | 12% | 7% | 9% | 11% | 17% |

| | <i>Total</i> | <i>Coalition</i> | <i>Labor</i> | <i>Greens</i> | <i>One Nation</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|---|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Income support for people looking for work | 30% | 25% | 35% | 41% | 21% | 27% |
| Spending on infrastructure and government services like health and education | 26% | 25% | 27% | 26% | 21% | 27% |
| Bringing forward income tax cuts | 20% | 24% | 18% | 14% | 23% | 11% |
| Decreasing the deficit and repaying debt | 12% | 15% | 11% | 6% | 27% | 2% |
| None of the above | 3% | 2% | 2% | 5% | 4% | 7% |
| Don't know / Not sure | 9% | 8% | 8% | 7% | 4% | 26% |