

Polling - Perspectives on poverty

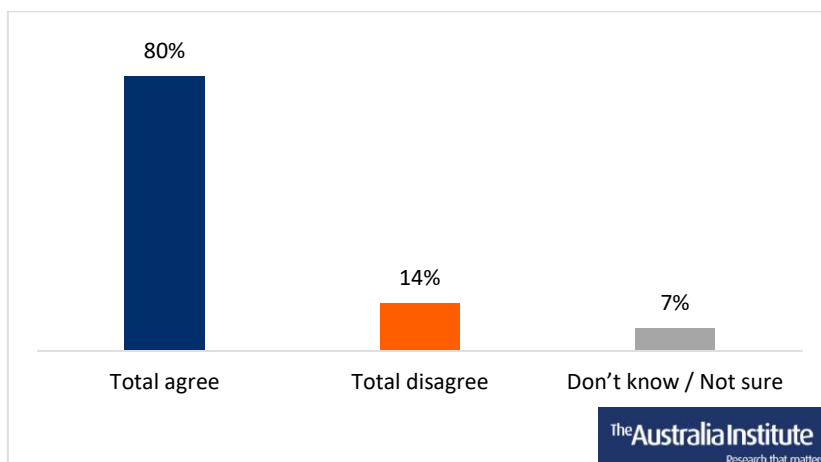
October 2022

Key results

Between 4 and 7 October 2022, the Australia Institute surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,003 Australians about their understanding of the impact of poverty and their attitude to the appropriate level of income support. The results indicate an overwhelming majority of Australians support the principle that income support payments should keep people out of poverty.

- More than four in five Australians (80%) agree that income support payments should be set at a level that keeps Australians out of poverty, 14% disagree.
- More than nine in ten Australians (94%) with an income level of \$20,000 or less agree that income support payments should be set at a level that keeps Australians out of poverty.
- Over four in five Australians (84%) agree that poverty is scarring, resulting in poorer health and life expectancy, compared to 9% who disagree.
- Over half of Australians (53%) agree that the experience of poverty has a positive effect on the formation of character, compared to one in three (35%) who disagree.

Figure 1: Income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty

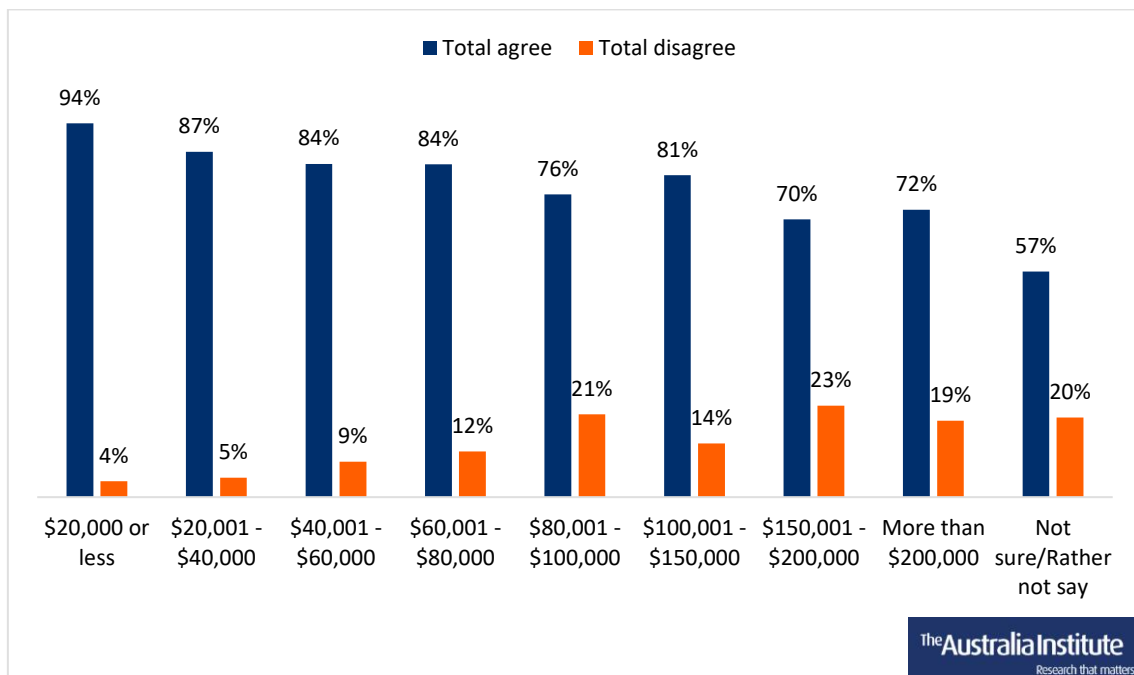


Rate of income support payments

Australians show strong overall agreement with the statement that income support should be set at a level that keeps out Australians out of poverty.

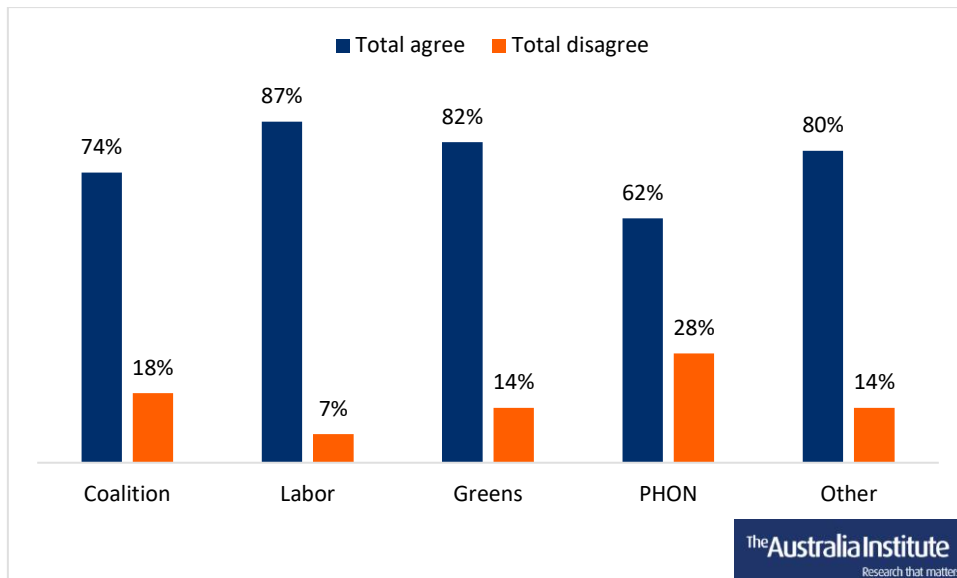
- More than four in five Australians (80%) agree that income support payments should be set at a level that keeps Australians out of poverty, 14% disagree.
- Across all household incomes, most Australians agree that income support payments should be set at a level that keeps Australians out of poverty.
- Agreement is highest among those on the lowest household incomes, \$20,000 or under (94%).
- Agreement is lowest among the two highest income groups – \$150,000 and above – but even among these groups seven in ten (70%–72%) agree that income support should be set at a level that keeps Australians out of poverty.

Figure 2: income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty, by income



- Almost nine in ten Labor voters (87%) agree that income support payments should be set at a level to keep Australians out of poverty, the highest of any voting intention.
 - Fewer than one in ten Labor voters (7%) disagree.
- Four in five Greens (82%) and Independent/Other voters (80%) agree that income support should be set at a rate that keeps Australians out of poverty, as do three in four Coalition voters (74%).
- Agreement was lowest amongst One Nation voters, however even there three in five (62%) agree that income support payments should be set at a rate that keeps Australians out of poverty, twice as many as disagree (28%).

Figure 3: Income support payments should be set at a rate that keeps Australians out of poverty, by voting intention

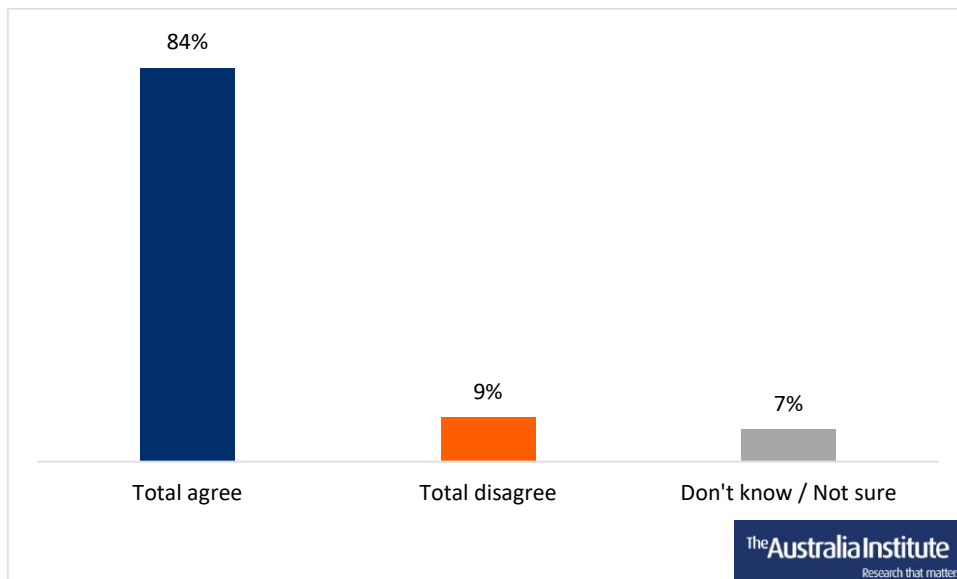


Scarring effects of poverty

A majority of Australians agree that the experience of poverty is scarring – that its after-effects can be seen in poorer health and life expectancy.

- More than four in five Australians (84%) agree that the experience of poverty is scarring, compared to one in ten who disagree.

Figure 4: The experience of poverty is scarring

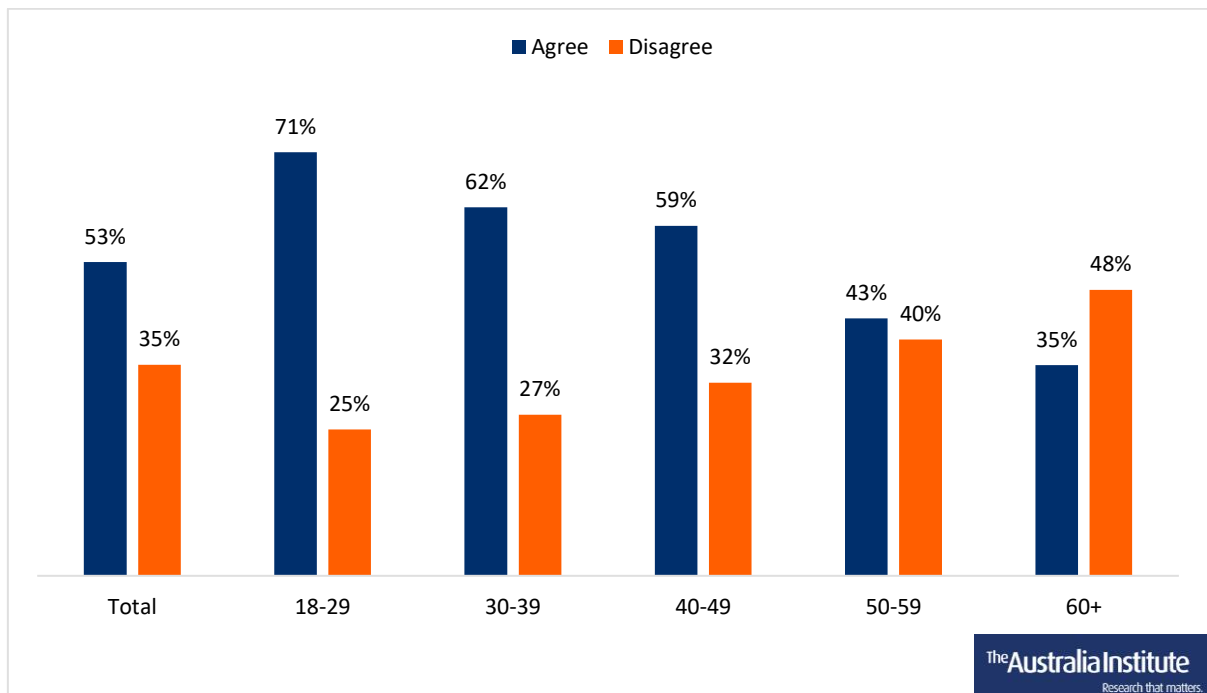


Poverty and character formation

Polling results show that Australians of different ages have different understandings of the effects of poverty on individuals.

- More than half of Australians (53%) agree that the experience of poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character, compared to one in three (35%) who disagree.
- Agreement that the experience of poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character declines dramatically by age.
- Seven in ten (71%) Australians aged 18–29 agree that poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character, as do a majority of those aged 30–49 (59–62%).
- Australians aged 50–59 are as likely to agree (43%) as disagree (40%) that poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character.
- Among those aged 60 and older, about half (48%) disagree that poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character, and one in three (35%) agree.

Figure 5: Poverty makes a positive contribution to character, by age group



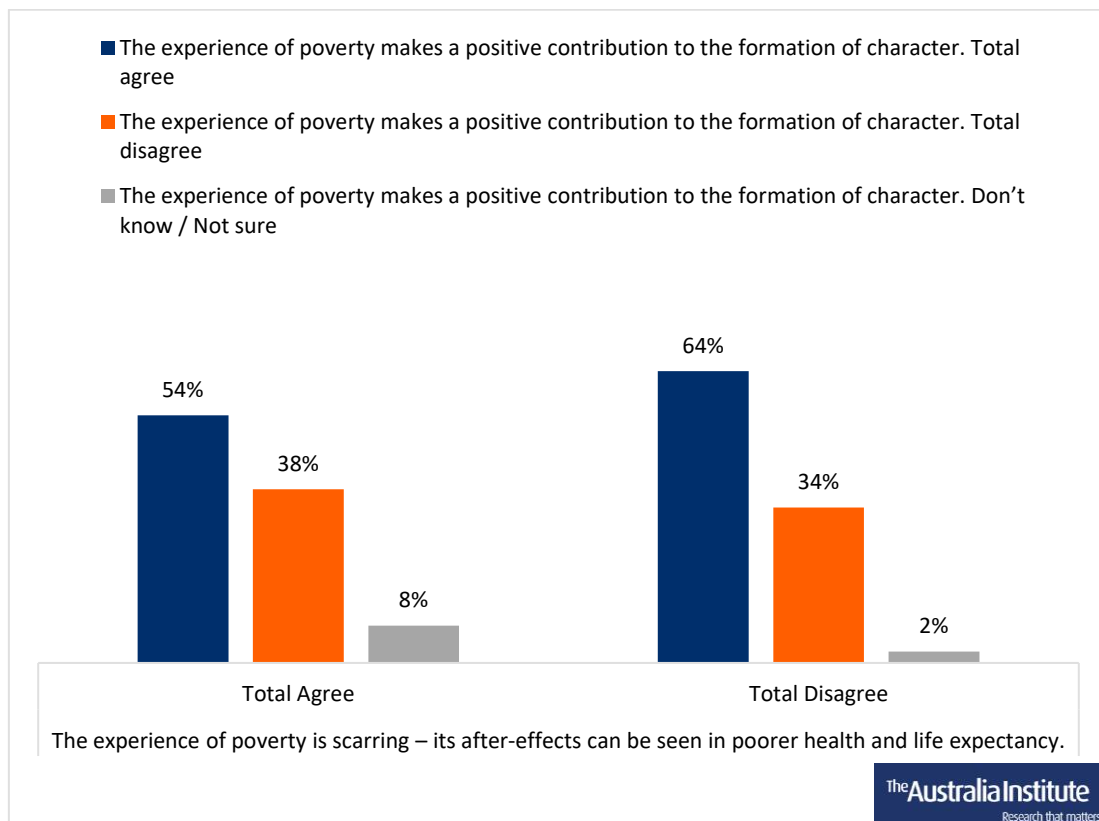
Contrasting attitudes to poverty

Respondents had two statements about the effect of poverty put to them: that it makes a positive contribution to the formation of character and that it is scarring. Both statements received majority agreement.

Agreement that poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character does not significantly differ based on whether someone agrees that poverty is scarring.

- About half of respondents who agree that poverty is scarring nonetheless agree that it contributes positively to the formation of character (54%).
- About two in three respondents who disagree that poverty is scarring agree that poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character (64%).

Figure 6: Agreement that poverty is character forming, by attitude to scarring

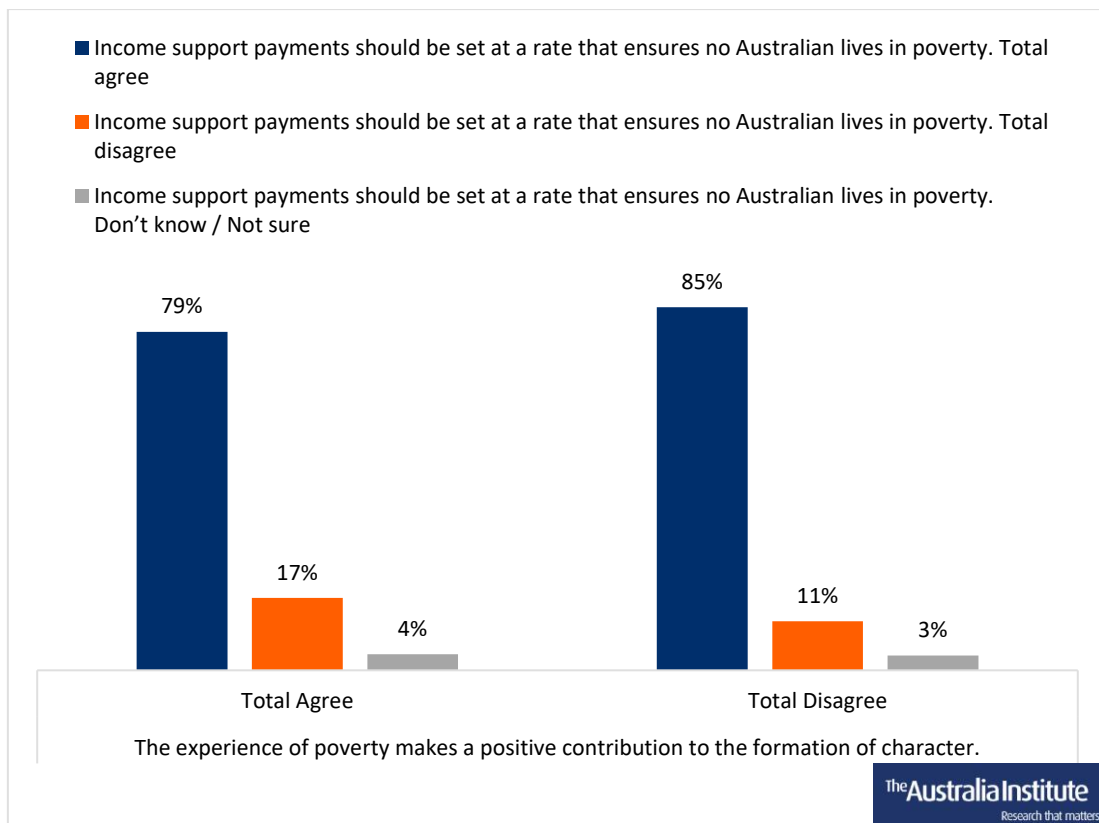


How beliefs about poverty affect attitude toward income support

Australians agree that income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty, regardless of whether they agree that poverty is character forming.

- Of respondents who disagree that poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character, over four in five (85%) agree that income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty.
- Even for respondents who agree that poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character, four in five (79%) agree that income support payments should be set at a level that ensures no Australian lives in poverty.

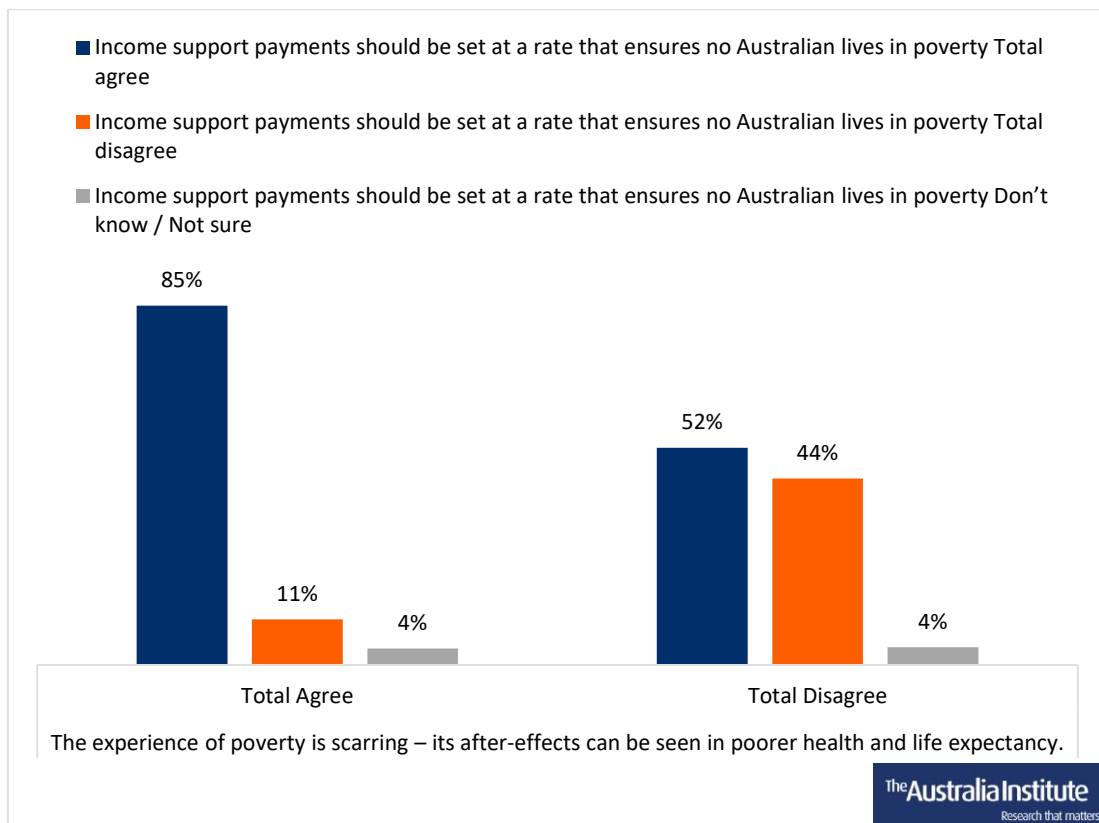
Figure 7: Income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty, by agreement that poverty is character forming



Australians differ in their attitudes to whether income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty, depending on whether they agree that poverty is scarring.

- Of respondents who agree that the experience of poverty is scarring, more than four in five (85%) agree that income support payments should be set at a level that ensures no Australian lives in poverty.
- Of respondents who disagree that the experience of poverty is scarring, half agree (52%) and just under half disagree (44%) that income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty.

Figure 8: Income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty, by agreement that the experience of poverty is scarring



Method

Between 4 and 7 October 2022, The Australia Institute surveyed 1,003 adults living in Australia, online through Dynata’s panel, with nationally representative samples by gender, age group and state/territory.

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.

The research is compliant with the [Australian Polling Council Quality Mark standards](#). The long methodology disclosure statement follows.

Long disclosure statement

The results were weighted by three variables (gender, age group, and state or territory) based on Australian Bureau of Statistics [“National, state and territory population”](#) data, using the raking method. Those who answered the gender identity question as "Non-binary", "I use a different term", or "Prefer not to answer" had their responses included with females for the purpose of reporting, due to constraints from weighting data availability. This resulted in an effective sample size of 936.

The margin of error (95% confidence level) for the national results is 3%.

Results are shown only for larger states.

Voting intention questions appeared just after the initial demographic questions, before policy questions. Respondents who answered “Don’t know / Not sure” for voting intention were then asked a leaning question; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs. “Coalition” includes separate responses for Liberal and National. “Other” refers to Independent/Other, and minor parties in cases where they were included in the voting intention but represent too small a sample to be reported separately in the crosstabs.



**Australian
Polling Council
Quality Mark**

Detailed results

No preceding questions in the poll are expected to have influenced the results of the questions published here.

Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The experience of poverty makes a positive contribution to the formation of character.

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>WA</i>
Strongly agree	24%	31%	16%	26%	21%	23%	28%
Agree	29%	33%	25%	33%	30%	27%	20%
Disagree	21%	15%	27%	16%	21%	24%	23%
Strongly disagree	14%	10%	18%	13%	17%	14%	15%
Don't know / Not sure	12%	10%	13%	11%	12%	12%	14%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>PHON</i>	<i>Other</i>
Strongly agree	24%	32%	11%	22%	22%	33%
Agree	29%	27%	33%	29%	35%	25%
Disagree	21%	22%	21%	18%	31%	19%
Strongly disagree	14%	9%	21%	20%	7%	11%
Don't know / Not sure	12%	11%	14%	11%	6%	12%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>18-29</i>	<i>30-39</i>	<i>40-49</i>	<i>50-59</i>	<i>60+</i>
Strongly agree	24%	44%	36%	25%	13%	7%
Agree	29%	27%	26%	34%	30%	29%
Disagree	21%	13%	16%	19%	27%	28%
Strongly disagree	14%	12%	11%	14%	13%	20%
Don't know / Not sure	12%	4%	11%	9%	17%	17%

	<i>Total</i>	<\$20K	\$20-\$40K	\$40-\$60K	\$60-\$80K	\$80-\$100K	\$100-\$150K	\$150-\$200K	\$200K+	Not sure/ Rather not say
Strongly agree	24%	19%	9%	4%	8%	33%	37%	43%	41%	4%
Agree	29%	27%	30%	29%	35%	29%	28%	28%	28%	24%
Disagree	21%	25%	23%	30%	30%	16%	17%	12%	17%	25%
Strongly disagree	14%	17%	18%	18%	17%	17%	11%	7%	10%	15%
Don't know / Not sure	12%	12%	21%	20%	10%	5%	7%	9%	3%	31%

The experience of poverty is scarring – its after-effects can be seen in poorer health and life expectancy

	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	NSW	QLD	VIC	WA
Strongly agree	33%	28%	38%	32%	33%	33%	36%
Agree	51%	55%	47%	54%	48%	51%	52%
Disagree	7%	9%	5%	7%	9%	6%	4%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	6%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%

	<i>Total</i>	Coalition	Labor	PHON	Greens	Other
Strongly agree	33%	30%	37%	22%	43%	25%
Agree	51%	55%	45%	50%	44%	60%
Disagree	7%	7%	7%	16%	7%	6%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	7%	1%	3%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	6%	9%	6%	5%	6%

	<i>Total</i>	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Strongly agree	33%	34%	28%	36%	35%	32%
Agree	51%	55%	53%	49%	49%	48%
Disagree	7%	5%	9%	8%	5%	9%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	4%	7%	6%	9%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	<\$20K	\$20-\$40K	\$40-\$60K	\$60-\$80K	\$80-\$100K	\$100-\$150K	\$150-\$200K	\$200K+	Not sure/ Rather not say
Strongly agree	33%	45%	41%	32%	32%	28%	29%	29%	39%	33%
Agree	51%	40%	36%	50%	51%	62%	58%	58%	47%	51%
Disagree	7%	10%	8%	7%	12%	3%	7%	8%	8%	7%
Strongly disagree	2%	0%	3%	0%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	5%	13%	11%	3%	5%	4%	2%	3%	7%

Income support payments should be set at a rate that ensures no Australian lives in poverty.

	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	NSW	QLD	VIC	WA
Strongly agree	45%	43%	48%	44%	46%	44%	51%
Agree	34%	35%	34%	32%	37%	38%	27%
Disagree	11%	13%	10%	13%	9%	9%	13%
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%	2%	1%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	6%	7%	9%	6%	6%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	Coalition	Labor	Greens	PHON	Other
Strongly agree	45%	39%	47%	56%	36%	48%
Agree	34%	35%	40%	26%	26%	32%
Disagree	11%	14%	6%	12%	18%	12%
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	1%	2%	10%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	8%	6%	4%	10%	6%

	<i>Total</i>	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Strongly agree	45%	49%	47%	49%	41%	42%
Agree	34%	30%	34%	30%	36%	39%
Disagree	11%	16%	11%	13%	10%	8%
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	1%	2%	4%	3%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	3%	7%	6%	8%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	<\$20K	\$20-\$40K	\$40-\$60K	\$60-\$80K	\$80-\$100K	\$100-\$150K	\$150-\$200K	\$200K+	Not sure/ Rather not say
Strongly agree	45%	56%	50%	50%	45%	48%	45%	37%	41%	26%
Agree	34%	38%	37%	34%	39%	28%	36%	33%	32%	31%
Disagree	11%	4%	4%	7%	8%	16%	13%	19%	13%	11%
Strongly disagree	3%	0%	1%	2%	3%	5%	1%	4%	6%	9%
Don't know / Not sure	7%	2%	8%	7%	5%	3%	5%	7%	8%	23%