

Ending child poverty in Australia

Although one in six Australian children live in poverty, the Australian Government does not officially define or measure poverty. With the increases to income support payments made during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government has proven it can lift children out of poverty. Permanently increasing these payments would lift tens of thousands of children out of poverty.

Discussion paper

Kristen Scicluna

Jack Thrower

June 2024

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIA INSTITUTE

The Australia Institute is an independent public policy think tank based in Canberra. It is funded by donations from philanthropic trusts and individuals and commissioned research. We barrack for ideas, not political parties or candidates. Since its launch in 1994, the Institute has carried out highly influential research on a broad range of economic, social and environmental issues.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

As we begin the 21st century, new dilemmas confront our society and our planet. Unprecedented levels of consumption co-exist with extreme poverty. Through new technology we are more connected than we have ever been, yet civic engagement is declining. Environmental neglect continues despite heightened ecological awareness. A better balance is urgently needed.

The Australia Institute's directors, staff and supporters represent a broad range of views and priorities. What unites us is a belief that through a combination of research and creativity we can promote new solutions and ways of thinking.

OUR PURPOSE - 'RESEARCH THAT MATTERS'

The Institute publishes research that contributes to a more just, sustainable and peaceful society. Our goal is to gather, interpret and communicate evidence in order to both diagnose the problems we face and propose new solutions to tackle them.

The Institute is wholly independent and not affiliated with any other organisation. Donations to its Research Fund are tax deductible for the donor. Anyone wishing to donate can do so via the website at <https://www.australiainstitute.org.au> or by calling the Institute on 02 6130 0530. Our secure and user-friendly website allows donors to make either one-off or regular monthly donations and we encourage everyone who can to donate in this way as it assists our research in the most significant manner.

Level 1, Endeavour House, 1 Franklin St
Canberra, ACT 2601

Tel: (02) 61300530

Email: mail@australiainstitute.org.au

Website: www.australiainstitute.org.au

ISSN: 1836-9014

Contents

Summary.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Australian children face poverty despite great national wealth.....	4
The life-long impacts of child poverty	6
Australia’s poverty data void.....	9
What works.....	11
Conclusion	14
Appendix: Polling.....	15
Method	15
Detailed results.....	17

Summary

One in six Australian children live in poverty, yet there is no official poverty line or monitoring of poverty in place. Poverty has long-lasting and insidious impacts on a child's health and well-being and can affect their schooling and employment opportunities throughout their entire lifetime. Given that the low rate of income support payments keeps many families in poverty, reducing child poverty is not inherently complicated. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government managed to lift more than half a million Australians, including children, out of poverty overnight by supplementing existing income support payments.

The Australia Institute recently conducted polling to determine community attitudes towards child poverty in Australia. This polling found that respondents were overwhelmingly supportive of government measures to reduce child poverty, including:

- Four in five (83%) Australians support the Commonwealth Government regularly measuring and reporting on poverty rates in Australia.
- Four in five (81%) Australians agree that income support payments should be set at a rate that do not cause any child in Australia to live in poverty.
- Australians are highly concerned that Australia has a high child poverty rate compared to other developed countries (69%), its impact on children's health and lifespan (83%), and on education and employment outcomes (85%).
- Demographics were not a factor that influenced respondents' opinions about child poverty.

Without an official measure of poverty it is difficult to address the problem. Our polling shows that most Australians want the Commonwealth Government to measure poverty, and that most also support policies that would reduce rates of child poverty. It is time for the Commonwealth Government to hear these calls, raise income payments to a rate that would pull households out of poverty, collect and publish data on poverty that would inform policymakers and keep poverty on the agenda, and take transformative action towards permanently eliminating child poverty.

Introduction

Although Australia is a rich country, one in six Australian children live in poverty.¹ Australia has the 13th highest youth poverty rate in the OECD, surpassing the UK, Germany, and Canada.²

Child poverty can take a lifelong toll. Conditions like asthma, heart disease, impaired cognitive development, and learning difficulties are more prevalent among children who have experienced poverty.³ These children often struggle at school, meaning that they may not complete high school or receive a tertiary education, which limits their access to high-quality employment opportunities once they reach working age. These struggles lead to lifespans that are on average three years shorter than that of higher income Australians.

The Commonwealth Government's failure to recognise an official national poverty line, or to monitor poverty rates, is a major obstacle to tackling the problem.⁴ Instead this task is currently undertaken by not-for-profit organisations and academic institutions. As it stands, the best measures of poverty in Australia comes from a partnership between the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and the University of New South Wales (UNSW).⁴ This partnership tracks poverty and inequality over time, advocates for establishing an official poverty line, and calls for setting income support payments at a level that helps ensure no child lives in poverty.

However, whilst this partnership produces highly accurate and valuable work, it does not have the same impact that official government statistics would. In corporate management there is the saying "what gets measured gets managed", and we often

¹ Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty in Australia 2023: Who is affected – Poverty & inequality partnership report*, <https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/poverty-in-australia-2023-who-is-affected/>

² Monks, Mandzufas, & Cross (2022) *The impact of poverty on the developing child: A narrative review*, https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:fc94cac/Monks_et_al_2022a.pdf; OECD (2024) *Poverty rate*, <http://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm>

³ Monks et al. (2022) *The impact of poverty on the developing child: A narrative review*; Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty & Inequality in Australia: Submission to Inquiry into the extent and nature of poverty in Australia*, <https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Poverty-and-Inequality-Partnership-Poverty-Inquiry-submission.pdf>

⁴ Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (n.d.) *Poverty and inequality – Research and insights into poverty and inequality in Australia*, <https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/>

see the same in government policy. Inflation and the budget deficit are constantly in the national spotlight because the Bureau of Statistics releases data on inflation every month, and the Treasury regularly reports the size of the national debt. Yet there are never any official announcements of how many children live in poverty in Australia. If Australia is to make a meaningful effort to reduce child poverty, a good place to start would be for the Commonwealth Government to officially define poverty, measure poverty rates, and publish periodic updates. This would keep government accountable and enable public oversight.

Polling by the Australia Institute shows that Australians are concerned about child poverty, and support efforts to reduce it. Australians strongly support regularly measuring and reporting on poverty rates. Australians also expressed significant concern about Australia's high child poverty rates compared to other developed countries, its impact on children's health, lifespan, education, and employment outcomes. As a solution, most Australians agree that income support payments should be set at a rate that helps ensure no child in Australia lives in poverty. These findings were consistent across states, ages, and voting intentions.

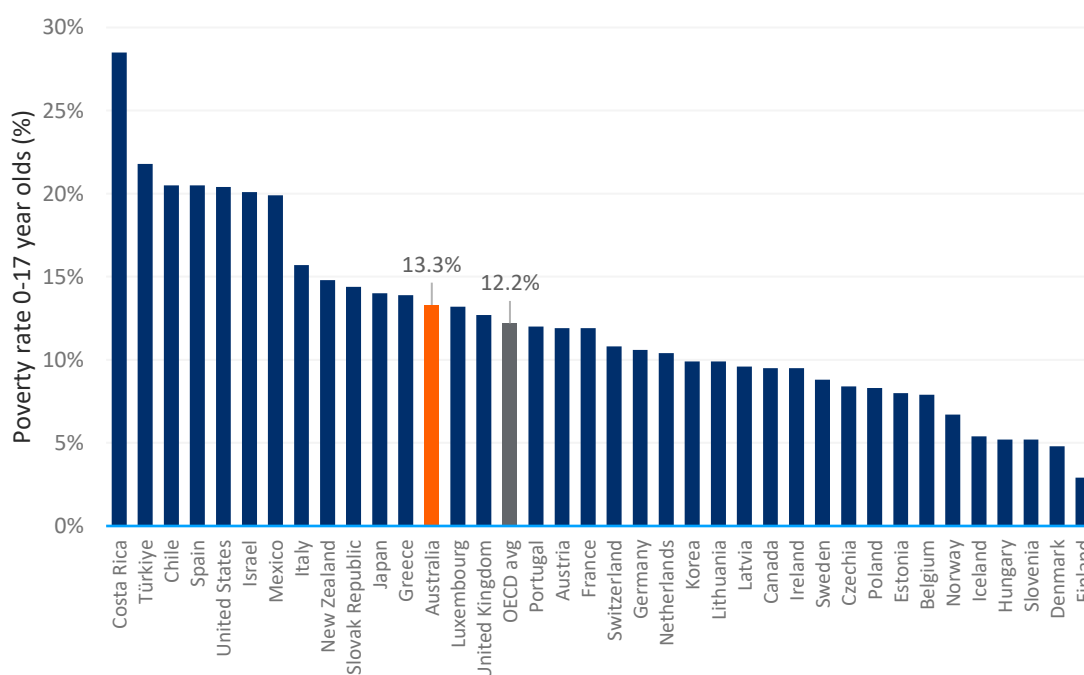
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government showed that it can radically reduce poverty if it wants to. As a wealthy nation, Australia can ensure that *every* child – no matter their background – lives a stable, healthy, and meaningful life.

Australian children face poverty despite great national wealth

One in six (16.6%) Australian children currently live in poverty – this is about 761,000 children.⁵ The poverty rate is the proportion of people whose income falls under a defined poverty line. The poverty line used in this report is 50% of median (middle) income. This definition of poverty is usually used for international comparisons.

Australia is one of the most affluent countries in the world, with the eighth highest GDP per capita out of 38 nations in the OECD.⁶ Yet Australia's poverty rate is higher than the OECD average. Of the 37 countries for which data is available, 23 countries – including the UK, Germany, and Canada – have lower poverty rates. Australia's youth poverty rate (ages 0-17) is even worse, ranking twenty-fifth out of 37 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Australia has more youth poverty than 24 other OECD countries



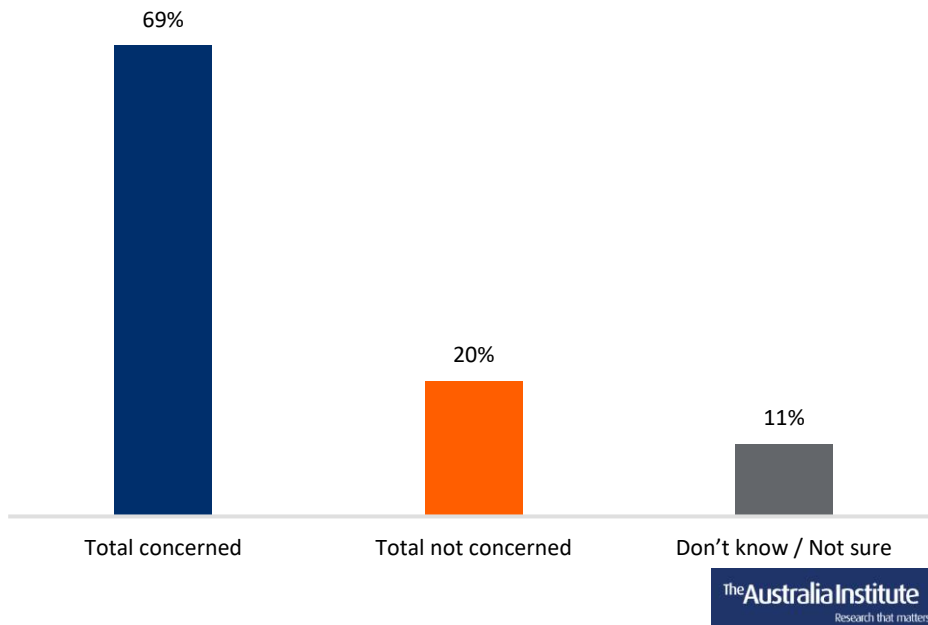
⁵ Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty in Australia 2023: Who is affected – Poverty & inequality partnership report*, pp. 30–31, <https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/poverty-in-australia-2023-who-is-affected/>

⁶ OECD (2024) *Gross domestic product (2022)*, <https://data.oecd.org/gdp/gross-domestic-product-gdp.htm>

Source: Adapted from OECD (2024), Poverty rate (indicator), <https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm> (Accessed 6 Mar 2024, latest available data)

The Australia Institute asked Australians if they were concerned that Australia has higher child poverty rates than most other developed countries. Seven in ten Australians (69%) said they were either very concerned or somewhat concerned (Figure 2). Responses were consistent across diverse demographics, with people of different genders, income levels, age groups, states, voting preferences, parental statuses, and educational backgrounds expressing similar levels of concern about the issue (see Appendix for full details).

Figure 2. Seven in ten Australians are concerned that Australia has more child poverty than most other developed countries



Source: Australia Institute polling

The life-long impacts of child poverty

Poverty has a profound and lasting impact on a child's future, including their health, development, and educational success. Children who have experienced poverty have a disease burden and mortality rate that is one and a half times higher than children who have not.⁷ These children are twice as likely to develop chronic illnesses such as asthma, heart disease, and depression.⁸ People who are socio-economically disadvantaged are more than twice as likely to have an 'avoidable death' (a death that should be avoidable in the current healthcare system), and live shorter lives – dying on average three years earlier than the wealthiest Australians.⁷ They are also over 70% more likely to commit suicide.⁷ Poverty, particularly during early childhood, can also lead to 'toxic stress', a state in which a child's 'stress-response system' is constantly overwhelmed.⁹ This chronic state of stress can alter a child's brain structure, negatively impacting their cognitive and emotional development.⁸

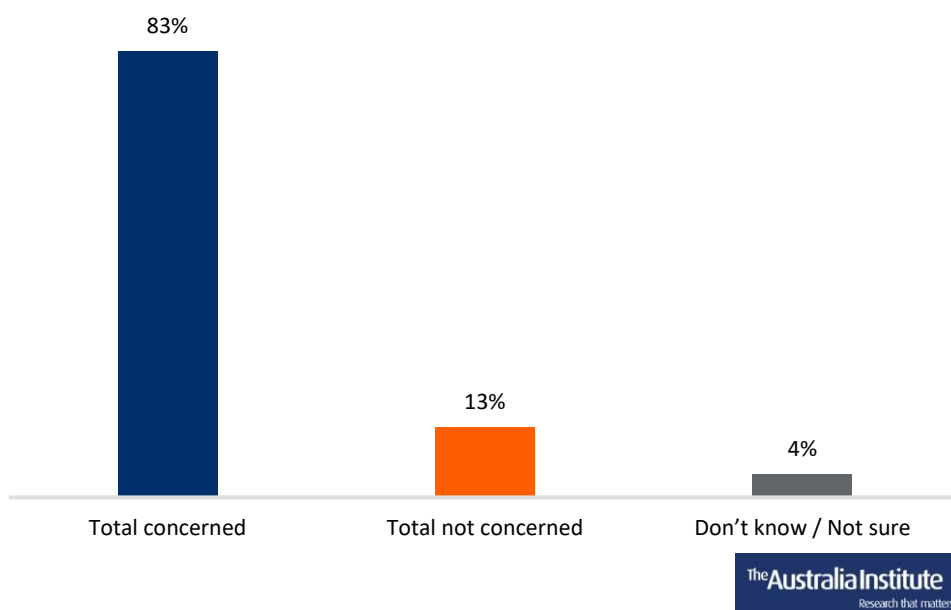
Polling conducted by the Australia Institute found that a clear majority of Australians are concerned about the impact of poverty on children and their health. Four in five (83%) Australians are either very concerned or somewhat concerned that child poverty can lead to poor long-term health outcomes and shortened life expectancy (Figure 3).

⁷ Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty & Inequality in Australia: Submission to Inquiry into the extent and nature of poverty in Australia*

⁸ Francis, DePriest, Wilson, & Gross (2018) 'Child Poverty, Toxic Stress, and Social Determinants of Health: Screening and Care Coordination', *The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, <https://doi.org/10.3912%2FOJIN.Vol23No03Man02> ; Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty & Inequality in Australia: Submission to Inquiry into the extent and nature of poverty in Australia*

⁹ ACOSS (2019) *Poverty and inequality makes us sick*, https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ACOSS_Cohealth_health-inequality-infographic.pdf; Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty & Inequality in Australia: Submission to Inquiry into the extent and nature of poverty in Australia*

Figure 3. Four in five Australians are concerned that the experience of child poverty can lead to poor long-term health and shorter life expectancy



Source: Australia Institute polling

Impaired brain development, which can be one consequence of child poverty, can negatively impact critical skills like self-control, focus, and sociability that can make it harder for children to perform well at school.¹⁰ This can initiate a cascade of events that culminates in reduced school-readiness, higher drop-out and absenteeism rates, and lower educational attainment.¹¹

The education disparity between students from low-income and high-income families in Australia is widening. Disadvantaged children are increasingly falling behind their higher income peers in literacy and numeracy, to the point that a gap equivalent to five years of schooling now exists.¹² Year 12 completion rates are significantly lower (69.7%) for lower-income students than for higher-income students (82.9%).¹³ This trend persists into higher education, where only about two-thirds (68.9%) of the

¹⁰ Gitterman et al. (2016) *Poverty and Child Health in the United States*, <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2016-0339>

¹¹ Francis et al. (2018) *Child Poverty, Toxic Stress, and Social Determinants of Health: Screening and Care Coordination*; Monks et al. (2022) *The impact of poverty on the developing child: A narrative review*

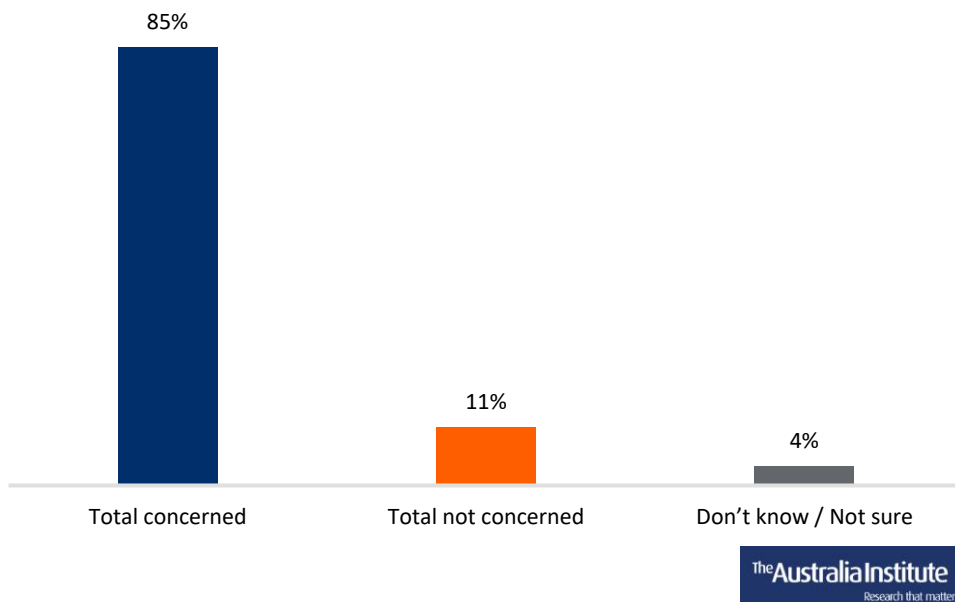
¹² Cassidy (2023) 'Australia's poorest children are five years behind richest peers, Naplan analysis shows', *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/nov/27/australias-poorest-children-are-five-years-behind-richest-peers-naplan-analysis-shows>

¹³ Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) (2022) *Year 12 certification rates*, <https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/year-12-certification-rates>

lowest income students finish their degree, compared with over three-quarters (77.7%) of the highest income.¹⁴ The flow-on effects of child poverty often mean that, once these children reach working age, they more commonly face unstable employment and unemployment.¹⁵

Australians are overwhelmingly concerned about the potential for child poverty to negatively impact educational and employment prospects, with Australia Institute polling showing that six in seven Australians (85%) are either very concerned or somewhat concerned (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Six in seven Australians are concerned that the experience of child poverty can lead to poor education and employment outcomes



Source: Australia Institute polling

¹⁴ Edwards & McMillan (2015) *Completing university in a growing sector: Is equity an issue?*, p. 13, https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1045&context=higher_education

¹⁵ Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty & Inequality in Australia: Submission to Inquiry into the extent and nature of poverty in Australia*

Australia's poverty data void

The Australian Government has no official definition of poverty and does not officially track or publish updates on the prevalence of poverty. The closest thing Australia has to an official poverty line is the 'Henderson' poverty line. The Henderson poverty line was initially calculated in 1973, as the income needed to support a basic standard of living for a family of four, and has since become the standard used by researchers to track the success of poverty reduction efforts.¹⁶ Despite its many iterations and updates, this Australia-specific poverty line is becoming increasingly outdated as it cannot be directly compared to the poverty rates used in other countries, and because it does not account for the specific impacts of relative poverty.¹⁶

Relative poverty occurs when a person has significantly less income and resources compared with the rest of society. This differs from absolute poverty, which measures income against more fixed thresholds, for instance whether someone can afford to eat. Relative poverty is associated with a range of harms including marginalisation from social participation,¹⁷ and the psychological impacts of social comparison stemming from inequality itself.¹⁸

To remedy this, the Australian Government could officially adopt a relative income-based poverty line. This could be the 50% of median income rate adopted by the OECD,¹⁹ or the 60% rate utilised by the European Union.²⁰ Not only would this encompass relative poverty, it would also allow Australia's poverty rates to be directly compared with other countries.

As Australia's foremost authority on the issue, ACOSS and UNSW have refined the 50% and 60% median income poverty rates to create an 'after-housing' poverty rate that accounts for housing related costs.²⁰ Given Australia's current housing and rental crisis, this allows for a clearer and more precise comparison of living standards to be made between groups with low housing costs, such as mortgage-free homeowners who can

¹⁶ Melbourne Institute (2019) *Henderson Poverty Line*,
<https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/research/labour/henderson-poverty-line>

¹⁷ Sen (1999) *Development as Freedom*, p89–90,
<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/development-as-freedom-9780192893307?lang=en&cc=nl>

¹⁸ See, e.g., Wilkinson & Pickett (2018) *The Inner Level: How More Equal Societies Reduce Stress, Restore Sanity and Improve Everyone's Well-Being*

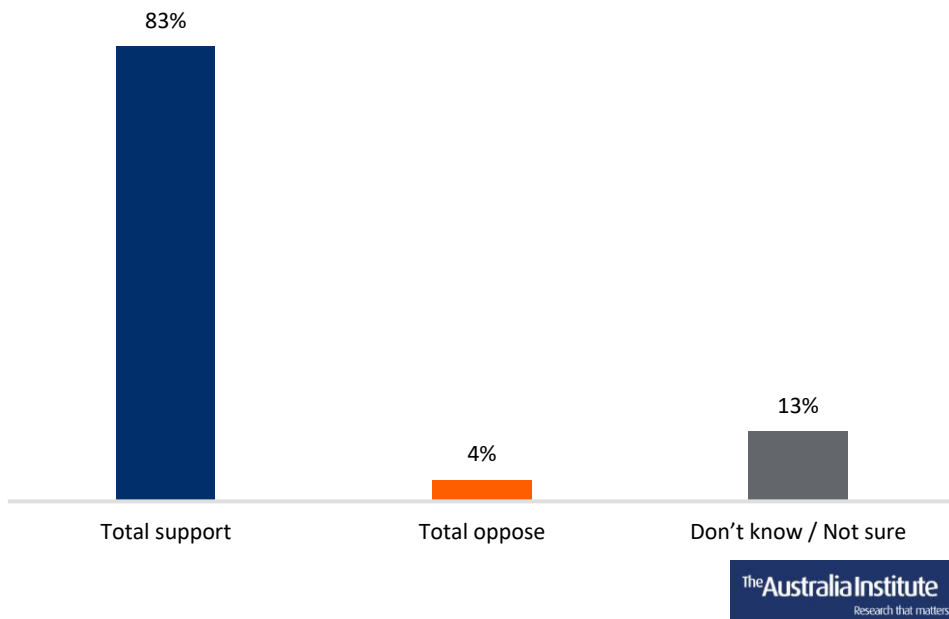
¹⁹ OECD (2024) *Poverty rate*

²⁰ Eurostat (2022) *Datasets: At-risk-of-poverty rate*,
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/product/page/TESPM010>

afford a higher standard of living, and those with higher costs, such as those paying off a mortgage or renting.

Australia Institute polling shows that majority of Australians support the idea of the Australian Government regularly measuring and reporting on poverty rates in Australia. More than four in five (83%) Australians either support or strongly support this policy (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Four in five Australians support the Australian Government regularly measuring and reporting on poverty rates in Australia



Source: Australia Institute polling

What works

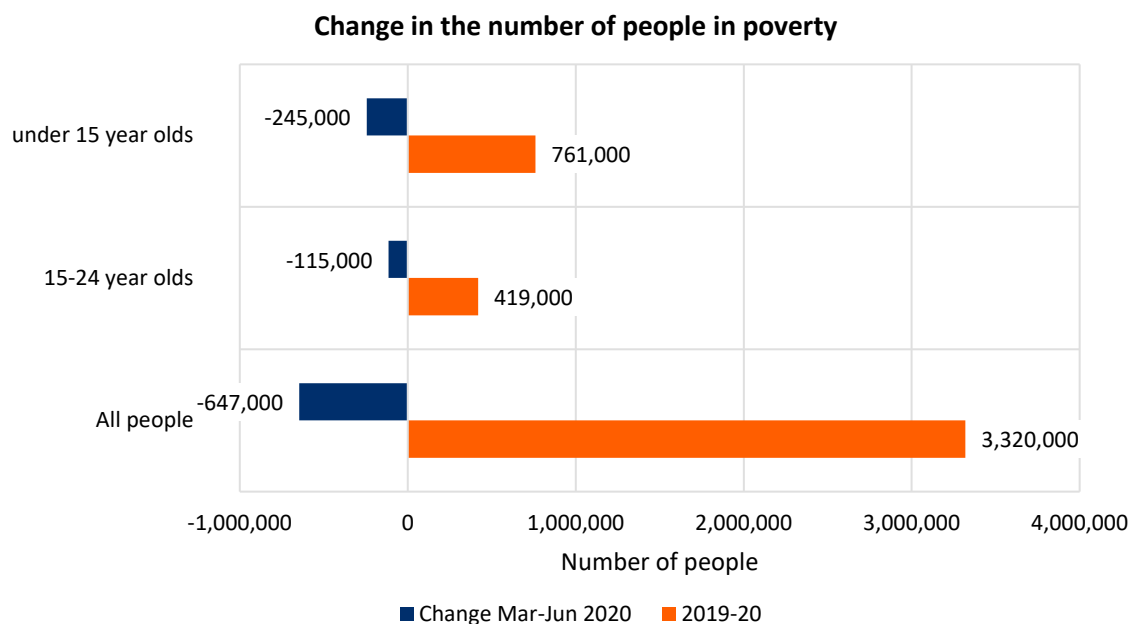
While the causes of poverty are complex and multi-faceted, poverty is, by definition, an income dependent state. This makes the road to reducing or even eliminating poverty quite straightforward: lifting the incomes of people to above the poverty line.²¹

The Australian Government has already shown how easy it is to reduce poverty. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government introduced an income support payment worth an additional \$550 per fortnight to people receiving unemployment payments (JobSeeker).²² This single change lifted 647,000 Australians out of poverty overnight (Figure 6).²¹ The number of children under the age of 15 living in poverty dropped from 761,000 to 516,000, a decrease of 245,000. For those aged between 15-24, the number of children and young people in poverty decreased by 115,000 – from 419,000 to 304,000. The Australian Government has proven that it is possible to instantly reduce poverty in Australia by providing the most vulnerable with financial support. While these temporary measures have now been repealed, it is evident that permanently raising income support payments to a level that helps ensure no child lives in poverty is entirely achievable.

²¹ Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty in Australia 2023: Who is affected – Poverty & inequality partnership report*

²² Grundnoff (2021) *Opportunity lost*, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/report/opportunity-lost/>

Figure 6. Increases to income support payments drastically reduced poverty in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic



Source: Adapted from ACOSS & UNSW (2020) *Number of people in poverty by age in 2019-20, and change in poverty*, <https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/poverty/number-of-people-in-poverty-by-age-in-2019-20-and-change-in-poverty/>

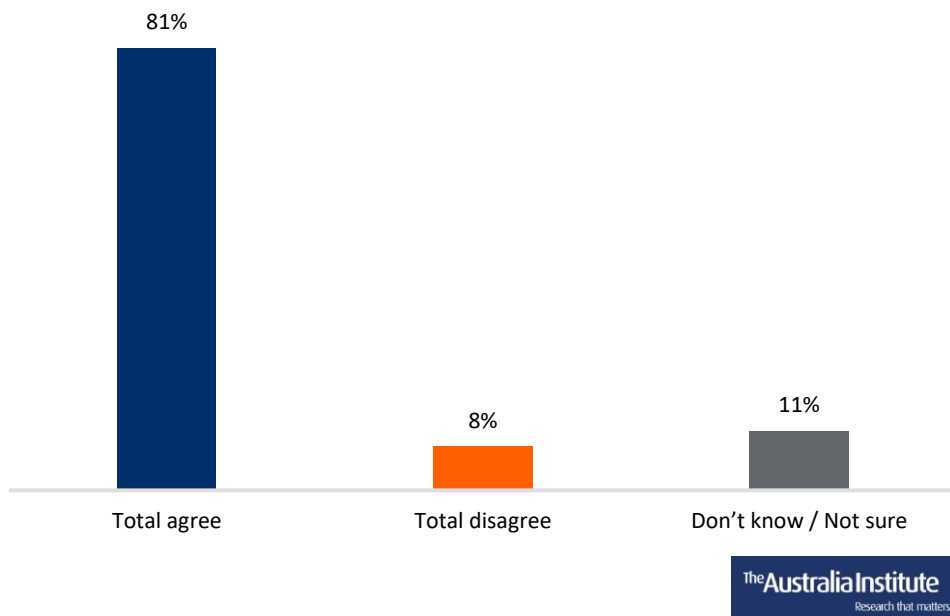
Previous work by the Australia Institute has advocated for a permanent increase to JobSeeker payments in line with the level of income support provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.²³ ACOSS has also recommended that the base rate of JobSeeker and related payments be substantially increased.²⁴

When asked if income support payments should be raised to an amount that does not cause any child in Australia to live in poverty, Australia Institute polling shows that four in five (81%) Australians agree (Figure 7).

²³ Grundnoff (2021) *Opportunity lost*

²⁴ Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) & The University of New South Wales (UNSW) (2023) *Poverty & Inequality in Australia: Submission to Inquiry into the extent and nature of poverty in Australia*

Figure 7. Four in five Australians agree that income support payments should be raised to a rate that does not cause any child in Australia to live in poverty



Source: Australia Institute polling

Conclusion

The persistence of child poverty in one of the world's most prosperous countries is indefensible. The Commonwealth Government has already proven that it can easily lower the rate of poverty in Australia. The decision to increase income support payments during the COVID-19 pandemic lifted hundreds of thousands of people, including children, out of poverty overnight. The solution is clear, but the decision to act hinges on political will.

In addition to increasing the rate of income support payments, the Australian Government can establish child poverty as a national priority by adopting a clear and official definition of poverty that would allow for the creation of a national poverty line, and by regularly collecting and publishing data on poverty that would help keep governments accountable. As the polling in this report shows, Australians overwhelmingly support these policies. Taking serious measures to reduce child poverty is technically simple, politically popular, and morally imperative. The time has come for the Australian Government to act.

Appendix: Polling

Method

Short disclosure statement

Research company	Dynata
Client commissioning the research	The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS)
End client	NA
Fieldwork dates	23 January 2024 to 29 January 2024
Mode of data collection	Online recruited from research panel
Target population	Australian adults aged 18+
Sample size	1017
Australian Polling Council compliant	Yes
Voting intention published	Yes
Long disclosure statement	See below

Long disclosure statement

Effective sample size after weighting applied	1004
Margin of error associated with effective sample size	±3%
Variables used in weighting	Age, state/territory, and gender, based on Australian Bureau of Statistics “National, state and territory population” data
Gender identity categorisation	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
Weighting method used	Raking method
Full question text, responses categories and randomisation	See below
Source of online sample	Dynata’s online panel
How were undecided voters handled?	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

Voting intention categorisation	Voting crosstabs show voting intentions for the House of Representatives. “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.
Location results	Results are shown only for larger states



**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. Response options were presented in random order. The questions, and the response options for each question, are as follows:

Are you the parent or primary carer of one or more children under the age of 18 living in your home either full time or part time?

	Total	Male	Female
Yes	30%	27%	32%
No	70%	73%	68%

**Further demographic results appear in following questions.*

How concerned, if at all, are you about the following?

The experience of child poverty can lead to poor long-term health and shorter life expectancy

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Very concerned	41%	35%	47%	43%	40%	42%	47%
Somewhat concerned	42%	44%	39%	42%	48%	39%	30%
Not very concerned	10%	13%	7%	7%	7%	11%	19%
Not at all concerned	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	4%	1%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%	3%	3%

	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Very concerned	41%	45%	35%	54%	37%	36%
Somewhat concerned	42%	41%	47%	32%	36%	41%
Not very concerned	10%	8%	11%	10%	17%	8%
Not at all concerned	3%	2%	4%	1%	6%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	12%

	Total	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Very concerned	41%	48%	37%	34%	41%	43%
Somewhat concerned	42%	37%	44%	47%	42%	41%
Not very concerned	10%	12%	11%	11%	8%	9%
Not at all concerned	3%	3%	4%	1%	4%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	1%	4%	7%	4%	5%

	<i>Total</i>	Bachelor or above (university qualification)	Diploma (TAFE, college, university) Certificate III/IV	Higher School Certificate /Year 12	School Certificate /Year 10	Some high school /primary school
Very concerned	41%	43%	43%	34%	34%	47%
Somewhat concerned	42%	43%	40%	44%	44%	34%
Not very concerned	10%	8%	10%	12%	13%	13%
Not at all concerned	3%	3%	3%	4%	1%	0%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	3%	4%	5%	8%	6%

	<i>Total</i>	<\$60,000	\$60,001 – \$100,000	> \$100,000
Very concerned	41%	46%	43%	37%
Somewhat concerned	42%	38%	43%	43%
Not very concerned	10%	8%	10%	11%
Not at all concerned	3%	2%	1%	5%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	6%	3%	3%

	<i>Total</i>	Yes (currently care for someone under 18)	No (currently care for someone under 18)
Very concerned	41%	43%	40%
Somewhat concerned	42%	43%	41%
Not very concerned	10%	10%	10%
Not at all concerned	3%	3%	3%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	2%	5%

The experience of child poverty can lead to poor education and employment outcomes

	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Very concerned	42%	36%	47%	44%	44%	44%	41%
Somewhat concerned	43%	46%	40%	43%	42%	39%	47%
Not very concerned	9%	11%	7%	7%	10%	10%	8%
Not at all concerned	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	5%	3%	5%	2%	3%	2%

	<i>Total</i>	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Very concerned	42%	46%	36%	56%	44%	33%
Somewhat concerned	43%	41%	49%	36%	32%	45%
Not very concerned	9%	8%	9%	8%	15%	8%
Not at all concerned	2%	1%	3%	0%	6%	4%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	4%	3%	0%	3%	11%

	Total	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Very concerned	42%	43%	42%	36%	40%	45%
Somewhat concerned	43%	44%	41%	51%	42%	40%
Not very concerned	9%	9%	12%	6%	9%	8%
Not at all concerned	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	1%	3%	5%	5%	5%

	Total	Bachelor or above (university qualification)	Diploma (TAFE, college, university) Certificate III/IV	Higher School Certificate /Year 12	School Certificate /Year 10	Some high school /primary school
Very concerned	42%	43%	46%	34%	37%	45%
Somewhat concerned	43%	43%	41%	50%	41%	40%
Not very concerned	9%	9%	8%	9%	9%	11%
Not at all concerned	2%	3%	2%	2%	5%	0%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	3%	3%	4%	9%	4%

	Total	<\$60,000	\$60,001 – \$100,000	> \$100,000
Very concerned	42%	47%	44%	38%
Somewhat concerned	43%	41%	42%	45%
Not very concerned	9%	6%	10%	10%
Not at all concerned	2%	2%	2%	4%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	4%	2%	3%

	Total	Yes (currently care for someone under 18)	No (currently care for someone under 18)
Very concerned	42%	44%	41%
Somewhat concerned	43%	43%	43%
Not very concerned	9%	10%	8%
Not at all concerned	2%	2%	3%
Don't know / Not sure	4%	1%	5%

The proportion of children in poverty in Australia will rise over the next 10 years

**The authors elected to omit this question from the final report.*

Australia has more child poverty than most other developed countries

	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Very concerned	35%	31%	40%	36%	36%	34%	39%
Somewhat concerned	34%	35%	33%	35%	36%	31%	31%
Not very concerned	14%	16%	12%	13%	16%	12%	12%
Not at all concerned	6%	8%	5%	6%	4%	8%	8%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	10%	11%	10%	8%	15%	10%

	<i>Total</i>	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Very concerned	35%	42%	27%	48%	30%	31%
Somewhat concerned	34%	35%	36%	29%	22%	38%
Not very concerned	14%	11%	18%	13%	17%	8%
Not at all concerned	6%	3%	6%	3%	20%	9%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	8%	13%	6%	11%	14%

	<i>Total</i>	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Very concerned	35%	39%	36%	28%	34%	37%
Somewhat concerned	34%	31%	35%	42%	35%	30%
Not very concerned	14%	18%	16%	13%	11%	11%
Not at all concerned	6%	6%	6%	5%	10%	5%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	6%	7%	11%	10%	16%

	<i>Total</i>	Bachelor or above (university qualification)	Diploma (TAFE, college, university) Certificate III/IV	Higher School Certificate/ Year 12	School Certificate/ Year 10	Some high school/ primary school
Very concerned	35%	36%	37%	29%	34%	42%
Somewhat concerned	34%	35%	30%	40%	38%	30%
Not very concerned	14%	13%	14%	17%	12%	13%
Not at all concerned	6%	6%	6%	4%	9%	6%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	10%	13%	10%	7%	9%

	<i>Total</i>	<\$60,000	\$60,001 – \$100,000	> \$100,000
Very concerned	35%	38%	35%	34%
Somewhat concerned	34%	34%	34%	34%
Not very concerned	14%	11%	16%	16%
Not at all concerned	6%	5%	5%	9%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	13%	11%	7%

	<i>Total</i>	Yes (currently care for someone <18)	No (currently care for someone <18)
Very concerned	35%	39%	34%
Somewhat concerned	34%	35%	34%
Not very concerned	14%	17%	13%
Not at all concerned	6%	5%	7%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	5%	13%

The proportion of children in poverty has risen over the past decade

**While most recent OECD data indicates a rise in child poverty in Australia from 2012-2020, other authorities on child poverty lack this shared consensus. As such, the authors elected to omit this question from the final report.*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

“Income support payments should be set at a rate that does not cause any child in Australia to live in poverty”

	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Strongly agree	38%	32%	43%	39%	39%	33%	39%
Agree	43%	46%	41%	42%	43%	45%	43%
Disagree	6%	8%	5%	7%	7%	6%	9%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	11%	11%	10%	10%	14%	7%

	<i>Total</i>	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Strongly agree	38%	40%	29%	53%	45%	35%
Agree	43%	46%	48%	41%	25%	38%
Disagree	6%	5%	9%	3%	12%	5%
Strongly disagree	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	9%	12%	3%	14%	20%

	<i>Total</i>	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Strongly agree	38%	43%	45%	36%	39%	29%
Agree	43%	49%	39%	46%	39%	43%
Disagree	6%	4%	5%	5%	10%	8%
Strongly disagree	2%	0%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	3%	10%	12%	9%	17%

	<i>Total</i>	Bachelor or above (university qualification)	Diploma (TAFE, college, university) Certificate III/IV	Higher School Certificate /Year 12	School Certificate /Year 10	Some high school /primary school
Strongly agree	38%	34%	43%	31%	40%	57%
Agree	43%	49%	40%	46%	31%	29%
Disagree	6%	7%	6%	9%	4%	4%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	0%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	9%	11%	11%	22%	10%

	<i>Total</i>	<\$60,000	\$60,001 – \$100,000	> \$100,000
Strongly agree	38%	44%	35%	35%
Agree	43%	36%	48%	46%
Disagree	6%	5%	6%	8%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	13%	9%	9%

	<i>Total</i>	Yes (currently care for someone under 18)	No (currently care for someone under 18)
Strongly agree	38%	48%	33%
Agree	43%	40%	45%
Disagree	6%	4%	8%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	11%	7%	13%

To what extent do you support or oppose the Federal Government regularly measuring and reporting on poverty rates in Australia?

	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA
Strongly support	36%	34%	37%	36%	38%	34%	35%
Support	48%	49%	46%	50%	46%	44%	54%
Oppose	3%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Strongly oppose	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	11%	15%	11%	12%	17%	9%

	<i>Total</i>	Labor	Coalition	Greens	One Nation	Other
Strongly support	36%	40%	31%	45%	36%	29%
Support	48%	49%	53%	43%	30%	44%
Oppose	3%	3%	3%	1%	9%	2%
Strongly oppose	1%	0%	1%	1%	6%	1%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	8%	12%	11%	19%	25%

	<i>Total</i>	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Strongly support	36%	31%	37%	34%	33%	40%
Support	48%	52%	49%	46%	53%	42%
Oppose	3%	2%	5%	3%	2%	3%
Strongly oppose	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	13%	9%	16%	10%	15%

	<i>Total</i>	Bachelor or above (university qualification)	Diploma (TAFE, college, university) Certificate III/IV	Higher School Certificate /Year 12	School Certificate /Year 10	Some high school /primary school
Strongly support	36%	37%	37%	33%	36%	30%
Support	48%	49%	48%	46%	40%	50%
Oppose	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%	0%
Strongly oppose	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	11%	12%	14%	23%	17%

	<i>Total</i>	<\$60,000	\$60,001 – \$100,000	> \$100,000
Strongly support	36%	39%	35%	34%
Support	48%	42%	51%	51%
Oppose	3%	3%	3%	3%
Strongly oppose	1%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	16%	10%	10%

	<i>Total</i>	Yes (currently care for someone under 18)	No (currently care for someone under 18)
Strongly support	36%	37%	35%
Support	48%	50%	47%
Oppose	3%	3%	3%
Strongly oppose	1%	1%	1%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	9%	15%