

Polling - Support for PALM portability

August 2026

AUSTRALIANS SUPPORT RIGHT TO CHANGE EMPLOYER

Polling conducted by the Australia Institute shows that there is strong support among the Australian public for the right of PALM visa holders to change employers in a range of circumstances. This includes if they are paid less than they are owed; if they are not provided with enough working hours; and if there are problems with their accommodation. Most Australians (66%) also support giving PALM visa holders access to Medicare while they are working in Australia.

The poll of 2230 Australians was conducted in June 2026. It provides a representative sample of public opinion in Australia and is compliant with the requirements of the Australian Polling Council. Full details of the methodology are provided in the methodology statement,¹ and a comprehensive breakdown of results can be found in the Appendix to this brief.

Respondents were first shown this introductory statement:

Australia has a visa – called the PALM visa – that allows people from Pacific Island countries (Fiji, Vanuatu, etc.) to work in Australia on a temporary basis. They mostly work in agriculture and meat processing, but some work in aged care and hospitality. People on PALM visas are not allowed to change jobs without permission from their employer.

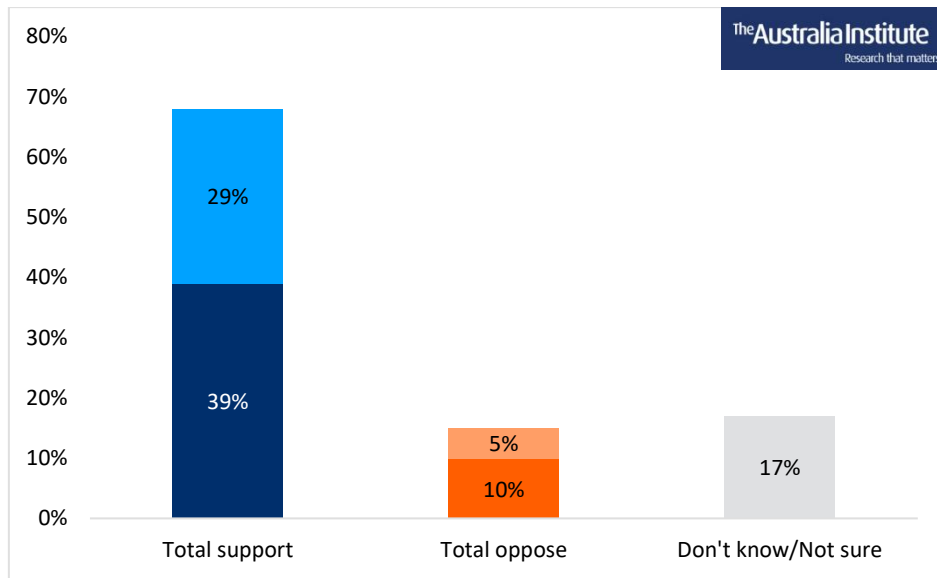
They were then asked the following four questions.

¹ <https://australiainstitute.org.au/australian-polling-council-long-methodology-disclosure-statements/>

1. Underpayment

To what extent do you support or oppose the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer without permission if they are paid less money than they are owed.

Figure 1: Paid less money than they are owed

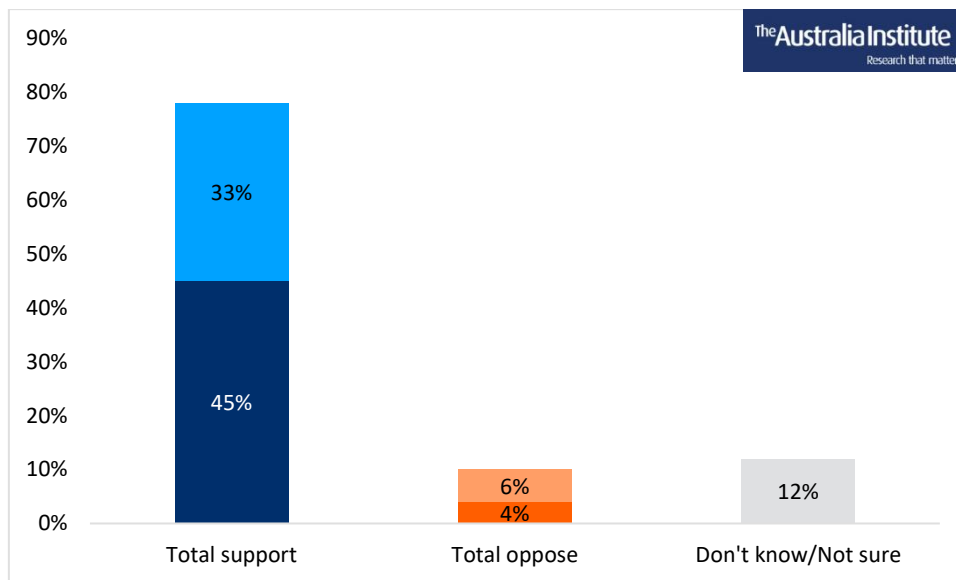


Almost seven in ten (68%) Australians either support (39%) or strongly support (29%) PALM visa holders having the right to change employer without permission if they are paid less money than they are owed, while less than two in ten (15%) Australians oppose or strongly oppose.

2. Underemployment

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer if they are not provided with enough working hours to earn a reasonable income.²

Figure 2: Not provided with enough working hours



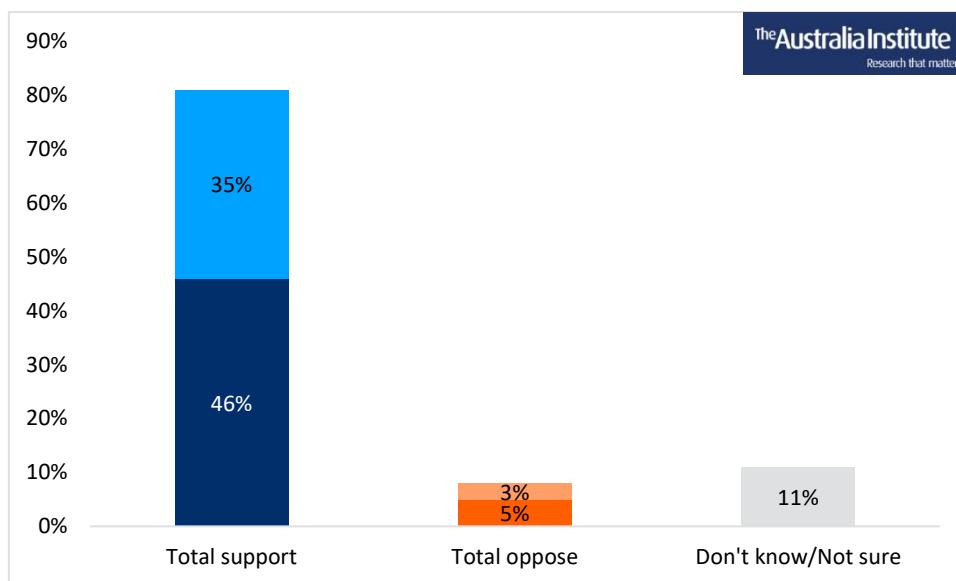
Nearly four in five Australians (78%) either support or strongly support PALM visa holders having the right to change employer if they are not provided with enough working hours to earn a reasonable income, while only one in ten (10%) oppose or strongly oppose.

² For questions 2, 3 and 4, there was an inconsistency in language between questions 2, 3, and 4 (which asked “To what extent do you agree or disagree”) and response options (which ranged from “Strongly support” to “Strongly oppose”). Language used in response options is reflected in the report text.

3. Accommodation

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer when there is a problem with the accommodation provided to them by their employer (for example, they are being charged too much rent, the accommodation is overcrowded, or living conditions are not up to standard).

Figure 3: Problem with accommodation

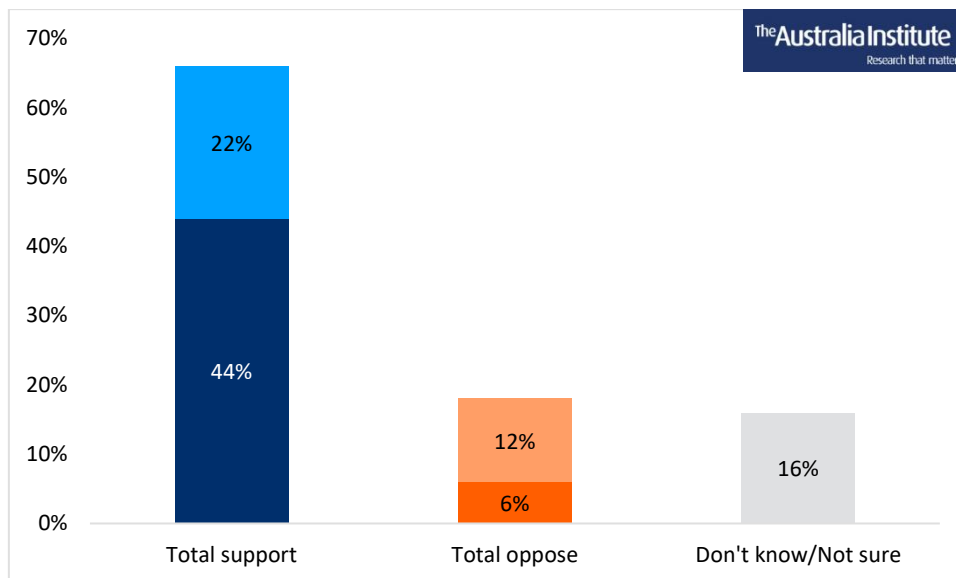


Four in five (81%) Australians either support (35%) or strongly support (46%) PALM visa holders having the right to change employer when there is a problem with the accommodation provided to them by their employer. Less than one in ten (8%) Australians oppose or strongly oppose PALM visa holders having that right, and one in ten (11%) don't know or aren't sure.

4. Medicare

PALM visa holders pay tax in Australia. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have access to Medicare while they are working in Australia.

Figure 4: Access to Medicare



Two in three Australians (66%) support or strongly support PALM visa holders having access to Medicare while they are working in Australia, while less than one in five (18%) oppose or strongly oppose.

CONCLUSION

These polling results show that most Australians support the right of PALM visa holders to change employer when they are underpaid, underemployed, or have a problem with their employer-provided accommodation. Given that these are conditions that PALM visa holders are too often subjected to, it is evidence that the public would support amending the PALM scheme to facilitate worker portability. The results also show that most Australians support PALM visa holders having access to Medicare while working in Australia.

APPENDIX - DETAILED RESULTS

FINAL RESULTS

When interpreting this document, please consider the following items:

- *For small sample (n<50) – interpret with caution*
- *All figures have been weighted to be representative of Australians eligible to vote*
- *The figures are based on a combination of quotas and weights and are representative of all Australians eligible to vote by age, gender, region, education, household income and past vote.*
- *Non-binary gender weighting is equal to its composition within the sample (n=7) - not present in the gender breakdown due to low sample size*
- *All results are based on percentages and have been rounded to 0 decimal places*
- *Each question will contain banners for:*
 - *Total level results*
 - *Gender*
 - *Age Group*
 - *State*
 - *Future voting intention*
- *For the banner “Future voting intention” all party names have been abbreviated as follows:*
 - *ALP – Labor*
 - *COA – Liberal / National Coalition*
 - *GRE – Greens*
 - *PHON – Pauline Hanson’s One Nation*
 - *IND – Independent*
 - *Other – Other parties*
 - *UND – Undecided*

Methodology:

YouGov conducted a survey of 2230 Australian residents on behalf of The Australia Institute between 5th Jun to 18th Jun 2026, using an online polling methodology. Full details are provided in the methodology statement. The poll is compliant with the Australian Polling Council’s requirements.

URL of Long Methodology statement: <https://australiainstitute.org.au/australian-polling-council-long-methodology-disclosure-statements/>

Column %	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+
Strongly support	29	29	28	45	27	23	28	28
Support	39	40	38	37	47	40	36	38
Oppose	10	11	9	10	9	8	13	10
Strongly oppose	5	6	4	0	6	6	4	6
Don't know / Not sure	17	14	21	8	11	23	19	18
NET Support	68	70	66	82	74	63	64	66
NET Oppose	15	17	13	10	15	14	17	16
Column n	2230	1091	1132	111	327	746	590	456

Table 1. PALM1. Australia has a visa – called the PALM visa – that allows people from Pacific Island countries (Fiji, Vanuatu, etc.) to work in Australia on a temporary basis. They mostly work in agriculture and meat processing, but some work in aged care and hospitality. People on PALM visas are not allowed to change jobs without permission from their employer. To what extent do you support or oppose the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer without permission if they are paid less money than they are owed:

Column %	Total	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	Other	ALP	COA	GRE	PHON	IND	Other	UND
Strongly support	29	26	30	30	25	27	41	33	18	55	18	32	30	22
Support	39	45	38	38	40	31	29	43	49	34	35	45	27	34
Oppose	10	7	11	11	12	12	9	9	11	2	16	7	10	7
Strongly oppose	5	6	3	5	6	7	3	2	4	1	10	4	13	2
Don't know / Not sure	17	16	18	16	17	23	18	13	18	8	21	12	20	35
NET Support	68	71	67	68	65	58	70	76	67	89	53	77	57	56
NET Oppose	15	14	14	16	18	19	12	11	14	3	26	12	23	9
Column n	2230	670	539	488	241	196	96	701	376	242	559	107	94	151

Table 2. PALM1. Australia has a visa – called the PALM visa – that allows people from Pacific Island countries (Fiji, Vanuatu, etc.) to work in Australia on a temporary basis. They mostly work in agriculture and meat processing, but some work in aged care and hospitality. People on PALM visas are not allowed to change jobs without permission from their employer. To what extent do you support or oppose the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer without permission if they are paid less money than they are owed:

Column %	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+
Strongly support	33	31	35	46	28	31	31	36
Support	45	49	42	39	52	43	48	43
Oppose	6	7	5	8	5	6	5	6
Strongly oppose	4	4	3	1	6	4	2	3
Don't know / Not sure	12	9	15	6	9	16	14	12
NET Support	79	80	77	86	80	74	80	79
NET Oppose	9	11	8	9	11	11	7	9
Column n	2230	1091	1132	111	327	746	590	456

Table 3. PALM2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer if they are not provided with enough working hours to earn a reasonable income.

Column %	Total	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	Other	ALP	COA	GRE	PHON	IND	Other	UND
Strongly support	33	31	35	37	29	29	34	39	26	60	21	32	38	23
Support	45	49	44	42	50	36	48	47	52	35	47	50	31	43
Oppose	6	5	6	7	8	6	4	6	6	2	9	4	5	4
Strongly oppose	4	4	2	4	3	6	3	1	3	0	6	5	11	3
Don't know / Not sure	12	11	13	10	10	23	11	7	13	3	17	9	15	27
NET Support	79	80	80	80	79	65	82	87	78	95	68	82	70	67
NET Oppose	9	9	7	10	11	12	6	7	9	2	15	9	16	6
Column n	2230	670	539	488	241	196	96	701	376	242	559	107	94	151

Table 4. PALM2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer if they are not provided with enough working hours to earn a reasonable income.

Column %	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+
Strongly support	35	35	36	56	29	29	35	38
Support	46	48	44	36	50	47	48	44
Oppose	5	6	4	5	10	4	4	4
Strongly oppose	3	4	2	2	4	4	1	2
Don't know / Not sure	11	7	14	1	7	16	12	12
NET Support	81	83	80	92	79	76	83	82
NET Oppose	8	10	6	7	13	8	5	6
Column n	2230	1091	1132	111	327	746	590	456

Table 5. PALM3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer when there is a problem with the accommodation provided to them by their employer (for example, they are being charged too much rent, the accommodation is overcrowded, or living conditions are not up to standard).

Column %	Total	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	Other	ALP	COA	GRE	PHON	IND	Other	UND
Strongly support	35	33	37	38	30	33	44	43	28	63	23	32	35	25
Support	46	50	43	45	52	35	41	44	54	31	50	55	45	40
Oppose	5	4	5	5	5	6	3	5	5	1	7	5	4	3
Strongly oppose	3	3	2	3	4	6	3	1	3	1	5	4	6	2
Don't know / Not sure	11	10	13	9	9	20	9	7	10	4	15	4	10	30
NET Support	81	83	80	84	83	68	85	87	82	95	73	87	80	65
NET Oppose	8	7	7	8	9	12	6	6	8	2	12	9	10	5
Column n	2230	670	539	488	241	196	96	701	376	242	559	107	94	151

Table 6. PALM3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have the right to change employer when there is a problem with the accommodation provided to them by their employer (for example, they are being charged too much rent, the accommodation is overcrowded, or living conditions are not up to standard).

Column %	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+
Strongly support	22	23	22	45	24	19	19	19
Support	44	47	40	44	44	40	43	47
Oppose	12	12	12	4	9	14	15	12
Strongly oppose	6	7	6	1	8	8	6	5
Don't know / Not sure	16	11	20	6	15	19	17	17
NET Support	66	70	63	89	68	59	62	66
NET Oppose	18	19	17	6	17	23	21	17
Column n	2230	1091	1132	111	327	746	590	456

Table 7. PALM4. PALM visa holders pay tax in Australia. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have access to Medicare while they are working in Australia.

Column %	Total	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	Other	ALP	COA	GRE	PHON	IND	Other	UND
Strongly support	22	24	23	22	19	17	28	30	15	50	12	19	16	13
Support	44	46	42	43	46	41	39	50	40	37	41	62	41	37
Oppose	12	12	13	10	15	13	7	9	16	4	20	3	6	10
Strongly oppose	6	5	4	9	5	10	11	1	9	1	11	7	12	5
Don't know / Not sure	16	13	18	16	15	19	15	10	20	8	16	9	25	35
NET Support	66	70	65	65	65	59	67	79	55	87	53	80	56	50
NET Oppose	18	17	17	19	20	23	18	11	25	5	31	10	19	15
Column n	2230	670	539	488	241	196	96	701	376	242	559	107	94	151

Table 8. PALM4. PALM visa holders pay tax in Australia. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: PALM visa holders should have access to Medicare while they are working in Australia.