

First 2015 Federal Polls Show Mixed Picture

Written by The Conversation

The first Federal polls of the new year have been published, and Morgan shows a reduction in Labor's lead from December, while Essential shows an increase. We will need to wait for more polls to ascertain what is happening. If the Coalition vote has improved, it would probably be due to the recent focus on terrorism.

[Morgan](#) had Labor's lead narrowing to 53-47 on previous election preferences, a 3.5% gain for the Coalition since mid-December. Primary votes were 38.5% for the Coalition (up 3.5), 38.5% for Labor (down 2.5) and 9.5% for the Greens (down 2). Respondent allocated preferences had Labor ahead by 54.5-45.5, a 3% gain for the Coalition on this measure. This poll was conducted on the weekends of 3-4 & 10-11 January from a sample of 2600. Relative to other pollsters, Morgan leans to Labor by about 1.5%.

A [Morgan phone poll](#), conducted on Monday and Tuesday nights from a sample of only 525, has Malcolm Turnbull leading as preferred Coalition leader with 36%, followed by Julie Bishop at 26% and Abbott at 14%. with no one else above 5%. Among Coalition voters, Abbott leads with 30%, followed by Bishop at 28% and Turnbull at 26%.

[Essential](#) had Labor increasing its lead to 54-46, a 2% gain for Labor since mid-December. Primary votes were 40% for Labor (up 2), 38% for the Coalition (down 2) and 10% for the Greens (steady). Abbott's approval rose 5 points to 37% and his disapproval fell 2 points to 53%, for a net approval of -16, up from -23 in December. Shorten also had a jump in net approval, up to +6 from -4; clearly, both leaders have benefited from not being headline news during the holidays. 81% thought those required to work outside normal hours should receive penalty rates, with only 13% disagreeing. By a 68-23 margin, voters opposed cutting penalty rates for retail and hospitality workers, and 63% said the result of such a cut would be to improve business profits, with only 18% thinking that business would employ more people. This survey was conducted on the 9-12 January from a sample of 1000. Essential is regarded as being very slow to catch trends that other pollsters detect earlier.

Queensland ReachTEL Ashgrove Poll has Newman Trailing 53-47

Nominations for the Queensland election on the 31 January closed yesterday, and candidate lists have now been published. There are a total of [433 candidates](#) for the 89 seats, an increase of three on 2012. Labor, the Liberal National Party (LNP) and the Greens will contest all seats, and Palmer United Party (PUP) will contest 50 seats.

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Premier Campbell Newman holds Ashgrove by 5.7%, and he [could easily lose](#) it even if the LNP retains government. There are five [candidates in Ashgrove](#) : two Independents, Newman, the Greens' Robert Hogg and Labor's Kate Jones, the member until the 2012 election.

A [ReachTEL poll](#) for 7 News was conducted last night with the candidates known from a sample of 850. The primary votes are 47.6% for Labor's Kate Jones (down 0.3% since early December), 43.7% for Newman (up 3.0%), 5.4% for the Greens (down 0.3%) and a combined 3.3% for the two Independents. After preferences, Jones leads Newman 53-47, a 2% gain for Newman. Newman appears to have benefited from PUP's absence, but Labor and Greens support has barely moved, and it is difficult to see Newman closing this gap with only 2.5 weeks to go.

Greek Election May Create Financial Turmoil

In Greece, [snap elections](#) have been called for the 25 January after the government failed to achieve the 3/5 parliamentary majority needed to confirm its nominee for President. The current Greek government is a coalition of the centre-right New Democrats and centre-left PASOK. The main opposition is the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA). If SYRIZA wins, they will water down austerity measures, possibly leading to the Greek debt increasing again, and eventually a Greek exit from the European Union.

Under the Greek electoral system, 250 of the 300 parliamentary seats are apportioned via proportional representation with a minimum vote of 3% required to win any seats. The remaining 50 seats are awarded to the party that wins a plurality of the overall vote. A plurality is winning more votes than any other party.

[Polling for the Greek election](#) has SYRIZA in about the mid-30's, and New Democrat in the low 30's, with SYRIZA's lead at 2-5% in all polls. This lead is small, but it appears stable, and SYRIZA is likely to win a plurality of the vote, and thus the 50-seat bonus. Other parties that are likely to win representation by clearing the 3% threshold are the pro-European Potami, the [fascist Golden Dawn](#), the Communists and PASOK.

PASOK was the major centre-left Greek political party, and its fall has been dramatic. At the [2](#)

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[009 election](#)

, PASOK won majority government with almost 44% of the vote, but their vote collapsed to 12.3% at the

[June 2012 election](#)

, and current polling has PASOK with only 4-6%. This disastrous fall can be attributed to blame for the financial crisis, and the formation of a coalition with the centre-right New Democrats would not have helped either.

Personal Note

I will be on holiday from the 19 to 23 January inclusive. If there are major Federal or Queensland polls while I am away, I will report on them when I return.

Adrian Beaumont does not work for, consult to, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has no relevant affiliations.

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