

A [NSW ReachTEL poll for Fairfax media](#), conducted 5 October from a sample of 1650, gave the Coalition a 52-48 lead by preference flows at the 2015 election, a 3 point gain for Labor since a [Channel 7 ReachTEL poll](#), conducted just after Mike Baird's resignation as Premier in January. With 8.1% undecided excluded, primary votes in this ReachTEL were 40.9% Coalition (down 1.8), 33.7% Labor (up 5.7), 9.9% Greens (up 1.5), 8.9% One Nation (down 7.4) and 2.4% Shooters, Fishers and Farmers. NSW uses optional preferential voting.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian held a 52.1-47.9 lead over opposition leader Luke Foley in ReachTEL's forced choice better Premier question, which tends to favour opposition leaders over polls that have an undecided option.

The January poll was taken when One Nation was at its peak, both nationally and in state polls, and that poll had One Nation at a record for any NSW poll. As One Nation's right-wing economic views have become better known, it appears that much of their working-class support has returned to Labor.

In Queensland, One Nation's [support in a recent ReachTEL was 18.1%](#) including undecided voters. Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk's support for the Adani coal mine does not distinguish Labor from the LNP. If the two major parties are seen as similar, anti-establishment parties can thrive.

At the recent NZ and UK elections, the total major party vote increased substantially. I believe this increase occurred at least partly because the major NZ and UK parties had very different policies, and anti-establishment parties were denied the "this mob is the same as the other mob" line. In contrast, the major parties were in coalition before the German election, and both slumped badly, with the far-right AfD winning 12.6%.

## NSW state by-elections: Nats hold seats despite big swings against

Yesterday, [by-elections occurred](#) in the NSW National-held seats of Murray and Cootamundra, and in Labor-held Blacktown; all three seats were easily won by the incumbent party at the 2015 election. The Liberals did not contest Blacktown.

In Murray, Shooters candidate Helen Dalton stood as an Independent at the 2015 state election. The [Nationals won by 53.5-46.5](#), a 19.2 point swing to Dalton since 2015. Primary votes were 40.5% Nationals (down 15.0), 31.4% Dalton (up 13.2) and 21.0% Labor (up 4.8).

In [Cootamundra, the Nationals](#) won by 60.1-39.9 vs Labor, a 10.3 point swing to Labor. Primary votes were 46.0% Nationals (down 19.9), 24.2% Labor (down 1.8) and 23.5% Shooters, who did not stand in 2015.

With no [Liberal in Blacktown](#), Labor romped to 68.9% of the primary vote (up 15.0). The Christian Democrats were a distant second with 17.7% and the Greens won 8.8%.

These results do not yet include postal votes, which are likely to favour the Nationals. Further pre-poll votes in Murray and Cootamundra also remain to be counted.

### **Galaxy poll in SA seat of Hartley: Xenophon leads Liberals 53-47, but ReachTEL has a 50-50 tie**

Nick Xenophon has announced he will leave the Senate after the High Court's ruling on whether current members are eligible has been delivered. Xenophon will contest the SA state Liberal-held seat of Hartley at the March 2018 election. A [Galaxy robopoll in Hartley](#), from a sample of 516, had Xenophon leading the Liberals by 53-47, from primary votes of 38% Liberal, 35% Xenophon, 17% Labor, 6% Greens and 3% Conservatives.

However, a ReachTEL poll for Channel 7 had a 50-50 tie, from primary votes of 36.7% Liberal, 21.7% Xenophon and 19.7% Labor. The primary votes probably include an undecided component of a little under 10%; these people can be pushed to say who they lean to. It is likely leaners strongly favoured Xenophon, as the Liberals would lead on the primary votes provided.

The Galaxy poll is encouraging for Xenophon, but the ReachTEL poll is more sobering. Labor will target Xenophon during the campaign over votes he has taken in the Senate that have helped the Coalition pass its legislation. Currently, only those who follow politics closely are aware of these votes, but Labor's campaign is likely to increase this awareness. Such a campaign could undermine Xenophon's support among centre-left voters.

## Essential state polling: July to September

[Essential has released](#) July to September quarterly polling for all mainland states, by month for the eastern seaboard states. In September, the Coalition led by 51-49 in NSW, unchanged on August. In Victoria, Labor led by 54-46, a 2 point gain for Labor since August. In WA, Labor led by 54-46 for July to September, a 1 point gain for the Coalition.

In Queensland, Labor led by 53-47 in September, a 2 point gain for the LNP since August. Primary votes were 35% Labor, 35% LNP, 13% One Nation and 10% Greens. By splitting One Nation and Others preferences evenly, Essential is likely to be overestimating Labor's two party vote.

In SA, Labor led by an unchanged 52-48 in July to September. Primary votes were 37% Labor, 30% Liberal, 18% Nick Xenophon Team and 6% Greens. If these hard-to-believe primary votes are correct, Labor is far further ahead than 52-48. The [NXT won 21.3% in SA](#) at the 2016 Federal election.

Essential's state polling was not good at any of the Victorian 2014, Queensland 2015 or NSW 2015 state elections.

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**Read more** <http://theconversation.com/nsw-reachtel-coalition-leads-52-48-as-one-nation-slumps-xenophon-tied-or-ahead-in-sas-hartley-85525>