



LOWY INSTITUTE
Poll 2024

20TH EDITION

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**UNDERSTANDING
AUSTRALIAN
ATTITUDES
TO THE WORLD**

Preface

This is the twentieth edition of the annual Lowy Institute Poll.

When the Institute first published this survey in 2005, our ambition was twofold: to help understand how Australians see the world; and to give Australians an opportunity to have their say on Australia's foreign policy.

The results of that first Lowy Institute Poll reflected a very different world from the one we live in today.

Then, there was a sense of optimism about China's rise. In the aftermath of 9/11 and the Iraq invasion, Australians were equally worried by Islamist fundamentalism and US foreign policies. Most Australians felt safe, however, and while they were conscious of global threats, these largely appeared distant.

Over the past two decades, the world has changed, and Australian attitudes along with it.

In 2024, the Australia–China relationship has stabilised somewhat following several difficult years, but it has not rebounded. Australians' trust towards China, while improving slightly, remains strikingly low. Threat perceptions remain high: seven in ten Australians consider it likely that China will pose a military threat to Australia in the future.

If Australians could vote in the US election, two-thirds would choose Joe Biden, and three in ten would choose Donald Trump. The great majority of Australians see the US alliance as important to Australia's security — which is one of the most consistent results over two decades of Lowy Institute polling. Nearly two-thirds support Australia's acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines. But looking to the future, many also fear the alliance could draw Australia into war.

Japan is held in high regard across a range of indicators, a reflection of shared values, interests, and strategic outlook. Australians are more reserved towards India and Indonesia, although their weight in global affairs continues to grow.

Cyberattacks are seen as the leading threat to Australia's interests for the second year in a row, while just over half of Australians see more risk than opportunity in the rapid proliferation of artificial intelligence.

Potential war over Taiwan or in the South China Sea looms larger in Australians' minds than the distant conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East. Support for Australian government assistance to Ukraine remains high, however, and three-quarters of Australians are in favour of reopening Australia's embassy in Kyiv.

Climate change remains a clear and pressing concern for the majority of Australians. But with cost-of-living pressures rising, more Australians now prioritise 'reducing household energy bills' than 'reducing carbon emissions'. Attitudes have darkened towards coal, lightened towards nuclear, and remain supportive of renewables.

Advanced economies are engaged in subsidy wars, and protectionism is on the rise. Yet Australians' support for free trade remains higher than ever. At the same time, they are overwhelmingly in favour of subsidising renewable energy technologies.

Overall, more Australians say the Albanese government is doing a good job on foreign policy than those who say it is not.

Australia cannot afford to be a bystander in a rapidly changing world. Australia is a significant country, with regional and global interests. Australia must be a participant.

Two decades after it began, the Lowy Institute Poll remains the definitive guide to Australian attitudes to the world. I am proud that the Poll continues to serve the democratic function for which it was created.

Dr Michael Fullilove AM
Executive Director
June 2024

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Executive summary

Global powers and world leaders

Few Australians (17%) say they trust China ‘somewhat’ or ‘a great deal’ to act responsibly in the world, representing a small increase over the last two years, but a sharp contrast to six years ago, when that figure was 52%. Feelings towards China remain cool: China registers 34° on the feelings thermometer, and only 12% of Australians express any confidence in Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Australians reserve the least trust for Russia (8%) out of a list of eight countries, and only 7% have any confidence in Russian President Vladimir Putin.

By contrast, Australians feel very positive towards Japan, ranking it highest in terms of trust (87%), second highest on confidence in its leader, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (61%), and giving it a very warm 75° on the feelings thermometer. For the third year in a row, Japan topped a list of six countries as ‘Australia’s best friend in Asia’.

Levels of trust towards the United States dropped five points to 56%, and confidence in US President Joe Biden fell by 13 points to 46%, a low point for him on this measure. Confidence in Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also fell by 12 points to 60%.

Trust in India (56%) and Indonesia (52%) remained moderate, while confidence in their leaders Narendra Modi (37%) and Joko Widodo (33%) remained low.

China

Notwithstanding low trust in China, the Australian public is roughly divided on the state of the bilateral relationship, with 53% saying the relationship is ‘very’ or ‘quite’ bad, and 44% saying that it is ‘very’ or ‘quite’ good. Half (51%) say Australia should place more importance on a stable relationship with China, while 45% say that Australia should place more importance on deterring China.

A slim majority of Australians (53%) see China as more of a security threat than an economic partner, while 44% see it as more of an economic partner than a security threat. These results have held steady from 2023, but are roughly inverse to attitudes in 2020, when 55% of Australians saw China more as an economic partner, and 41% as more a security threat. Looking to the future, a strong majority of Australians (71%) continue to think it ‘somewhat likely’ or ‘very likely’ that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years.

United States

In the lead-up to the 2024 presidential election, two-thirds of Australians (68%) would prefer to see Joe Biden re-elected, while one in three (29%) prefer Donald Trump. Strong support for Australia’s alliance with the United States has been a mainstay over two decades of Lowy Institute polling. This year, the vast majority of Australians (83%) continue to say the alliance is ‘very important’ or ‘fairly important’ to Australia’s security.

Nevertheless, attitudes towards the United States are complex: while more than six in ten (63%) say the alliance makes Australia safer from attack or pressure from China, when they look to the future, 75% also believe the alliance makes it more likely Australia will be drawn into a war in Asia.

India

Four in ten Australians (42%) say ‘trade and investment’ should be the highest priority in the relationship with India. One-third (32%) say ‘human rights in India’ should be the top bilateral priority, while only two in ten (20%) give ‘defence and regional security cooperation’ top billing.

Pacific Islands

One-third of Australians (34%) perceive China to be the most influential player in the Pacific Islands region, slightly more than those who say Australia (31%) has the most influence. Only one-quarter (25%) nominate the United States as most influential.

On movement of people within the region, two-thirds of Australians (67%) say they would support relaxing visa requirements for citizens of Pacific Islands countries to live, work, and study in Australia.

Safety and threats

In 2024, six in ten Australians (62%) say they feel either ‘safe’ or ‘very safe’. This remains steady from last year, but 30 points below the high watermark of 2010 (92%).

‘Cyberattacks from other countries’ remains at the top of a list of possible threats, with seven in ten Australians (70%) identifying it as a ‘critical threat’ to Australia’s interests in the next ten years. Potential conflicts over Taiwan (59%) and the South China Sea (57%) loom larger as threats than the more distant conflicts in Ukraine (46%) or the Middle East (41%). Concern about the impact of ‘political instability in the United States’ on Australia rose by nine points to 41%, but along with ‘conflict in the Middle East’, was the lowest ranked threat on the list.

Security and defence

In the third year of AUKUS, almost two-thirds of Australians (65%) remain either ‘somewhat’ or ‘strongly’ in favour of acquiring nuclear-powered submarines. More Australians who lean towards the Liberal–National Coalition (81%) than those who lean towards the Labor Party (69%) are in favour of acquiring nuclear-powered submarines, though this gap has narrowed substantially since last year.

If given a choice to establish closer security relations with one other country (apart from the United States and United Kingdom), 45% of Australians would choose Japan from a list of six. There is a large gap to the next highest preference, India (18%), followed by Indonesia (14%), France (12%), and South Korea (5%). Only 2% of Australians nominated the Philippines.

Australian public support for assisting Ukraine remains high. The vast majority of Australians (86%) continue to support 'keeping strict sanctions on Russia'. Eight in ten (80%) support 'admitting Ukrainian refugees into Australia'. Three-quarters support re-opening Australia's embassy in Kyiv (76%) and 'providing military aid to Ukraine' (74%).

Economy and trade

A majority of Australians (58%) say they are either 'optimistic' or 'very optimistic' about Australia's economic performance in the next five years. While a slight drop from 2023, this is the second-lowest level of economic optimism in the past two decades. Optimism fell more sharply in younger age groups.

A high proportion of Australians continue to support free trade, with, for example, eight in ten saying it is good for their standard of living. In relation to artificial intelligence (AI), on balance, a slightly larger number of Australians say the potential risks of AI outweigh the potential benefits (52%) compared to those who say the benefits outweigh the risks (45%).

Climate change

In 2024, a majority of Australians (57%) say global warming is a pressing problem about which 'we should begin taking steps now, even if this involves significant costs'. Three in ten (30%) say global warming should be dealt with gradually by 'taking steps that are low in cost'. Only 12% say we should not take any steps involving costs 'until we are sure that global warming is really a problem'.

Australians express slim to strong majority support for a range of potential federal government climate policies, though in some cases, support has softened. The vast majority of Australians (87%) say they would support the government 'providing subsidies for the development of renewable energy technologies'. Seven in ten support committing to 'a more ambitious national emissions reduction target' (72%) and Australia hosting a UN climate conference (70%), both down five points from 2022. A majority of Australians (63%) are also in favour of 'providing financial support to help developing countries in our region manage the impacts of climate change'.

A majority continue to support reducing coal exports to other countries (60%) and banning new coal mines (59%), both small drops on 2022 results, but a decisive swing away from more positive public sentiment towards coal less than a decade ago. Majority support (58%) remains for 'increasing the use of gas for Australia's energy generation', level with 2022. Support for introducing an emissions trading scheme dropped nine points from 2022 to 55% this year.

Energy policy

Almost half of Australians (48%) now say that 'reducing household energy bills' should be the main priority for the government's energy policy, a sharp 16-point rise from a similar question in 2021. The number of Australians who say that 'reducing carbon emissions' should be the main priority has fallen 18 points to 37%.

On renewable energy, two-thirds of Australians (66%) think the government's target to generate 82% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030 is either 'about right' (41%) or 'not ambitious enough' (25%). One-third (33%) say the renewable energy target is 'too ambitious'.

On nuclear energy, six in ten Australians (61%) say they 'somewhat' or 'strongly' support Australia using nuclear power to generate electricity, while a significant minority (37%) 'somewhat' or 'strongly' oppose it.

Democracy

A large majority of Australians (72%) see democracy as preferable to any other kind of government. Younger Australians are less likely than older Australians to say democracy is preferable, a gap that has widened slightly since 2022.

Immigration

Almost half the population (48%) say the total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is 'too high', while the other half (50%) either think immigration levels are 'about right' (40%) or 'too low' (10%). Results are steady from pre-pandemic levels.

However, Australians are overwhelmingly positive about Australia's cultural diversity. Nine in ten (90%) think Australia's culturally diverse population has been either 'mostly positive' or 'entirely positive' for Australia.

Australian government performance

On the government's overall foreign policy performance, a slim majority of Australians (56%) say the current Labor government is doing a good job, 15 points more than those who say it is doing a poor job (41%).

Australians give the government its highest mark out of ten for 'maintaining a strong alliance with the United States' (6.6 out of 10). Australians are moderately positive about the government's management of relations with the Pacific Islands (5.8) and Southeast Asia (5.7). They mark the government hardest on 'responding to the Israel-Hamas war' (4.2), 'managing Australia's approach to climate change' (4.8), and 'promoting and defending human rights internationally' (4.9).

The 2024 Lowy Institute Poll reports the results of a nationally representative survey conducted by the Social Research Centre (SRC) between 4 and 7 March 2024, with a sample size of 2028 adults across Australia. See Methodology (page 32) for full details.

Explore the data at poll.lowyinstitute.org

Global powers and world leaders

On a list of eight countries, only Russia (8%) elicits less trust from Australians, a ranking it has held since its invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Trust in global powers

Despite political re-engagement between Australia and China over the past two years, public sentiment towards China remains very low. Only 17% of Australians say they trust China 'somewhat' or 'a great deal' to act responsibly in the world. This is steady from 2023 and a minor increase on 2022, when trust in China reached a record low (12%). However, it still stands in sharp contrast to just six years ago, when half (52%) of Australians trusted China.

For the fourth year in a row, Australians ranked Japan as the most trusted foreign country on the list (87%). France (81%) and the United Kingdom (80%) were the next most trusted countries, remaining in the top three.

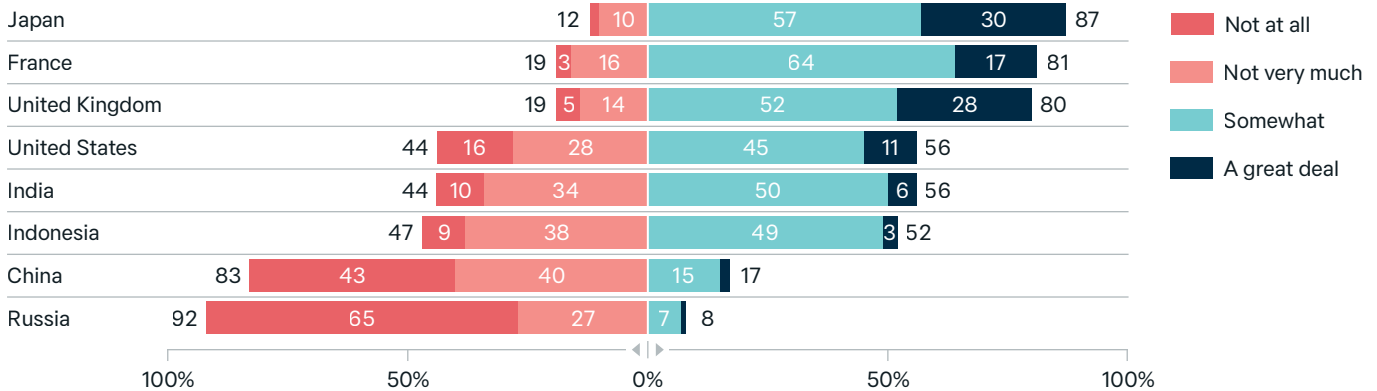
In the lead-up to the 2024 US presidential election, levels of trust in the United States dropped a further five points from 2023 to 56%, continuing a decline that now puts it at nine points below 2022 (65%), in the second year of the Biden presidency.

India (56%) and Indonesia (52%) remain largely steady in the middle of the group.

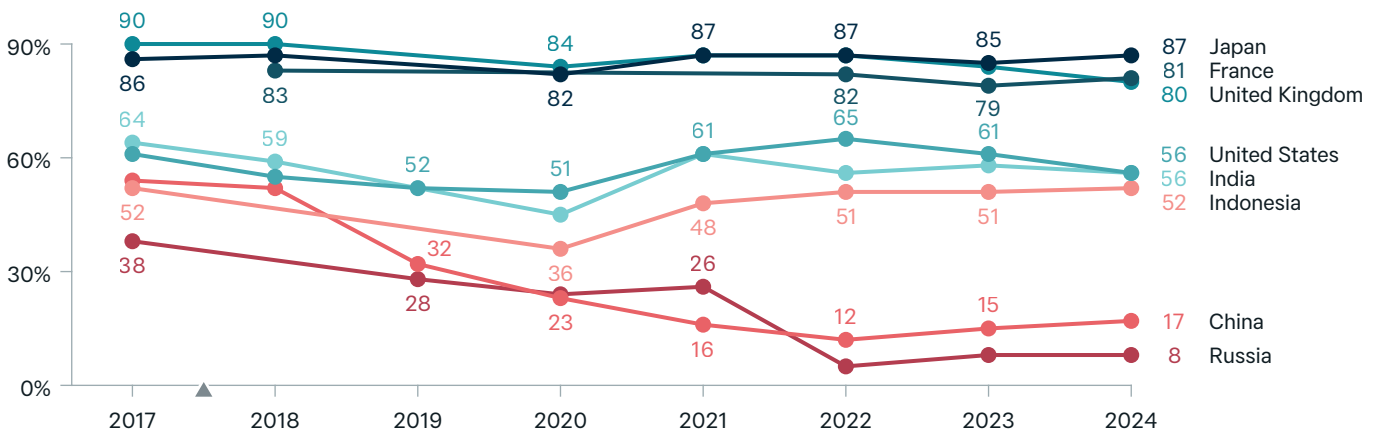
FIGURE 1

Trust in global powers

How much do you trust the following countries to act responsibly in the world?



Total who trust 'a great deal' and 'somewhat', 2017-2024



▲ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

Confidence in world leaders

Low levels of trust in China align with a lack of confidence in President Xi Jinping. Only 12% of Australians say they have ‘some’ or ‘a lot’ of confidence in President Xi ‘to do the right thing regarding world affairs’, steady from last year.

Australians continue to hold the least confidence in North Korean leader Kim Jong-un (4%), closely followed by Russian President Vladimir Putin (7%), both steady from last year.

By contrast, Australians tend to have more confidence in the leaders of liberal democracies, with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (65%), Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, and French President Emmanuel Macron (both 61%) topping the list of 12 leaders.

However, confidence in the leaders of some democracies dropped markedly. Australians’ confidence in Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy dropped 12 points to 60%, after he

topped the list of leaders last year. Confidence in UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak fell seven points to 56%, aligning with the lowest rating for his predecessor Boris Johnson (55%) in 2020. US President Joe Biden dropped 13 points to 46%, a new low for him on this measure, but still 16 points above Australians’ peak confidence rating for former president Donald Trump (30% in 2020). Confidence in Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi fell by seven points to 37%.

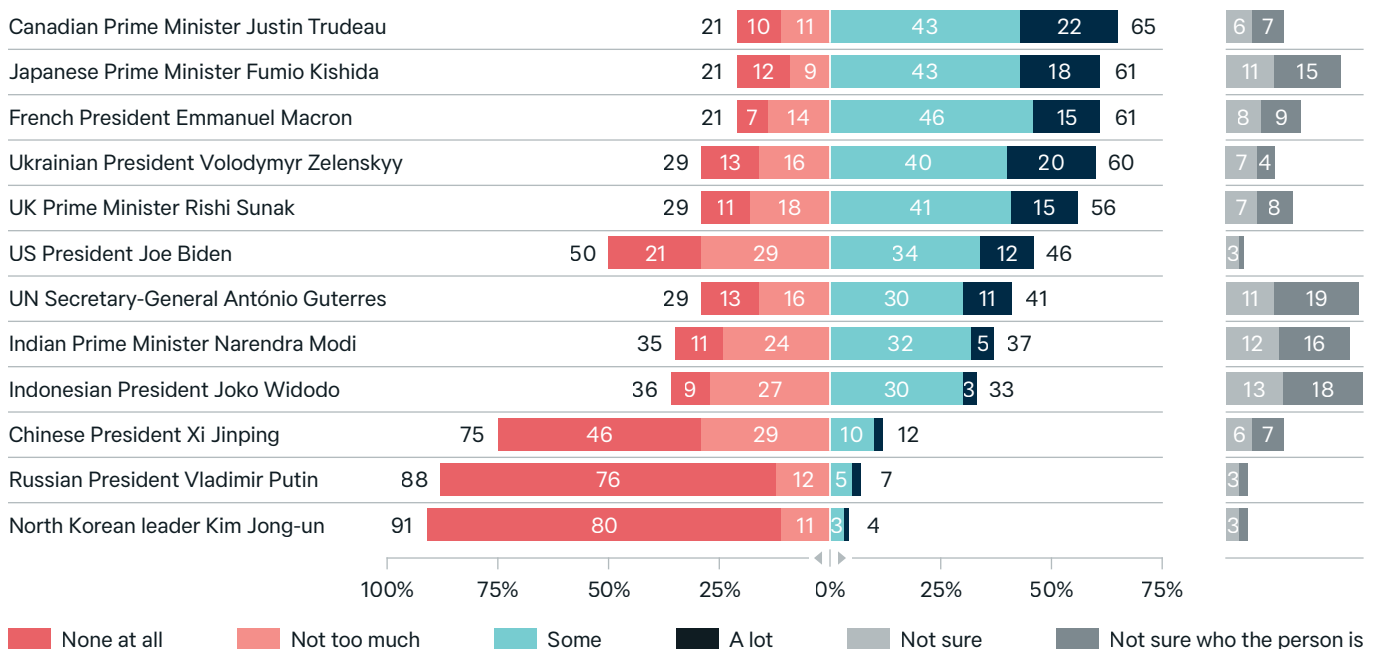
In March, as this Poll went to field, Indonesian President Joko Widodo was nearing the end of his term in office. Despite enjoying record high approval ratings at home, Australians’ confidence in President Widodo has remained consistently low, with only 33% expressing any level of confidence in him this year. A considerable proportion (18%) say they do not know who he is.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, included in this question for the first time, also received a lacklustre 41% confidence rating, with similarly significant numbers (19%) saying they do not know who he is.

FIGURE 2

Confidence in world leaders

Here is a list of political leaders. For each, please indicate how much confidence you have in the leader to do the right thing regarding world affairs — a lot of confidence, some confidence, not too much confidence or no confidence at all.



Feelings thermometer

The ‘feelings thermometer’ measures Australians’ warmth towards other countries and territories on a scale of 0° (coldest feelings) to 100° (warmest feelings), with each score reflecting the mean of responses.

New Zealand has topped the feelings thermometer in every year it has been included, and 2024 is no exception with it registering 84°. Australians also continue to feel very warmly towards Japan (75°) and the United Kingdom (74°), and warmly towards Germany (69°), South Korea, and Taiwan (both at 64°) — all steady on their previous readings.

Southeast Asian and Pacific Islands countries occupied much of the upper-middle band of the thermometer, with Vietnam (63°), the Philippines (61°), Solomon Islands (60°), and Indonesia (56°) all stable on previous years.

While still warm, feelings towards the United States fell four degrees to 59°, its lowest reading in the 20-year history of this Poll, and down from an all-time high of 73° in 2015. Warmth towards Papua New Guinea also fell four degrees to 56°, while India slid four degrees to a lukewarm 54°.

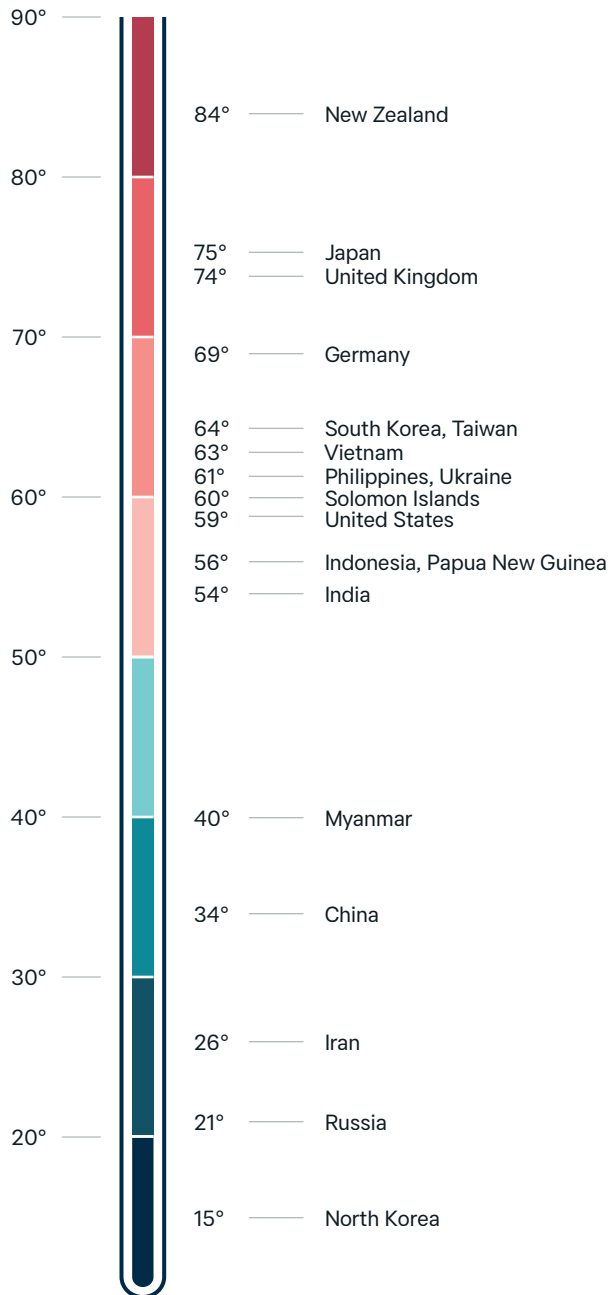
Australians’ feelings towards China (34°) have remained consistently cold for the past four years, following a sharp cooling from 58° in 2018. This echoes the decline in trust in China and drop in confidence in its leader (pages 6–7). Similarly, attitudes towards Russia plummeted following its invasion of Ukraine, and remain at a frosty 21°.

Feelings towards Iran dropped to 26°, eight degrees below its last rating in 2021. Australians reserved their coldest feelings for North Korea, which registered an icy 15°, steady from last year.

FIGURE 3

Feelings thermometer

Please rate your feelings towards some countries and territories, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.



Australia’s best friend in Asia

Japan has held its position as ‘Australia’s best friend in Asia’ for the third year in a row, with 42% of Australians placing it at the top of a list of six countries. Singapore (16%) and Indonesia (15%) were the next most popular choices, largely unchanged on last year.

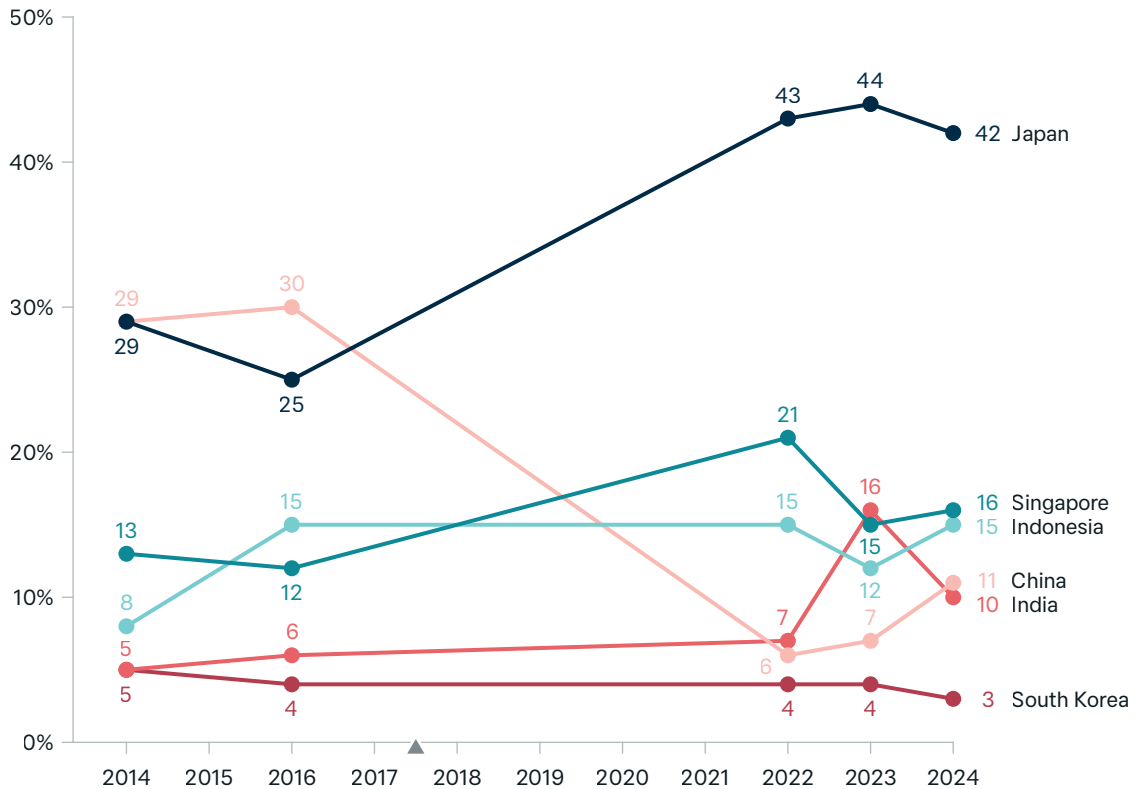
Japan held its position as ‘Australia’s best friend in Asia’ for the third year in a row.

China (11%) gained four points, placing it fourth on the list, while India (10%) dropped six points to fifth place, after a spike in popularity last year. South Korea (3%) again received the least votes on this metric.

FIGURE 4

Australia’s best friend in Asia

Thinking about Australia’s relations in Asia. In your personal opinion, which one of the following countries is Australia’s best friend in Asia?



▲ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

Relations in the Indo-Pacific

China

One of the most dramatic shifts over the 20-year history of the Lowy Institute Poll has been in Australian attitudes towards China. In 2016, China topped the list for ‘Australia’s best friend in Asia’ (page 9). Today, trust in China and confidence in its leader remain at a fraction of previous levels (pages 6–7).

This reflects a turbulent period in Australia–China relations that began around 2016 as Canberra became more forthright regarding its concerns about the Chinese government’s intentions in the region and allegations of interference in Australian politics. China responded by freezing high-level contact from 2020, and later by imposing a range of coercive trade measures against Australia.

The 2022 election of the Albanese Labor government in Australia provided a circuit breaker. Over the past two years, Australia and China have

re-engaged at a political level, with leaders and foreign and trade ministers meeting their counterparts on several occasions. Beijing has progressively lifted trade blockages, and in late 2023 released Australian journalist Cheng Lei from detention. Australian officials cautiously refer to this current phase of the relationship as ‘stabilisation’, while Chinese officials have more optimistically described it as an ‘improvement’.

China: economic partner or security threat?

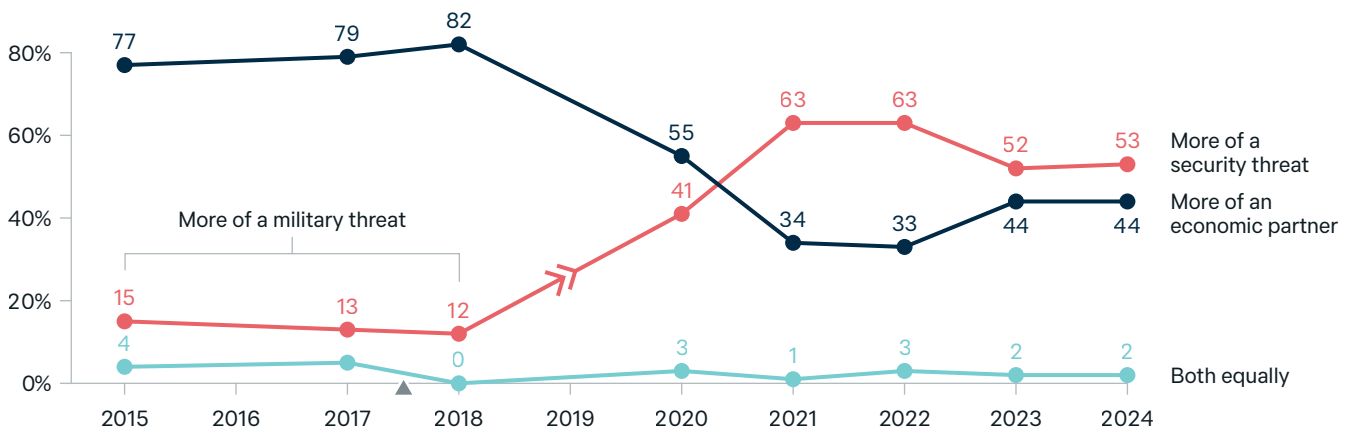
Changing public attitudes towards China are particularly evident on the question of whether Australians see China as more of an economic partner or security threat.

Up until 2020, the most prevalent view was that China was more of an economic partner than it was a military or security¹ threat to Australia. This flipped in 2021, at the nadir of the political relationship and while Beijing’s trade restrictions were in full force. Then, a clear majority (63%) saw China more as a security threat, while only one-third (34%) saw China as more of an economic partner, a trend that held steady in 2022. The following year, as the relationship began to thaw, threat perceptions mellowed, and public opinion moved back towards a more even split between the two views.

FIGURE 5

China: economic partner or security threat

In your own view, is China more of an economic partner or more of a security threat to Australia?¹



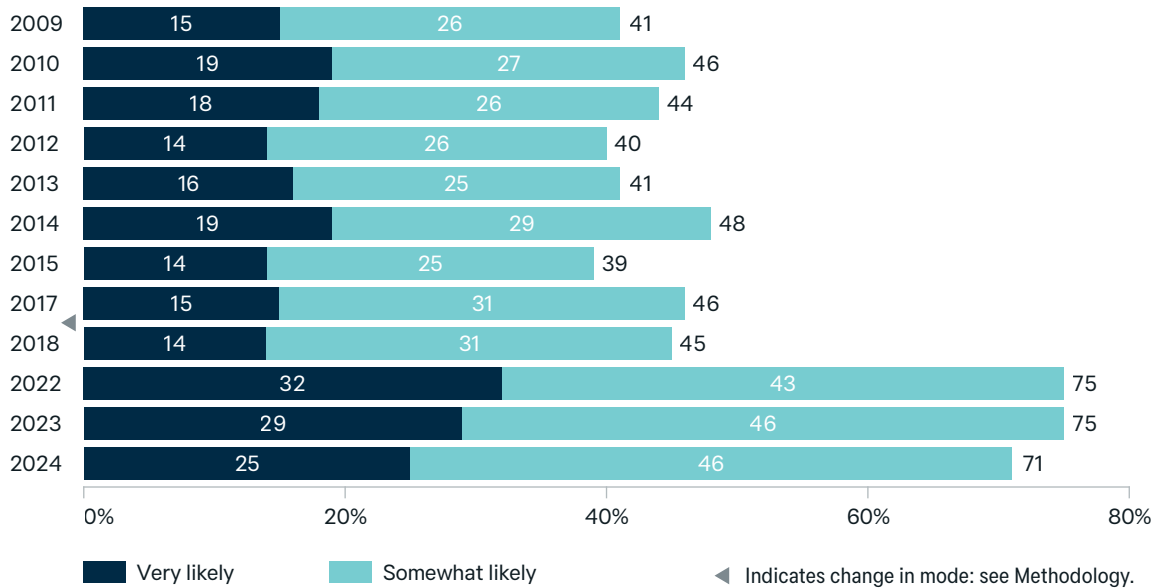
▲ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

¹ In 2015, 2017, and 2018, the question asked if China was ‘more of a military threat’.

FIGURE 6

China as a military threat

Do you think it is likely or unlikely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years?



In 2024, public attitudes appear to have plateaued rather than rebounded to the relative positivity of last decade. Slightly more than half of Australians (53%) now see China as more of a security threat, while 44% see it as more of an economic partner — results that have held steady from 2023.

China as a military threat

When looking to the future, threat perceptions of China are more widespread. A strong majority of Australians (71%) continue to think it ‘somewhat likely’ or ‘very likely’ that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years. While this is a four-point drop from last year, it still stands in marked contrast to 2018, when less than half (45%) perceived China as a future military threat.

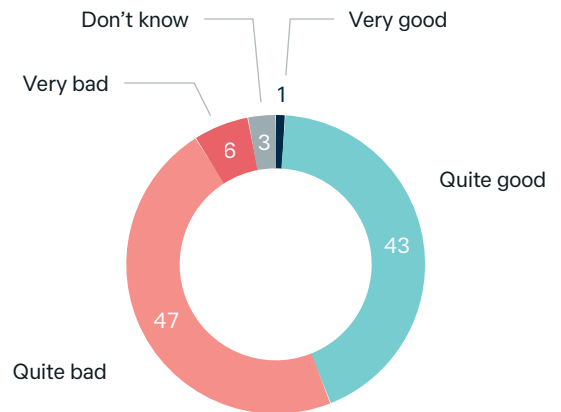
Australia–China relations

The Australian public is divided on the current state of the bilateral relationship, with those who describe it as ‘quite bad’ (47%) slightly outnumbering those who see it as ‘quite good’ (43%). Stronger views are in the small minority — only 6% describe the relationship as ‘very bad’, and almost none (1%) as ‘very good’.

FIGURE 7

Australia–China relations

On balance, how would you describe Australia’s current relationship with China?



China: emphasis on deterrence or stability

In recent years, successive Australian governments have pursued a defence strategy that seeks to deter China from altering the status quo in the Indo-Pacific by using military force. The elevated role of deterrence is evident in the Australia–United Kingdom–United States (AUKUS) partnership, which includes a plan to equip Australia with nuclear-powered submarines (page 19), and was made explicit in the 2024 National Defence Strategy (released after the completion of fieldwork for this Poll), which states “deterrence is now Australia’s primary strategic defence objective”.²

In parallel to its deterrence strategy, the current Australian government has pursued a diplomatic policy of ‘stabilisation’ and reassurance towards China. This involves consistent official messaging on enduring areas of concern, clarity that Australia is seeking peace and stability in the region, and an openness to cooperation in specific areas.

Deterrence and stable engagement are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, the Australian government has underlined its belief that these two tracks can reinforce each other. But so too can they undermine each other — a strong emphasis on deterrence could impact on the stability of the relationship, while a strong emphasis on stability may lessen the appetite to participate in some forms of deterrence.

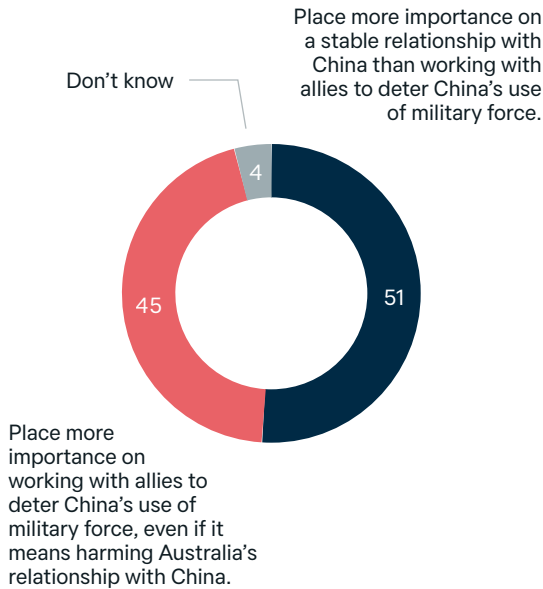
In 2024, half of all Australians (51%) say Australia should place more importance on a stable relationship with China than working with allies to deter China’s use of military force. A slightly lower proportion (45%) say that Australia should place more importance on deterring China’s use of military force, even if it means harming Australia’s relationship with China.

2 2024 National Defence Strategy, Australian Government, Defence, p.22, <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/strategic-planning/2024-national-defence-strategy-2024-integrated-investment-program>.

FIGURE 8

China: emphasis on deterrence or stability

Now thinking about how Australia should manage its relationship with China. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view? Australia should...



United States

US alliance

Despite declining trust in the United States and its president (page 6–7), the Australia–US alliance, known as ANZUS, continues to enjoy widespread support among Australians. In 2024, the vast majority of Australians (83%) say the alliance is ‘very important’ or ‘fairly important’ to Australia’s security, steady from last year, and five points below a record high of 87% in 2022.

Australians’ broad support for the alliance has been one of the most resilient features over two decades of Lowy Institute polling, largely withstanding leadership changes and political swings in the United States. Nevertheless, on average, Australians placed more importance on the alliance during the terms of presidents Obama and Biden than they did during the terms of presidents Bush and Trump.

FIGURE 9

US alliance: importance to Australia's security

Thinking now about the United States. How important is our relationship with the United States for Australia's security?

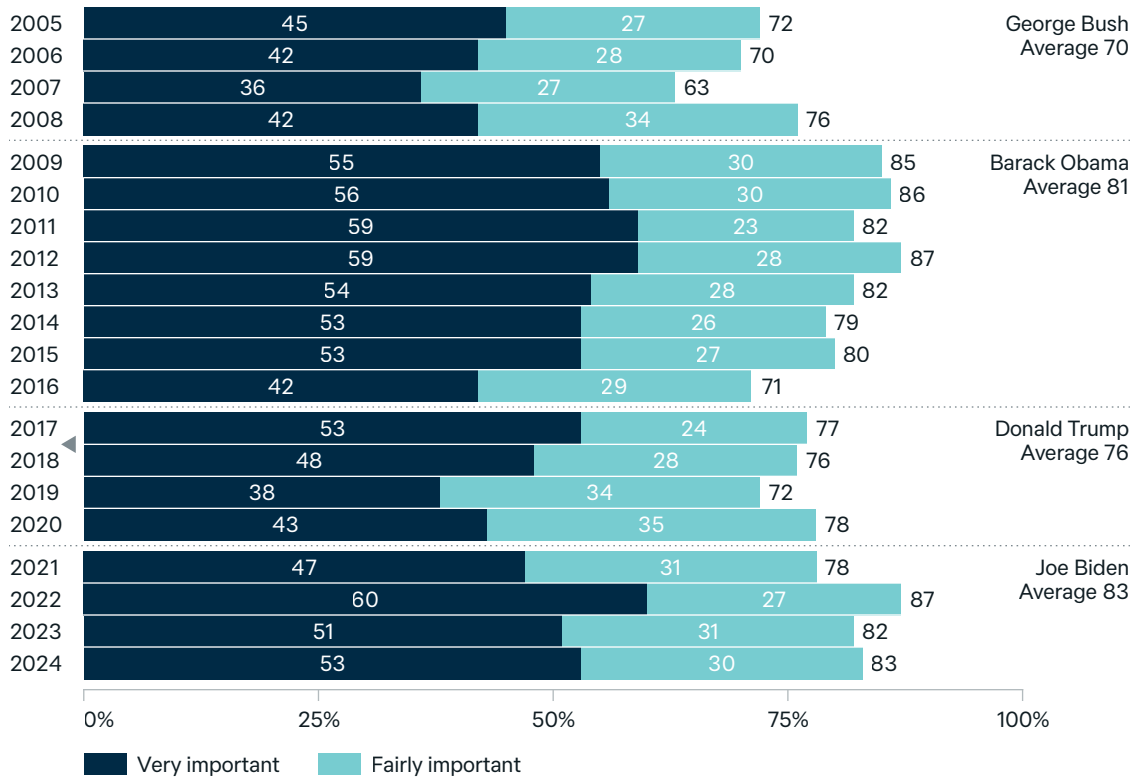
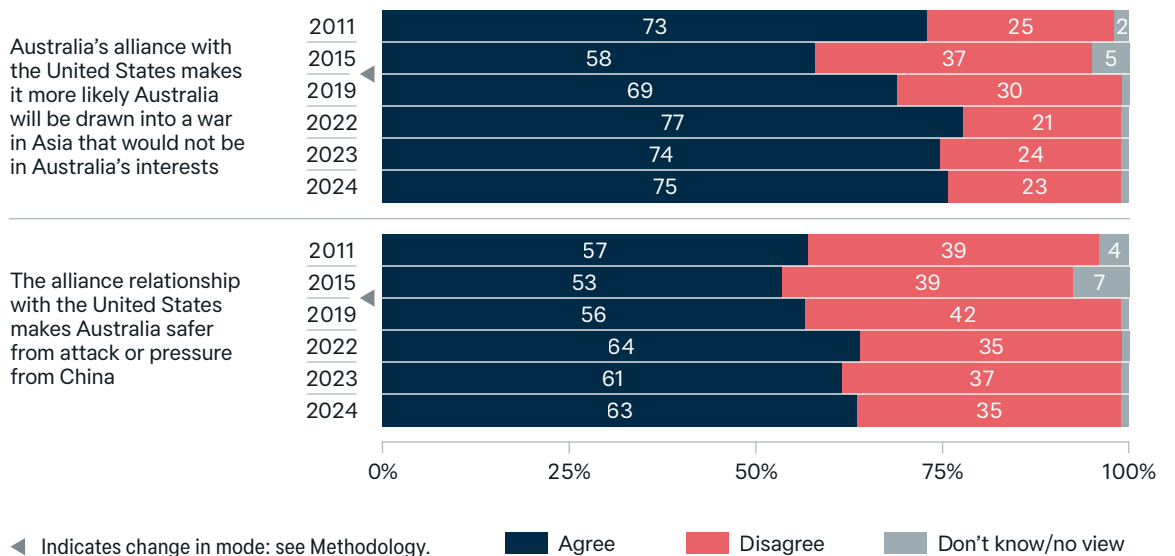


FIGURE 10

US alliance: effect

I am now going to read you some different arguments about the alliance relationship with the United States. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree.



◀ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

Agree Disagree Don't know/no view

Australians' views of the United States and the alliance defy simple characterisation. Although more than six in ten (63%) say that the alliance makes Australia safer from attack or pressure from China, when they look to the future, three-quarters (75%) also believe the alliance makes it more likely Australia will be drawn into a war in Asia.

2024 US presidential election

US President Joe Biden and former president Donald Trump are their parties' presumptive nominees for the 2024 US presidential election. President Biden is the clear favourite for Australians, with two-thirds (68%) preferring to see him elected.

A significant minority of Australians, nearly one in three (29%), would prefer to see Donald Trump elected. A preference for Trump is higher among those who lean politically towards One Nation (78%) or the Liberal-National Coalition (46%) than those who lean towards Labor or the Greens (both 14%).

When asked similar questions in the lead-up to the four most recent US presidential elections, a clear majority of Australians expressed a preference for the Democratic over the Republican candidate.

However, support for Donald Trump in Australia has risen markedly compared to his previous two presidential candidacies in 2020 and 2016, and is higher than support for any Republican presidential candidate included in past editions of the Lowy institute Poll.

FIGURE 11

2024 US presidential election

Thinking about the upcoming US presidential election. If it came to a choice between Joe Biden and Donald Trump, who would you prefer to see elected as the US president?

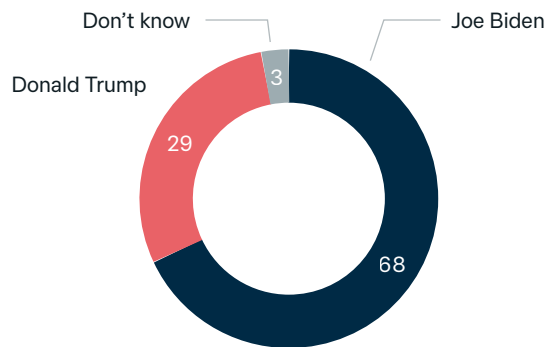
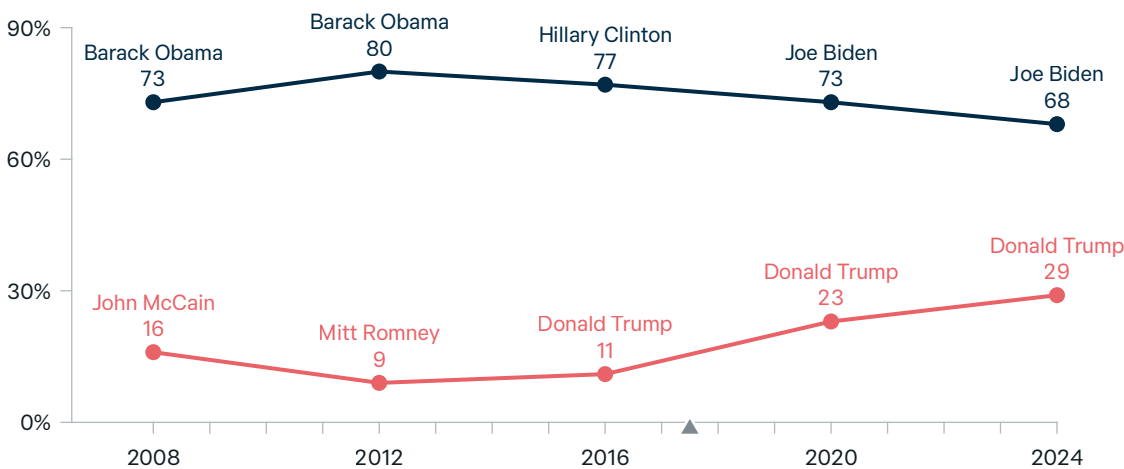


FIGURE 12

US presidential elections: Democrats vs Republicans

Which candidate would you prefer to see become President of the United States?



In previous years, the question was worded to reflect the names of the candidates and their parties at the time — see Poll website for exact wording. In 2024, the question was worded per figure 11.

▲ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

India

Over the past five years, Australia and India have drawn closer together politically, economically, and strategically. Australian and Indian prime ministers and their ministers now engage regularly on a bilateral basis and through groupings such as the Quad (Australia, India, Japan, the United States) and the G20. Australia and India have launched reciprocal strategies aimed at boosting two-way trade and investment, and agreed a trade deal that entered into force in December 2022. The tempo of defence and security cooperation has also lifted as both countries seek to deepen partnerships to balance China’s growing military weight in the Indo-Pacific.

At the same time, media and international human rights groups have documented religious discrimination as well as voiced concerns about an erosion of free speech and freedom of the press in India.

In a new question this year, Australians were asked to rank as a high, medium, or low priority three different issues in Australia’s engagement with India. In a follow-up question, respondents were then asked which of the three Australia should give the *highest* priority.

Four in ten Australians (42%) say trade and investment should be the *highest* priority in the relationship with India. One-third (32%) say human rights should be the top bilateral priority, while only two in ten (20%) give defence and regional security cooperation top billing.

Four in ten Australians say trade and investment should be the highest priority in the relationship with India.

FIGURE 13

India: Australia’s relationship priorities

Now a question about India. In your view, what priority should Australia give to the following issues in its relationship with India:

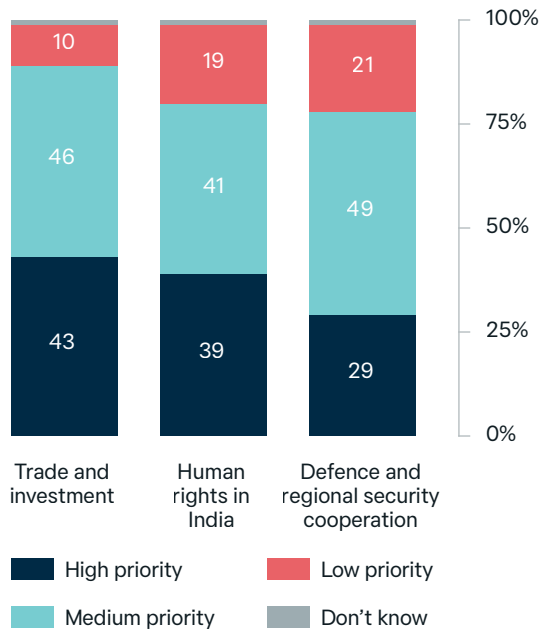
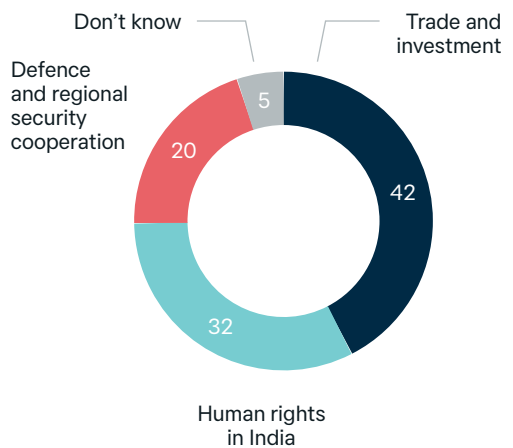


FIGURE 14

Highest priority for Australia’s relationship with India

Of these, which would you say Australia should give highest priority to in its relationship with India?



Pacific Islands

Influence in the Pacific Islands

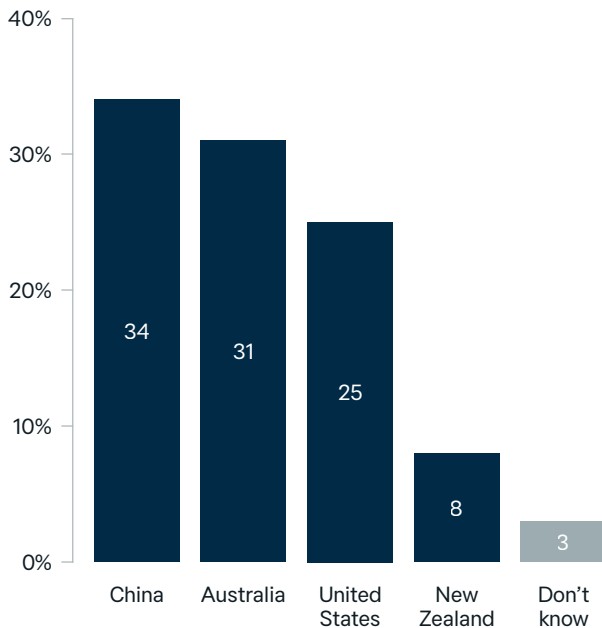
The Pacific Islands region has become a key arena in the contest for influence between China and the United States and its partners. Both superpowers are seeking to expand their roles as security partners in Pacific Islands countries, and are strengthening their development and diplomatic footprints in the region. Australia and New Zealand — both members of the Pacific Islands Forum — have also ramped up their diplomatic, aid, and security sector engagement with the Pacific.

In 2024, a new question tested Australians' perceptions about influence in the region. One-third of Australians (34%) perceive China to be the most influential player in the Pacific Islands region, slightly more than those who say Australia (31%) has the most influence. Only one-quarter (25%) nominate the United States as most influential, while a small minority (8%) select New Zealand.

FIGURE 15

Influence in Pacific Islands countries

Now thinking about the Pacific Islands region. In your opinion, which one of these countries has the most influence in Pacific Islands countries?



The prominence of China in Australians' perceptions of regional influence accords with previous Lowy Institute Polls, which revealed high anxiety about China's growing presence in the Pacific Islands. Last year, almost nine in ten Australians (87%) were 'somewhat' or 'very' concerned about China potentially 'opening a military base in a Pacific Islands country'.

Migration for Pacific Islanders

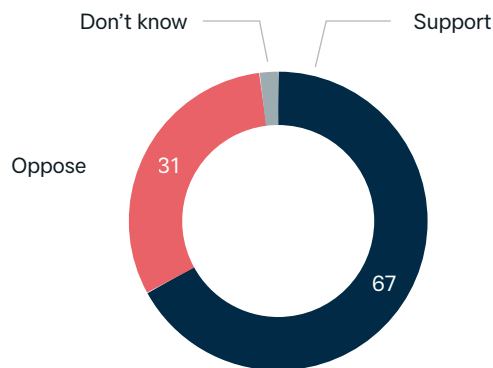
In recent years, the Australian government has expanded schemes to open further opportunities for Pacific Islander mobility to Australia. These include the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme for time-limited work stays, a Pacific Engagement Visa offering permanent residency, and a permanent migration pathway for Tuvaluans under the Falepili Union treaty.

Australians are broadly supportive of the idea of further easing restrictions on Pacific Islanders seeking to travel to or settle in Australia. Two-thirds of Australians (67%) say they would support relaxing visa requirements for citizens of Pacific Islands countries to live, work, and study in Australia, while less than one-third (31%) would oppose it.

FIGURE 16

Visa requirements for citizens of Pacific Islands countries

Would you support or oppose relaxing visa requirements for citizens of Pacific Islands countries to enable them to live, work, and study in Australia?



Safety and threats

Feelings of safety

Australians' sense of safety, which reached a record high in 2010, was deeply shaken at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, and again following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Since then, overall feelings of safety have only partially recovered, with six in ten Australians (62%) in 2024 saying they feel either 'safe' or 'very safe'. This remains steady from last year, but 30 points below the high watermark of 2010 (92%).

It is notable that the proportion of people feeling 'very safe' has remained consistently very low since 2020. Today, barely any (5%) say they feel 'very safe', as compared to 2010, when four in ten Australians (42%) felt this way.

Threats to Australia

Cyberattacks from other countries remain the leading threat to Australia, according to Australians asked about a range of possible 'threats to the vital interests of Australia in the next ten years'. Seven in ten Australians (70%) see cyberattacks from other countries as a 'critical threat', steady from 2023, and a clear 11-point lead over the next highest ranked threat — a military conflict between the United States and China over Taiwan (59%).

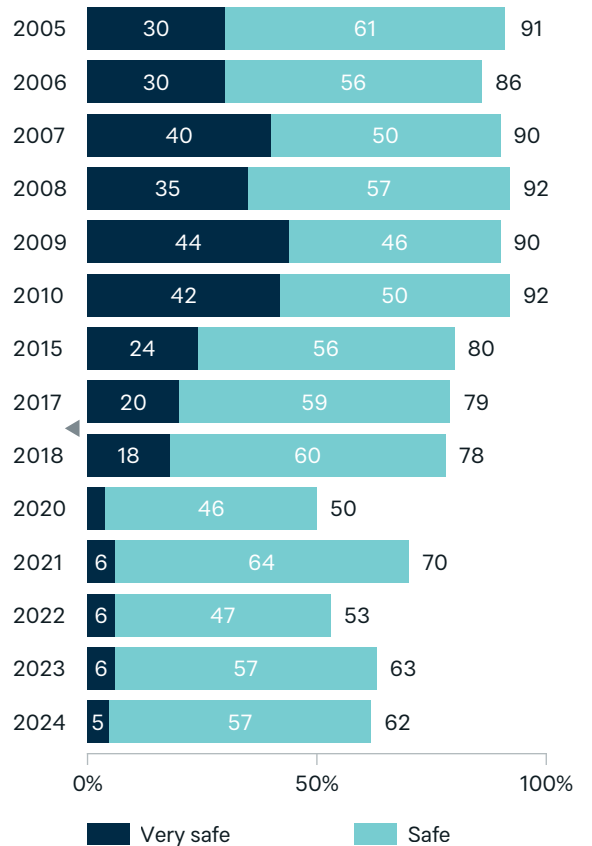
Australians are also seized of the potential for a military conflict in the South China Sea, with 57% rating it a critical threat, level with those who say the same of climate change (which remains steady since 2020). Potential conflicts over Taiwan (59%) and the South China Sea (57%) loom larger as critical threats than active, but more distant, conflicts in Ukraine (46%) or the Middle East (41%).

With the 2024 US presidential election approaching, concern about the impact of 'political instability in the United States' on Australia rose by nine points to 41%. However, together with conflict in the Middle East, this was the lowest ranked threat on the list.

FIGURE 17

Feelings of safety

Now about world events, how safe do you feel?



◀ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

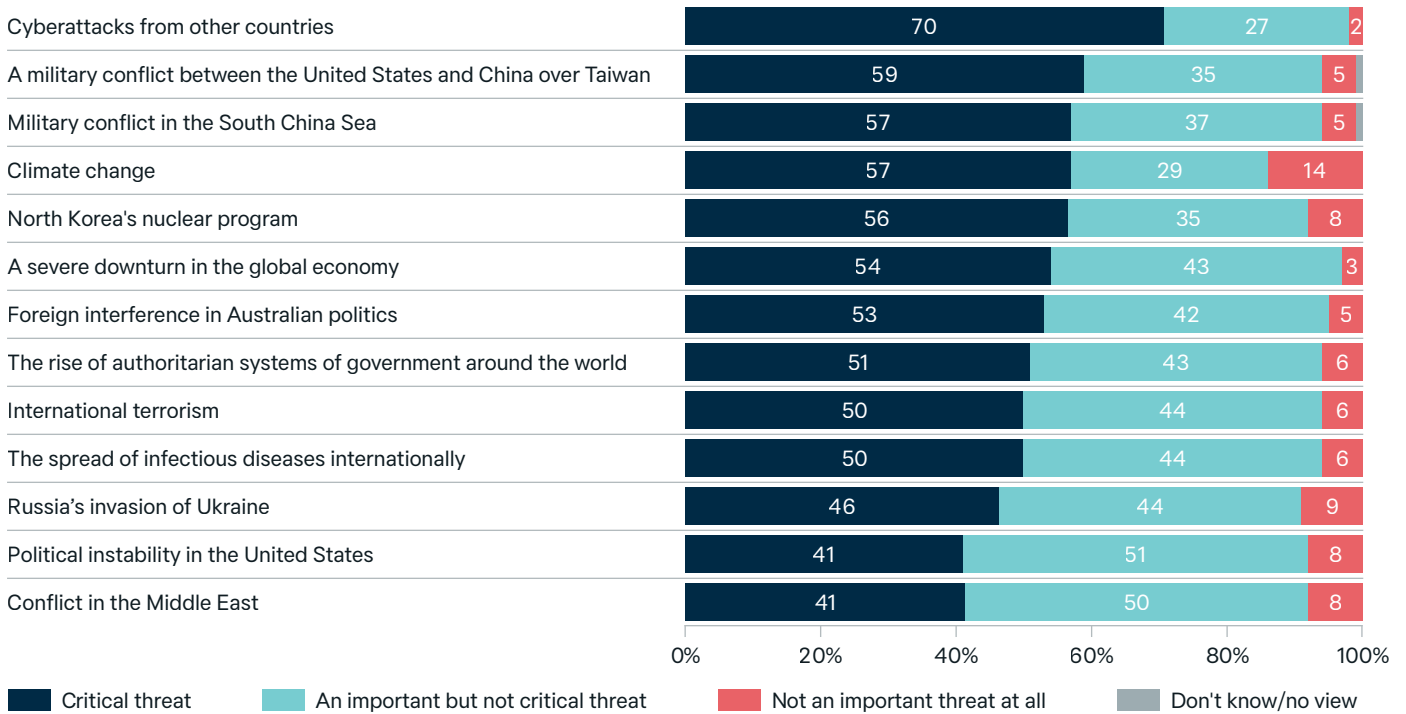
While anxieties about Covid-19 have steadily receded, concern about the spread of infectious diseases has not. Half the population (50%) see 'the spread of infectious diseases internationally' as a critical threat, 20 points higher than threat perceptions of 'Covid-19 and other potential epidemics' (30%) last year. Concern about the threats of 'foreign interference in Australian politics' (53%) and 'the rise of authoritarianism around the world' (51%) both held steady.

SAFETY AND THREATS

FIGURE 18

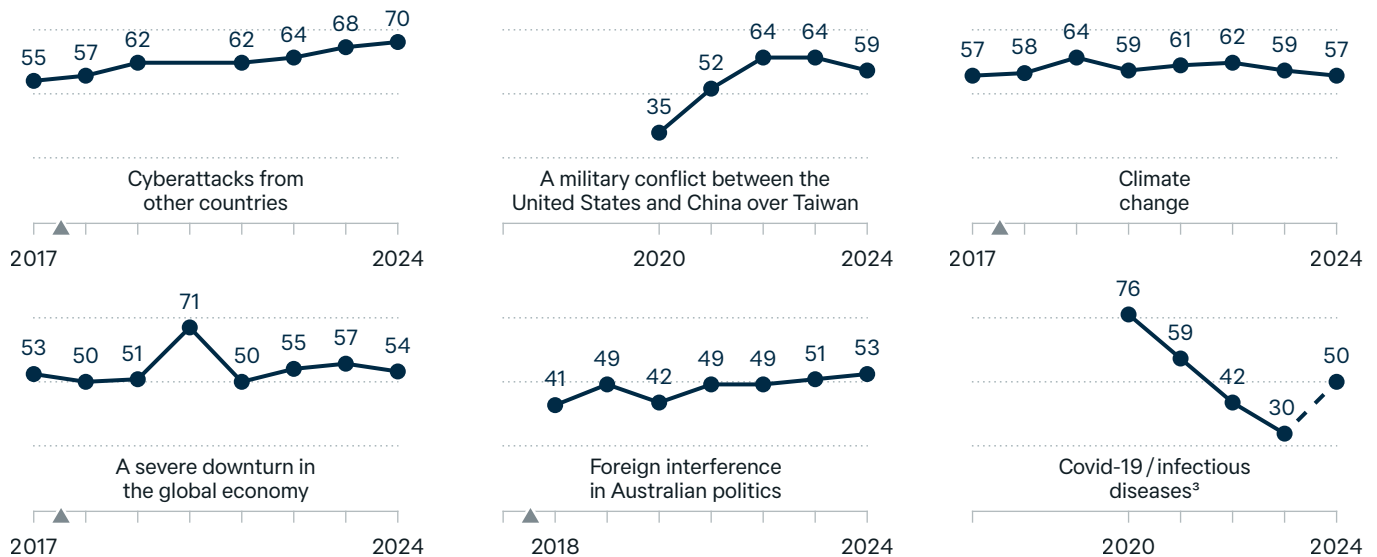
Threats to Australia's vital interests

Here is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Australia in the next ten years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all.



Threats to Australia's vital interests — selected

Total who say a 'critical threat', 2017-2024



3 In 2020, this question asked about 'novel coronavirus (Covid-19) and other potential epidemics' rather than 'the spread of infectious diseases internationally'. In 2021-2023, it asked about 'Covid-19 and other potential epidemics'.

▲ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

Security and defence

AUKUS: Nuclear-powered submarines

In the third year of the AUKUS security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, the governments are proceeding with a plan for Australia to acquire at least three conventionally-armed Virginia class nuclear-powered submarines from the early 2030s. The plan also includes the design and construction of new SSN-AUKUS class submarines for delivery to the Royal Australian Navy from the early 2040s.

In Australia, public debate about this endeavour has grown, highlighting questions around its strategic merits, future US political commitment to the deal, industrial and workforce capacity, and the high costs involved. Proponents argue the submarines would improve Australia’s ability to defend itself and contribute to deterring major power conflict in the region.

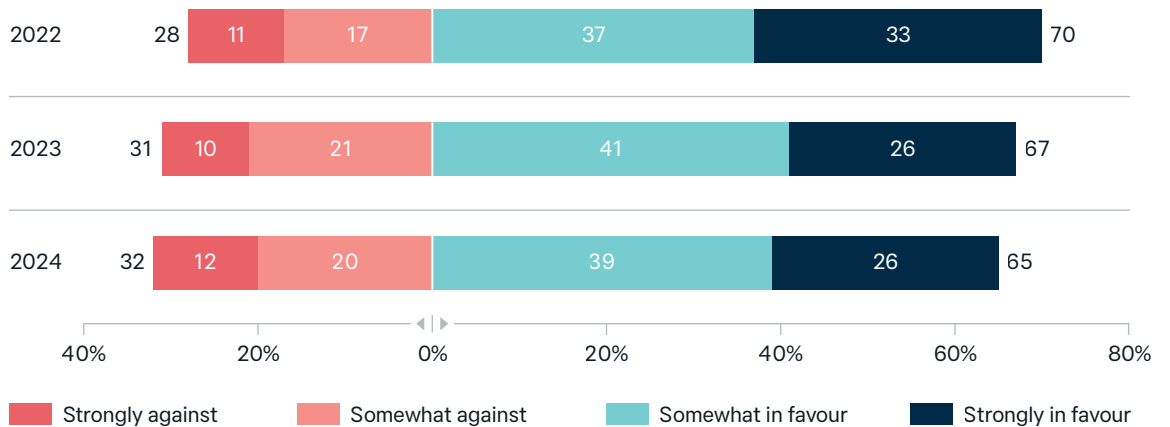
At a broad level, majority public support for acquiring nuclear-powered submarines has held relatively firm. In 2024, almost two-thirds of Australians (65%) remain either ‘somewhat’ or ‘strongly’ in favour — similar to last year, though five points below 2022 (70%), shortly after the deal was announced. One-third (32%) of Australians are ‘somewhat against’ or ‘strongly against’ acquiring nuclear-powered submarines.

While AUKUS continues to enjoy bipartisan political support in Australia, more Australians who lean towards the Liberal–National Coalition (81%) than those who lean towards the Labor Party (69%) are in favour of acquiring nuclear-powered submarines — a 12-point gap, narrowing from 21 points last year.

FIGURE 19

Acquiring nuclear-powered submarines

Now a question about submarines that are powered by nuclear energy, but do not have nuclear weapons. Are you in favour of or against Australia acquiring nuclear-powered submarines?



Security partnerships

Australia is seeking to broaden its security partnerships beyond its alliance with the United States. If given a choice to establish closer security relations with one other country, 45% of Australians would choose Japan from a list of six. There is a large gap to the next highest preference, India (18%), followed by Indonesia (14%), France (12%), and South Korea (5%).

Only 2% of Australians nominated the Philippines as their top preference for a closer security partnership, despite the two nations deepening their defence ties and staging their first joint sea and air patrols in the South China Sea off the Philippine coast in November 2023.

Ukraine

Two years after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, neither side has managed to achieve a decisive breakthrough and there is no end to the conflict in sight. Ongoing material international support for Ukraine, by no means assured, will be instrumental in Kyiv’s ability to continue to defend itself against Russian forces.

The United States, followed by Europe, is the largest provider of military and non-military aid to Ukraine. In late April 2024 (following conclusion of fieldwork for this Poll), after a months-long political impasse, the US Congress passed a bill authorising almost US\$61 billion in assistance for Ukraine. Shortly after, Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles announced a AU\$100 million package of military assistance.

FIGURE 20

Preference for closer security relations

Now thinking about defence and security. Australia already has close security partnerships with the United States and the United Kingdom. If Australia were to establish closer security relations with another country, which one of the following would you choose?

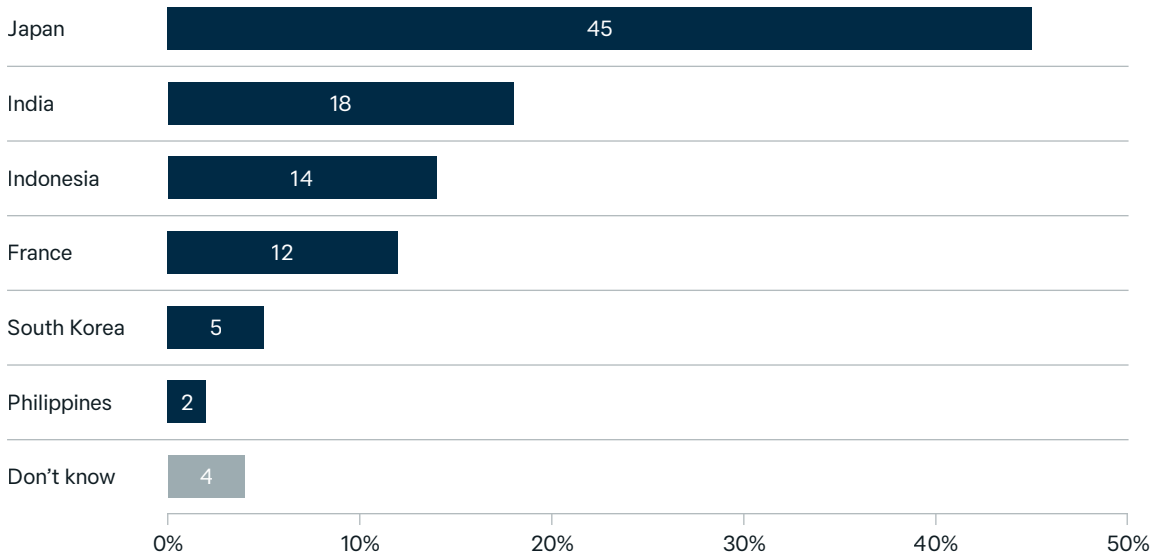
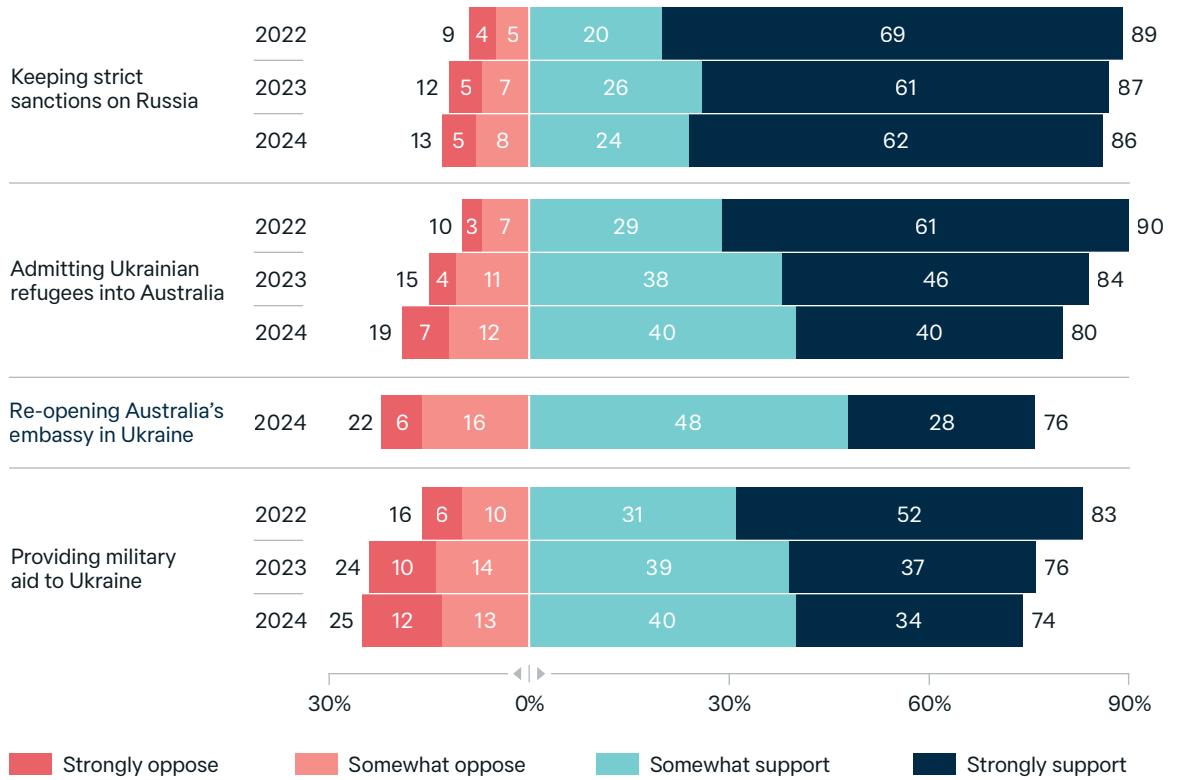


FIGURE 21

Australia’s response to the war in Ukraine

Thinking about Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, would you support or oppose Australia:



Australian public support for assisting Ukraine remains high. The vast majority of Australians (86%) continue to support ‘keeping strict sanctions on Russia’, steady from 2023. Eight in ten (80%) support ‘admitting Ukrainian refugees into Australia’, down four points from last year. Three-quarters (74%) support ‘providing military aid to Ukraine’, steady on last year.

Australian public support for assisting Ukraine remains high

Whereas the level of ‘strong support’ for each of these measures waned significantly between 2022 and 2023, over the past year, it has held steady for sanctions and military aid, and dropped a further six points for admitting refugees.

In answer to a new question in 2024, three-quarters of Australians (76%) support re-opening Australia’s embassy in Kyiv, which withdrew from Ukraine after Russia’s invasion in 2022 and remains closed due to security concerns. The majority of Western embassies that withdrew in 2022 have since returned to Kyiv. At time of writing, Australia’s Ambassador to Ukraine continues to operate from Warsaw.

Economy and trade

Economic optimism

In the past, Australians' sense of economic optimism has proven resilient, even remaining buoyant during the 2008 global financial crisis. But the pandemic changed that, plunging overall economic optimism in 2020 to the lowest point (52%) in the Lowy Institute Poll's history.

In 2024, fears of a global recession have moderated, but the post-Covid global economic recovery has been slow. Growth in China remains lacklustre, inflation lingers in North America, and the economies of Europe remain sluggish, while wars in Ukraine and the Middle East have impacted supply chains and prices. In Australia, rising costs of living and interest rate increases over the past two years have put many households under financial pressure.

A majority of Australians (58%) still say they are either 'optimistic' (54%) or 'very optimistic' (4%) about Australia's economic performance in the next five years. However, this represents a four-point drop in overall economic optimism, to the second-lowest level in the past two decades.

This moderate change masks a more significant generational divide in economic outlook. Overall economic optimism fell by 11 points on last year to 44% in the 18–29 age group, while optimism levels held steady among those aged over 45.

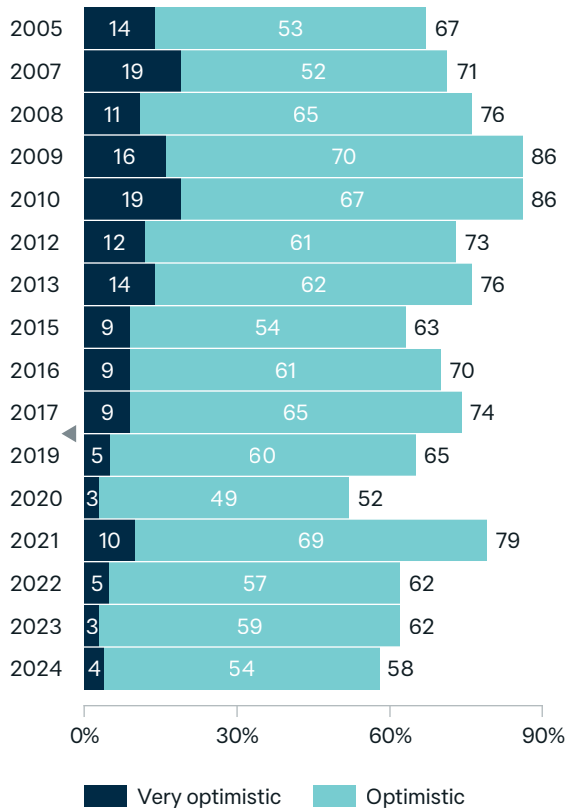
Free trade

Since the 1980s, successive Australian governments have followed a free market economic orthodoxy that largely relied on open trade and market forces to shape the economy. But in April 2024, after fieldwork for this Poll, the Albanese Labor government announced the Future Made in Australia agenda — an industrial policy that seeks to use government subsidies and support to achieve economic, national security, and decar-

FIGURE 22

Economic optimism

Thinking about Australia's economic performance in the world. Overall, how optimistic are you about Australia's economic performance in the world over the next five years?



◀ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

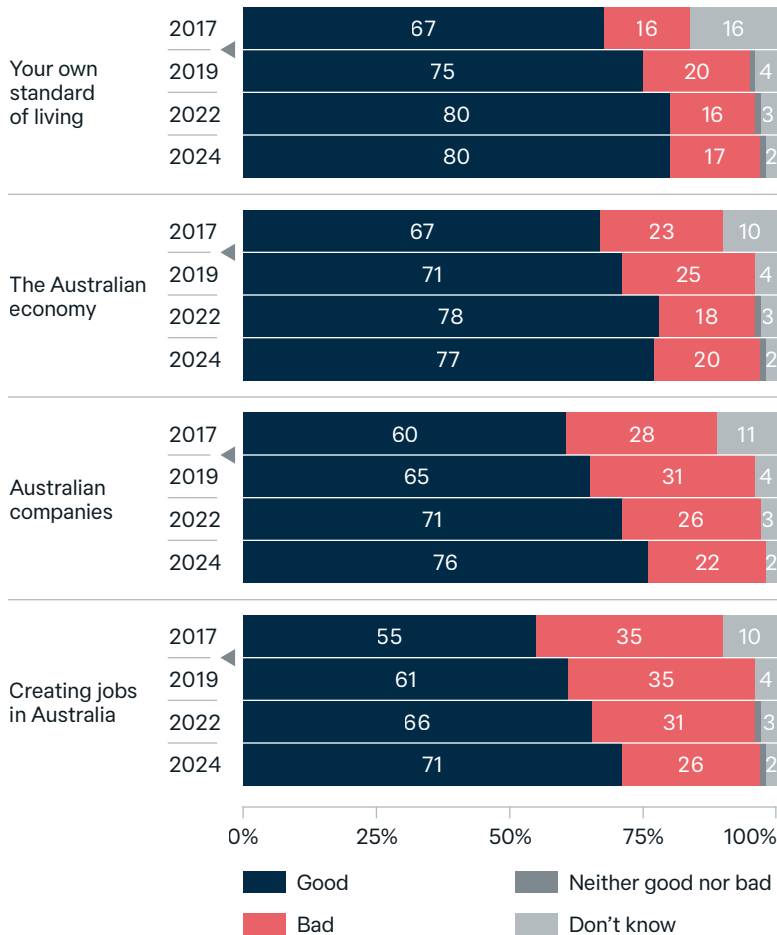
bonisation objectives. This follows a number of major economies, including the United States, China, Japan, and Europe, providing significant subsidies to support domestic clean energy and advanced manufacturing industries.

Despite the global trend towards market intervention and in some cases protectionism, in Australia, free trade has strong majority support that continues to grow. Eight in ten Australians (80%) say free trade is good for their standard of living, similar to the last time this question was asked in 2022. More than three-quarters say free trade is good for the Australian economy (77%) and Australian companies (76%, up five points from 2022).

FIGURE 23

Support for free trade

Overall, do you personally think free trade is good or bad for each of the following:



◀ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

Seven in ten Australians (71%) say free trade is good for creating jobs in Australia, up five points from 2022.

Nevertheless, views on the economy are complex. Longstanding support for free trade coincides with a vast majority of Australians (87%) also supporting the provision of subsidies for renewable technologies (page 27), and strong support (70%) in 2023 for the idea of friendshoring ('ensuring supply chains run through countries that are friendly towards Australia').

Artificial intelligence

With the advent of more advanced and accessible generative artificial intelligence, or AI, in the past two years, there has also been an explosion of debate about the risks, benefits, and role of AI in the world.

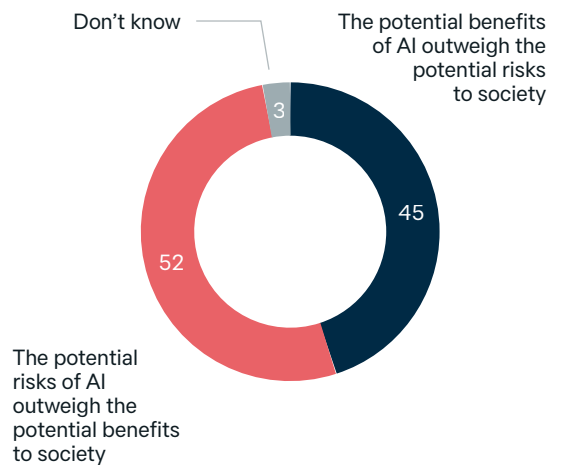
For the first time, the Lowy Institute Poll asked Australians how they perceive the risks versus the benefits of AI. On balance, a slightly larger number of Australians say the potential risks of AI outweigh the potential benefits (52%) compared to those who say the benefits outweigh the risks (45%).

Younger Australians are more likely to be positively disposed to AI, with 55% of 18–29 year olds saying the benefits outweigh the risks, compared to 42% of 45–59 year olds, and only 36% of those aged 60 and over.

FIGURE 24

Risks and benefits of artificial intelligence

Now a question about artificial intelligence or 'AI'. The use of artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly widespread in the world. Weighing up the potential benefits and risks of AI, on balance, do you think:



Climate change and energy

Climate change

Despite a fractious Australian political debate on climate change over the past two decades, overall, Australians' sense of urgency in addressing climate change has remained relatively high since 2018. This aligns with roughly steady threat perceptions of climate change over the same period (page 18).

In 2024, a majority of Australians (57%) say 'global warming is a serious and pressing problem' about which 'we should begin taking steps now, even if this involves significant costs'. Three in ten (30%) say 'the problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking

steps that are low in cost'. Only 12% take the view that 'until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs'. All results are steady from 2023.

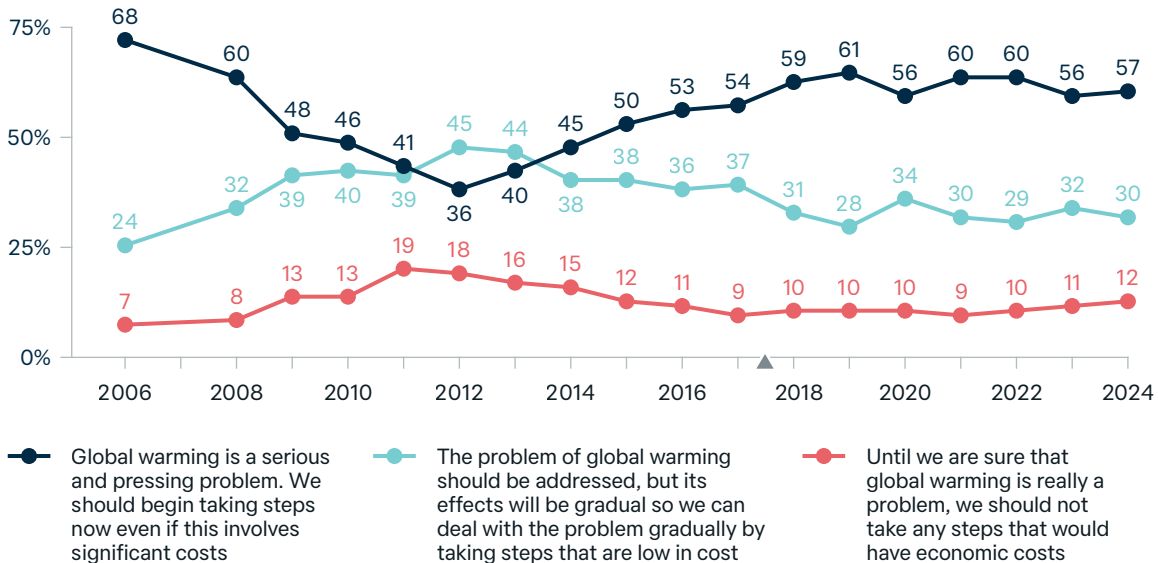
There remains a significant gap between younger and older Australians on this issue, though the gap has narrowed slightly compared with last year. Almost three-quarters (73%) of Australians aged 18–29 say global warming is a serious and pressing problem, compared with 51% of those aged over 60.

Political leaning is strongly correlated with how Australians answer this question. Seven in ten (71%) of those who lean towards Labor say global warming is a serious and pressing problem, compared to only 29% of those who lean towards the Liberal–National Coalition. Among the latter group, the most prevalent view (48%) is to deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost.

FIGURE 25

Climate change

Now about global warming. There is a controversy over what the countries of the world, including Australia, should do about the problem of global warming. Please indicate which of the following three statements comes closest to your own point of view.



▲ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

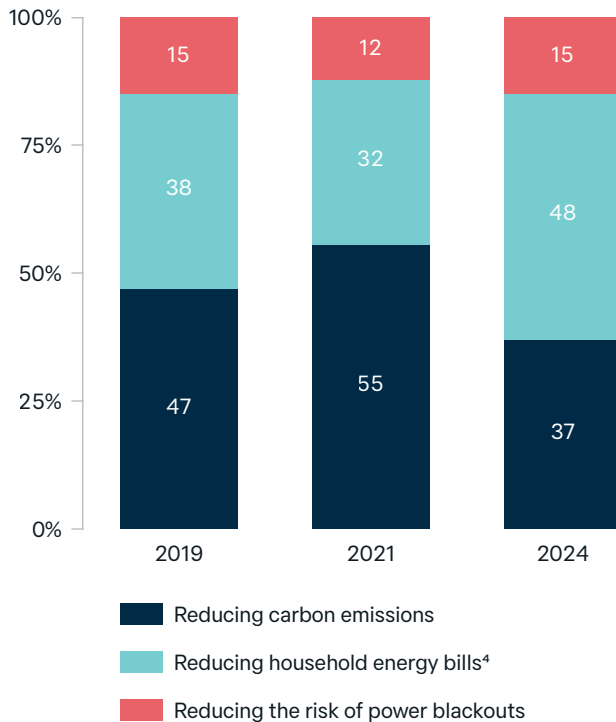
Energy policy priorities

In the context of rising energy prices and high cost-of-living pressures in Australia, almost half of Australians (48%) now say that ‘reducing household energy bills’ should be the main priority for the government’s energy policy, a sharp 16-point rise from a similar question in 2021. The number of Australians who say that ‘reducing carbon emissions’ should be the main priority has fallen 18 points to 37%, no longer the leading response. ‘Reducing the risk of power blackouts’ remained relatively low as a priority, gaining three points to 15%.

FIGURE 26

Energy policy priorities

Now thinking about Australia’s energy policy, including electricity and gas. Which one of the following goals do you personally think should be the main priority for the federal government?

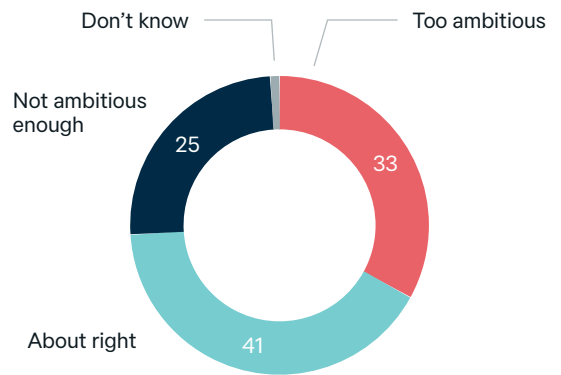


4 In 2019 and 2021, this question asked about ‘reducing household bills’ rather than ‘reducing household energy bills’. In those years, the framing of the question did not include reference to ‘electricity and gas’ specifically.

FIGURE 27

Australian renewable energy target

Now for a question about renewable energy sources such as solar or wind. The current federal Labor government has set a national Australian target for 82% of electricity to be generated through renewables by 2030. Do you think Australia’s target to transition to renewable energy is...



Renewable energy

The Australian government has set a national target to generate 82% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030. The largest share of Australians (41%) think this target is ‘about right’. For the remainder, one-third (33%) of Australians say the renewable energy target is ‘too ambitious’, while one-quarter (25%) say it is ‘not ambitious enough’.

Nuclear power

Australia’s federal opposition has announced that, if elected, it would look to introduce nuclear power generation into Australia’s energy mix, alongside renewables and other sources of energy, as part of its plan to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Public opinion towards nuclear power in Australia has shifted over time. This year, in response to a new question, six in ten Australians (61%) say they ‘somewhat’ or ‘strongly’ support Australia using nuclear power to generate electricity, while a

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

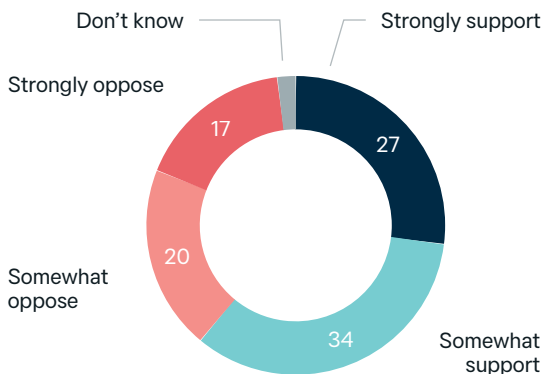
significant minority (37%) 'somewhat' or 'strongly' oppose it. Those who 'strongly support' nuclear power generation (27%) outnumber those who 'strongly oppose' it (17%).

In contrast, more than a decade ago in 2011, in response to a related question in this Poll, more than six in ten Australians (62%) said they were either 'strongly against' (46%) or 'somewhat against' (16%) 'Australia building nuclear power plants as part of its plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions'.

FIGURE 28

Nuclear energy

Now a question about nuclear power. Do you support or oppose Australia using nuclear power to generate electricity, alongside other sources of energy?



Potential climate policies

In 2024, Australians express slim to strong majority support for a range of potential federal government climate-related policies. However, compared to the last time this question was asked in 2022, support has softened mildly for a range of options including a more ambitious national emissions reduction target, hosting a UN climate conference, reducing coal exports, and banning new coal mines, and more notably for introducing an emissions trading scheme. Support remained steady for subsidising renewable technologies, and increasing the use of gas.

Led by the 2022 US Inflation Reduction Act, a number of countries have announced significant subsidies for the development of clean energy technology. In April 2024, following fieldwork for this Poll, the Albanese Labor government announced plans to subsidise renewables production in Australia. The vast majority of Australians (87%) say they would support the government 'providing subsidies for the development of renewable energy technologies', steady from 2022 (90%).

Seven in ten Australians (72%) support committing 'to a more ambitious national emissions reduction target', down five points from 2022. Under the Paris Agreement on climate change, countries are due to submit to the United Nations an updated 2035 emissions reduction target by 2025.

Australia is bidding to co-host the UN's annual climate conference of the parties (COP) in 2026, in partnership with other Pacific Islands nations. This initiative appears to have widespread support among Australians (70%), though this figure is down five points from 2022.

Two-thirds of Australians (68%) support 'making it easier for the citizens of climate-vulnerable countries to migrate to Australia', in line with support for improving visa access for Pacific Islanders (page 16). In November 2023, the Australian and Tuvalu governments announced the Falepili Union, a deal that provides a pathway for Tuvaluans to migrate permanently to Australia in the face of climate change, while further entrenching Australia as Tuvalu's primary security partner.

A majority of Australians (63%) are also in favour of 'providing financial support to help developing countries in our region manage the impacts of climate change'. In late 2023, Australia announced it would rejoin the Green Climate Fund, pledging a \$50 million contribution.

A majority continue to support reducing coal exports to other countries (60%) and banning new coal mines (59%). While this constitutes a drop of five and four points respectively on 2022 results, it still represents a decisive swing away from more positive public sentiment towards coal less than a decade ago. In 2016, in response to a different question, a majority (66%) said Australia should continue to export coal to developing countries.

In contrast to attitudes towards coal, majority support (58%) remains for ‘increasing the use of gas for Australia’s energy generation’, level with 2022.

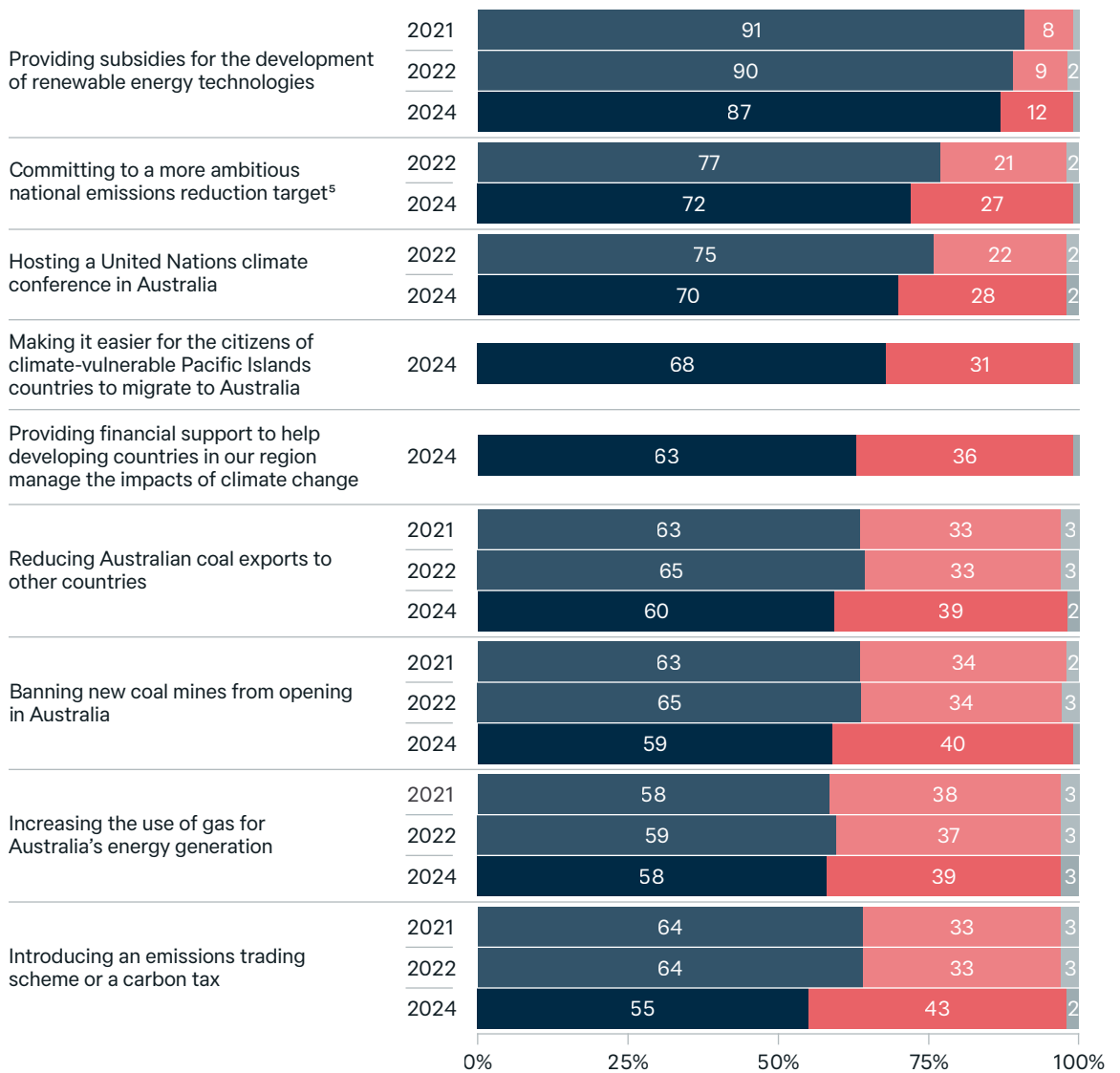
Slightly more than half of Australians (55%) support introducing an emissions trading scheme or a carbon tax, a drop of nine points since 2022.

While an economy-wide emissions trading scheme is no longer under active debate in Australian politics, the government’s reformed Safeguard Mechanism does allow for emissions trading as part of a system to curb emissions in high-emitting industries.

FIGURE 29

Potential federal government policies on climate change

Would you support or oppose the following federal government policies?



5 In 2022, this question asked about ‘Committing to a more ambitious emissions reduction target for 2030’.

Support Oppose Don't know

Societal issues

Democracy

A large majority of Australians (72%) see democracy as preferable to any other kind of government, remaining near a record high set in 2022 (74%). The number who say ‘in some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable’ remained steady at 18%. Fewer than one in ten Australians (9%) continue to say ‘it doesn’t matter what kind of government we have’.

A longstanding age gap in answers to this question has widened slightly again over the past two years. Younger Australians aged 18–44 (65%) are less likely than older Australians aged over 45 (79%) to say democracy is preferable to any other kind of government — a 14-point gap that has widened by five points since 2022.

Immigration

Immigration and border protection policy continue to be among the most contested issues in Australia’s political debate. In 2024, public attitudes regarding Australia’s immigration intake appear remarkably consistent with pre-pandemic sentiment.

Almost half the population (48%) say the total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is ‘too high’, while the other half (50%) either think immigration levels are ‘about right’ (40%) or ‘too low’ (10%). These results are mostly steady from the last time this question was asked in 2019.

FIGURE 30

Democracy

Now a question about democracy. Below are some statements about democracy. Please indicate which one of the three statements comes closest to your own personal views about democracy.

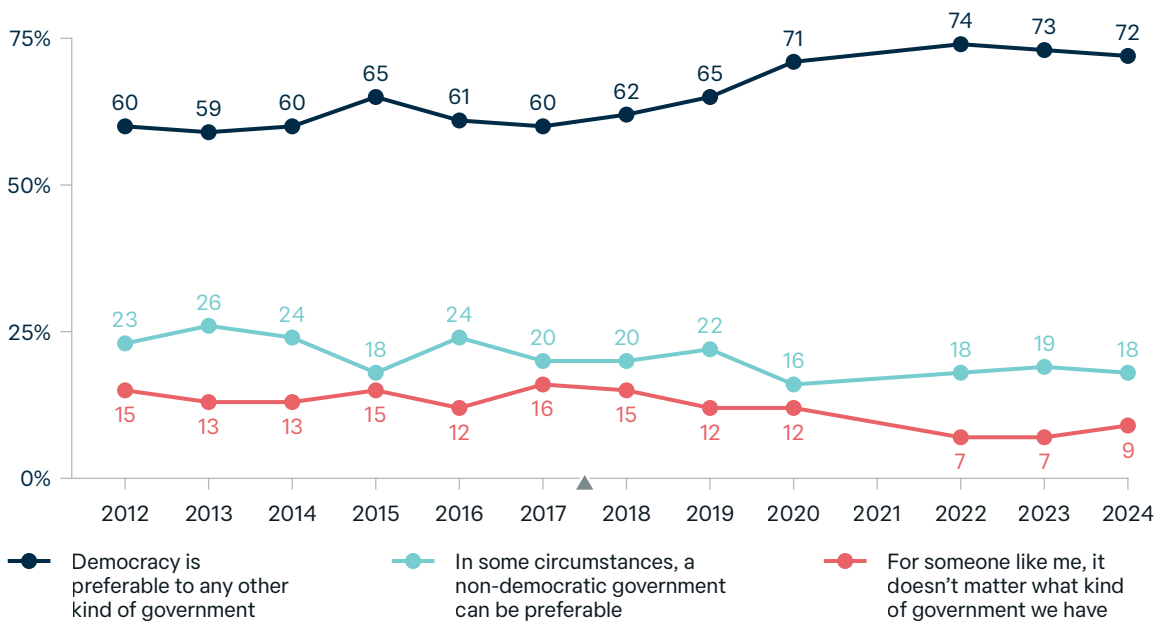
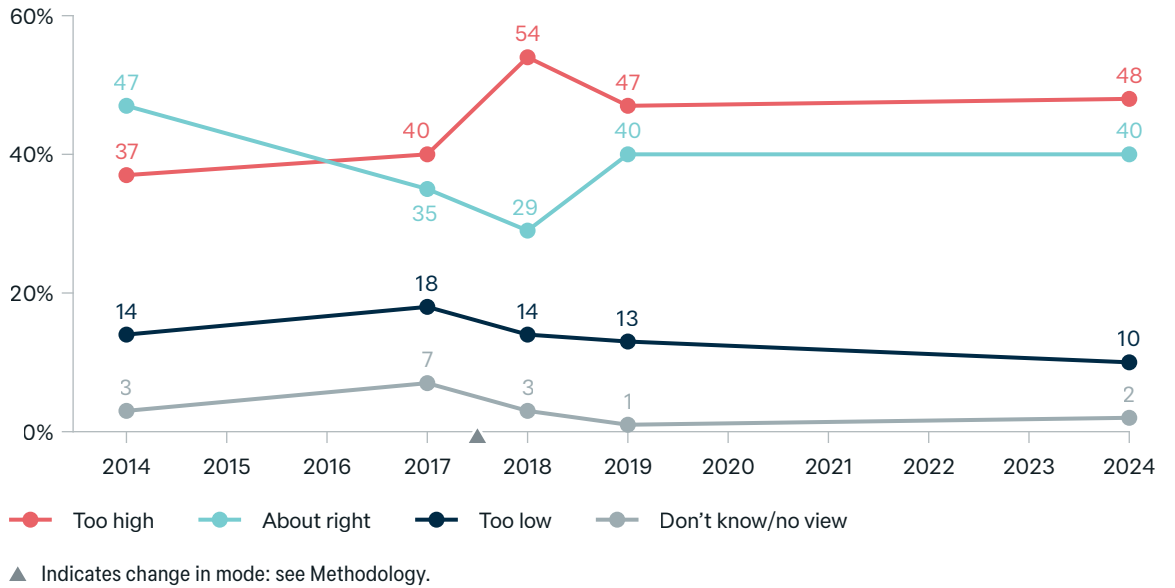


FIGURE 31

Immigration rate

Do you personally think that the total number of migrants coming to Australia each year is too high, too low, or about right?



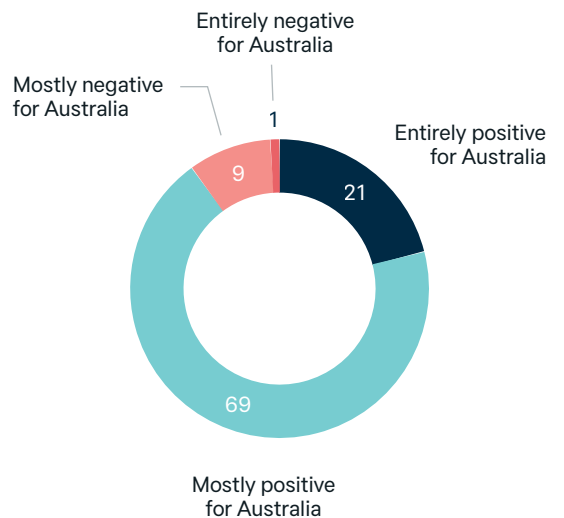
Cultural diversity

While Australians are roughly divided in their views about the current migration intake, they are overwhelmingly positive about Australia’s cultural diversity, a product of decades of immigration. Nine in ten (90%) think Australia’s culturally diverse population has been either ‘mostly positive’ (69%) or ‘entirely positive’ (21%) for Australia. Only a very small minority (9%) say the country’s culturally diverse population has been ‘mostly negative’, and almost none (1%) say it has been ‘entirely negative’.

FIGURE 32

Cultural diversity

For several decades, Australia has been open to people from all over the world. Overall, do you think Australia’s culturally diverse population has been:



Australian government performance

Foreign policy performance

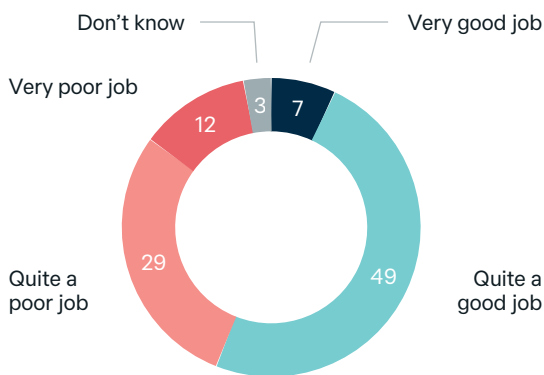
For the first time in the Lowy Institute Poll, Australians were asked their view of the federal government’s overall handling of Australia’s foreign policy.

A majority of Australians (56%) say the current Labor government is doing a good job, 15 points more than those who say it is doing a poor job (41%). Most people hold these views moderately, but a larger share say the government is doing a ‘very poor job’ (12%) compared to those who say it is doing a ‘very good job’ (7%).

FIGURE 33

Federal government foreign policy performance

Now thinking about the Australian government. To what extent do you think the current federal Labor government is doing a good job, or a poor job, of handling Australia’s foreign policy?



Government report card

Almost two years into the Labor government’s term in office, Australians were asked to give a score out of ten for its handling of a number of issues. Australians awarded the government its highest mark for ‘maintaining a strong alliance with the United States’ (6.6 out of 10), a small decline from 2023 (7.1).

Australians were moderately positive about the government’s management of relations with the Pacific Islands (5.8) and Southeast Asia (5.7).

On the question of the government ‘maintaining a capable defence force’, Australians were slightly less positive (5.3), as they were on its management of the relationship with China (5.3), a small decline from last year (5.8), notwithstanding the re-engagement between the two governments. The government received an average score (5.0) for management of the economy, a small decline from 5.7 last year.

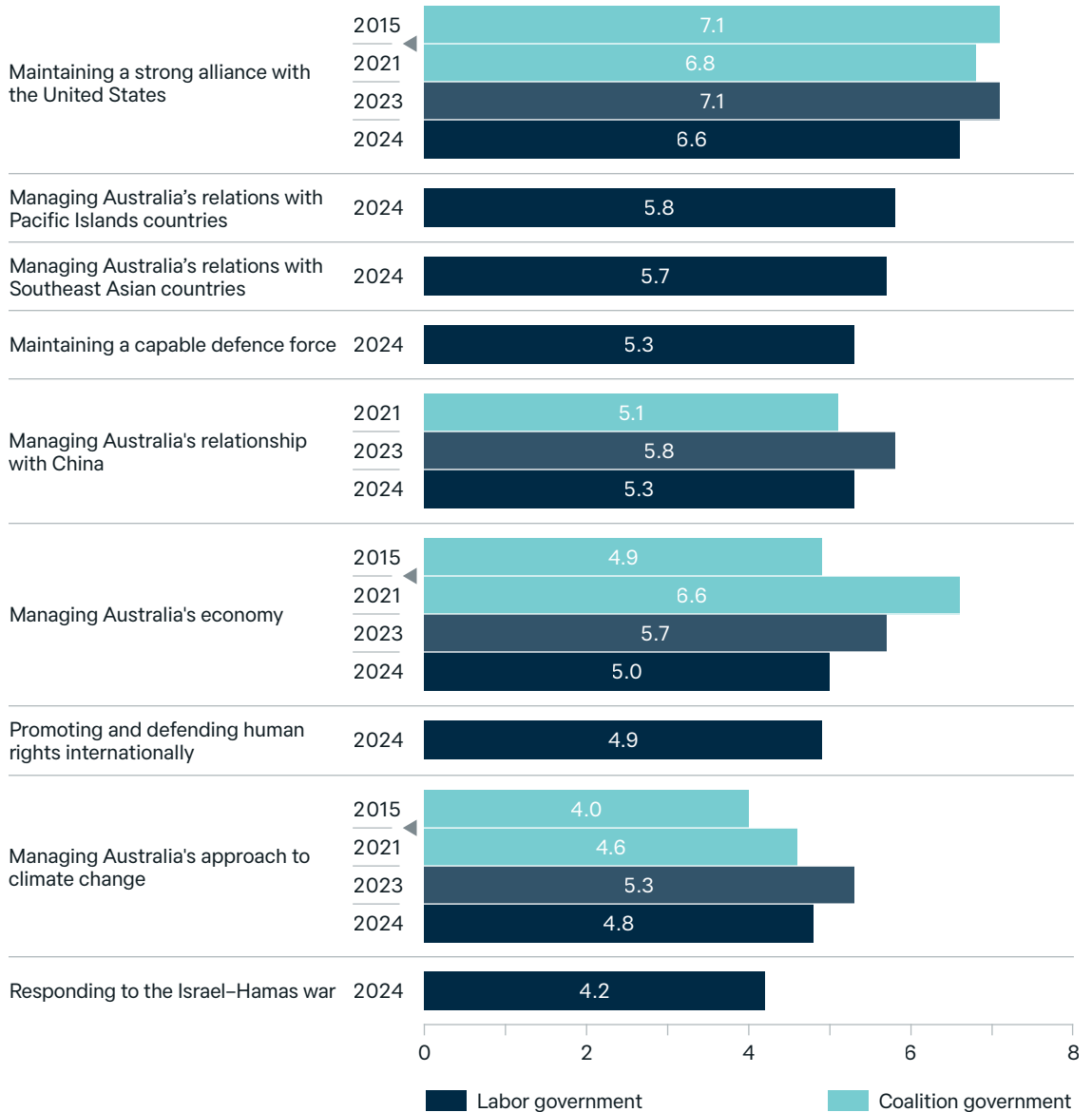
Australians marked the government hardest on ‘responding to the Israel– Hamas war’ (4.2), ‘managing Australia’s approach to climate change’ (4.8), and ‘promoting and defending human rights internationally’ (4.9).

In 2021, the last time this question was asked of a Coalition government, Australians also awarded the highest marks for maintaining the US alliance (7.1). The then Coalition government scored a higher rating than the current Labor government for managing Australia’s economy (6.6), and slightly lower ratings than Labor for managing the relationship with China (5.1) and Australia’s approach to climate change (4.6).

FIGURE 34

Labor⁶ government report card

Now thinking about Australian politics. What mark out of ten would you personally give the Labor government in Canberra for its performance in handling each of the following issues — with 10 meaning it has done an excellent job, 5 an average job, and 0 a very poor job?



6 In 2015 and 2021, a similar question asked about the performance of the 'Coalition Government in Canberra'.

◀ Indicates change in mode: see Methodology.

Scores represent the mean of weighted responses.

About the Poll

Methodology

The 2024 Lowy Institute Poll reports the results of a national survey of 2028 adults across Australia between 4 and 17 March 2024. The survey was conducted by the Social Research Centre (SRC), using the Life in Australia™ panel — currently the only probability-based online panel in Australia. Members of the panel were randomly recruited via their landline or mobile telephone or via their address (rather than being self-selected volunteers) and agreed to provide their contact details to take part in surveys on a regular basis. SRC uses a mixed-mode approach for the panel, including online surveys (99% of respondents) and computer-assisted telephone interviewing (1% of respondents) to provide coverage of the offline population (households without internet access). The order of questions in the questionnaire was different from the order presented in this report.

On a simple random sample of 2028 responses, the margin of error is 2.2%. Where a complex sample is used, the 'design effect' measures the additional variance in comparison with a simple random sample. The design effect for this survey is estimated at 1.27. For the 2024 Lowy Institute Poll survey, a completion rate of 68.2% was achieved. Taking into account the recruitment rate to the panel and attrition from the panel, the cumulative response rate is 1.2%. Unlike other commercial online panels in Australia, the probability basis of the Life in Australia™ sampling method means results are generalisable to the national population and sampling errors and confidence intervals can be calculated.

In reading the results, note that totals may not add to 100% due to rounding. Each response option has been rounded individually and grouped responses (e.g. those who 'somewhat agree' plus 'strongly agree') have not been rounded at the group level.

In 2024, the Lowy Institute Poll transitioned to using Life in Australia™ 'streamlined weights', reflecting contemporary benchmarks and population trends. The streamlined weighting solution is optimised to improve accuracy of survey estimates while maintaining precision. This is done by adjusting the sample to a set of demographic characteristics that minimise bias while maximising effective sample size. Streamlined weights effectively adjust for non-response and sample error. The set of benchmark characteristics used for streamlined weighting include age group, highest qualification, gender, number of household adults, language spoken at home, state, and region within state.

In 2019, the Lowy Institute completed a three-year transition in the methodology for Lowy Institute polling, which until 2017 was conducted solely by telephone. From 2005 to 2011, the Poll was conducted by landline only. From 2012 to 2017, it was conducted using both landline and mobile numbers. In 2017, the SRC administered four key questions from the Poll to an online sample of 2513 respondents in parallel with the telephone survey of 1200 respondents, which was reported in the 2017 Lowy Institute Poll. This parallel survey provided valuable comparison information between the two methodologies. In 2018, the Lowy Institute Poll was a combination of a telephone-only sample of 600 respondents and an online sample of 600 respondents drawn from Life in Australia™. In 2019 and 2020, the Lowy Institute Poll was administered with approximately 90% of respondents online and 10% offline.

Interactive data for all results and previous poll reports can be accessed through our website: <https://poll.lowyinstitute.org>

In order to ensure comparability of the 2018 Poll with the telephone responses of our 2005–17 Polls, the response sets were weighted and blended using the following approach: first, weights for the telephone respondents (50% of the sample) were calculated accounting for the dual chances of being contacted by landline or mobile, and reflecting key population characteristics. Then, for each online respondent, the most similar telephone respondent was found using a range of survey variables, and that person’s telephone weighting was used as the ‘base weight’ for the next step. Finally, the telephone and online responses were then combined into a single data set, and the results then weighted to reflect the demographic profile of the Australian population aged 18 years and over based on Australian Bureau of Statistics population data.

The transition to a predominantly online survey panel for Lowy Institute Polls reflects the declining response rates for telephone surveys, now widespread internet access in Australia, and accords with the survey methods of highly respected polling organisations internationally.

The majority of questions in the 2024 survey are ‘tracking’ questions that have been asked in previous Lowy Institute Polls, allowing us to compare public opinion on a single issue over time. Footnotes and markers (▲, ◀) have been used in the charts in the Poll to represent the change of mode, which can potentially elicit slightly different responses.

The question on cultural diversity was initially omitted and re-asked of those who already had responded when the issue was identified. Altogether, 88.8% of respondents answered the cultural diversity question. A non-response to the question was not predicted by demographics collected on panellists and is unlikely to lead to appreciable non-response bias.

Life in Australia™ members are offered a small incentive for joining the panel and another incentive for each survey they complete — a \$10 gift card, payment, or donation to a nominated charity.

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Several questions in this and previous Lowy Institute Polls were modelled on those developed by other polling organisations, including the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, the Pew Research Center, Australian Election Study, Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, Ipsos MORI, and Essential.

About the author



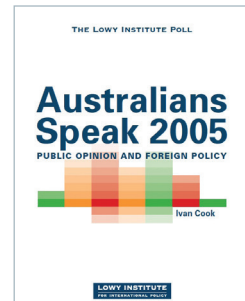
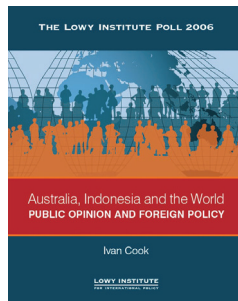
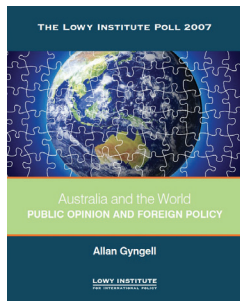
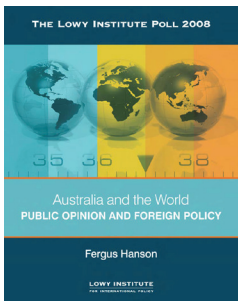
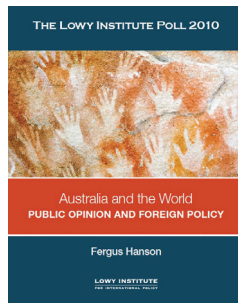
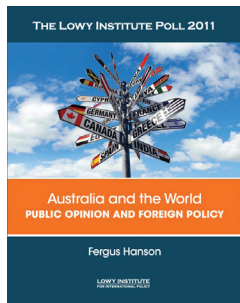
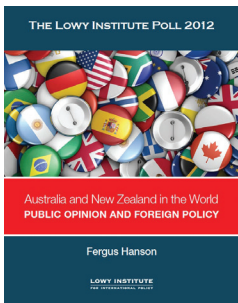
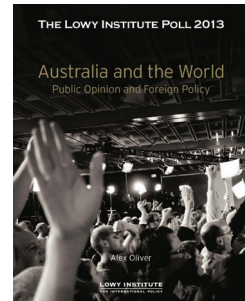
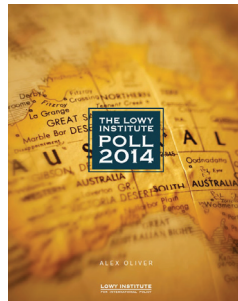
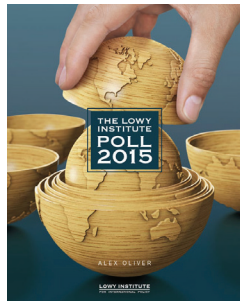
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