

# Lowy Institute Poll: 2025 Preview

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16 APRIL 2025

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## Introduction

In an early release of selected results from the 2025 Lowy Institute Poll, we provide a snapshot of Australians' confidence in their political leaders' foreign policy abilities, as well as reactions to US President Donald Trump's blitz of policy announcements since taking office in January. Fieldwork for this poll was conducted from 3 to 16 March 2025 on a sample of 2117 adults across Australia.

# Trust in the United States

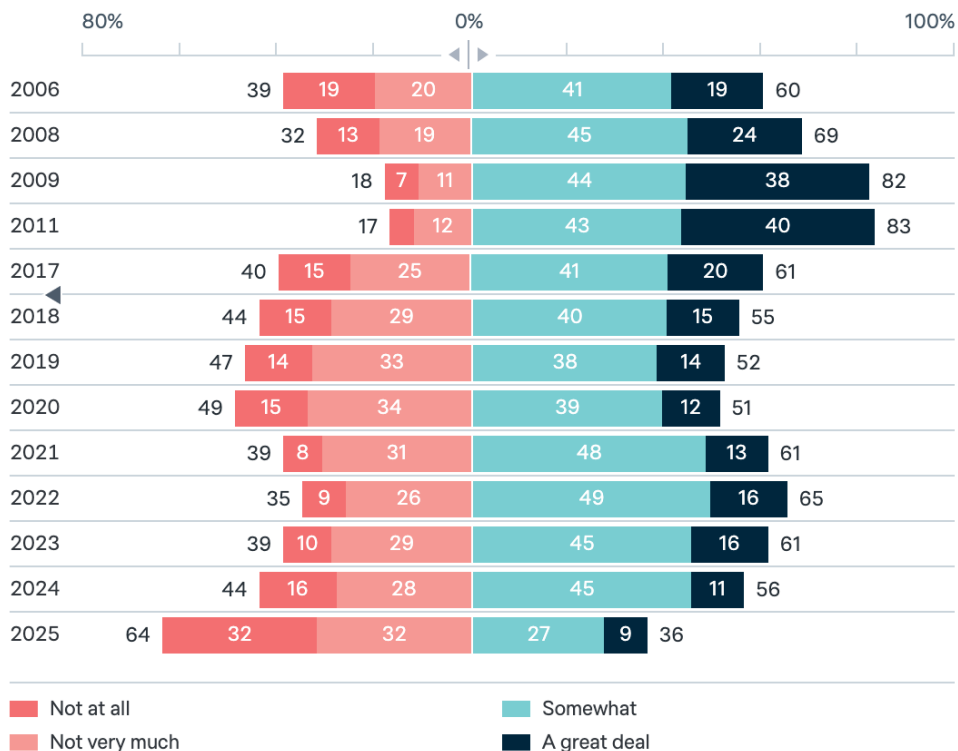
Since US President Donald Trump was inaugurated in January, he has upended longstanding assumptions about the United States' power and place in the world, its involvement in global institutions, and its approach to its allies and partners.

In this context, Australians' trust in the United States to act responsibly fell by 20 points, with only 36% of the public expressing any level of trust – a new low in two decades of Lowy Institute polling. By contrast, almost two thirds of the public (64%) say they hold 'not very much' trust (32%) or no trust 'at all' (32%) in the United States to act responsibly.

On this question, trust towards the United States among older Australians fell dramatically, while trust among younger Australians was already relatively low and fell by a smaller margin.

## Trust in the United States

How much do you trust the United States to act responsibly in the world?



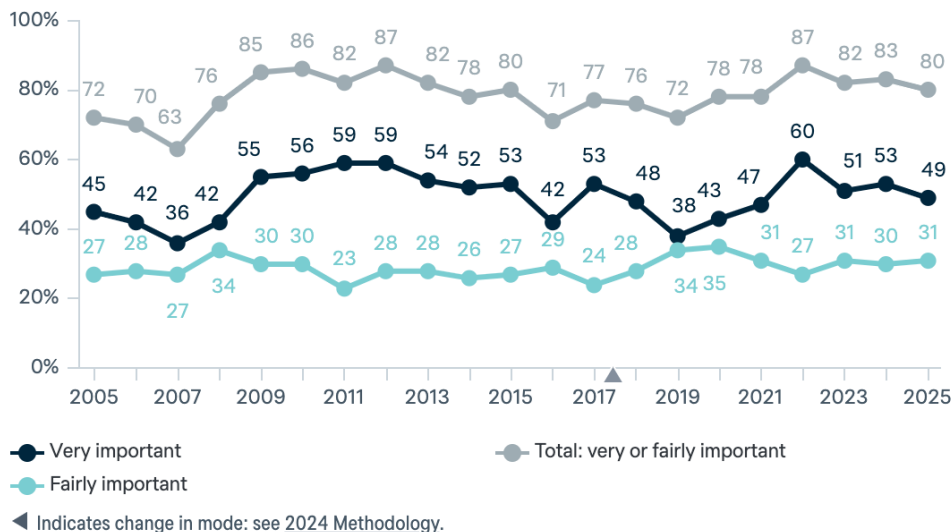
# US alliance: importance

Despite the significant drop in trust towards the United States, the vast majority of Australians (80%) continue to say the alliance is ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ important for Australia’s security, steady on last year (83%).

The view that the US alliance is important to Australia’s security has been one of the most resilient features of Lowy Institute polling, including holding at a strong majority throughout Donald Trump’s first term. The lowest ebb of support for the alliance was in 2007, during President George Bush’s war on Iraq, when only 63% of Australians said the alliance was important to the country’s security.

## US alliance: importance to Australia’s security

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



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## Policies of President Trump

Regarding Donald Trump's specific policies, with the exception of his demand for allies to spend more on defence (evenly split at 49% approve and disapprove), every other policy we tested received clear majority disapproval from the Australian public.

Australians are most disapproving of President Trump's pressure on Denmark to sell or hand over the self-governing territory of Greenland to the United States (89%). In January, Trump refused to rule out using force to acquire the territory.

Eight in ten Australians also disapprove of Donald Trump's use of tariffs to pressure other countries to comply with his administration's objectives (81%). At time of fieldwork, President Trump had announced plans for 25% tariffs on steel and aluminium imports to the United States, including from Australia, as well as announced or threatened tariffs against China, Canada, Mexico and several other countries. He had not yet announced his April 2 'Liberation Day' tranche of tariffs on countries around the world.

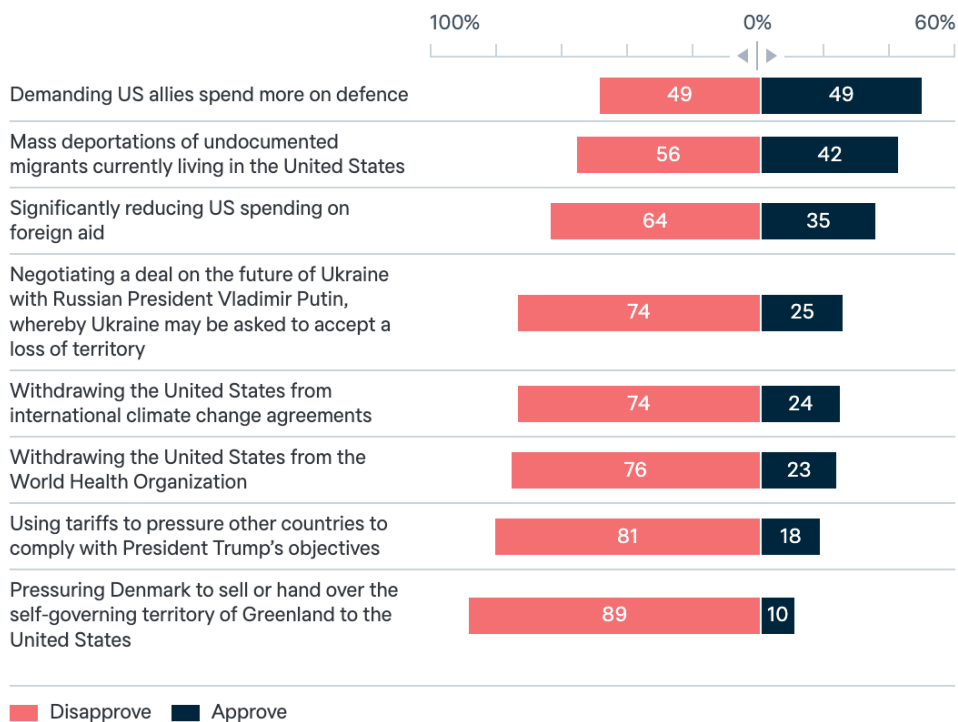
Three-quarters of Australians disapprove of withdrawing the United States from the World Health Organization (76%) and international climate change agreements (74%).

A similar majority of Australians disapprove (74%) of President Trump negotiating a deal on the future of Ukraine with Russian President Putin, whereby Ukraine may be asked to accept a loss of territory. President Trump's combative Oval Office meeting with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy took place just before fieldwork for this poll.

To a lesser extent, Australians disapprove of significantly reducing US spending on foreign aid (64%), and mass deportations of undocumented migrants (56%).

## Policies of President Trump

Here are some policies of US President Donald Trump, please indicate whether you approve or disapprove of each one:



1 to 2 per cent answered 'don't know' for each policy — not shown in chart.

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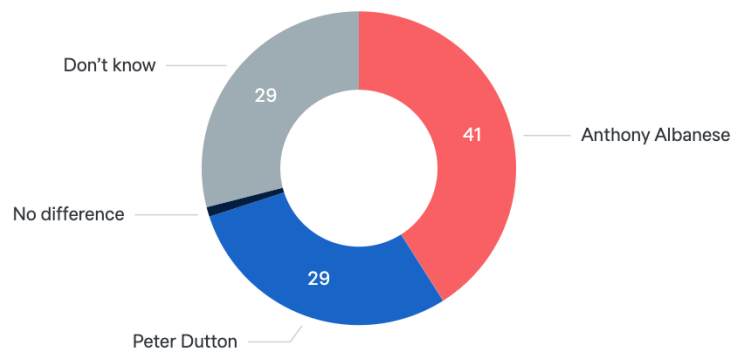
## Better foreign policy prime minister

In the lead up to the 2025 federal election, we asked Australians which political leader would be more competent at handling Australian foreign policy over the next three years. Incumbent Prime Minister Anthony Albanese (41%) leads Opposition leader Peter Dutton (29%) on this measure by twelve points. However, a significant number of Australians (29%) are undecided.

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### 2025 election: better foreign policy Prime Minister

Over the next three years, do you think Anthony Albanese or Peter Dutton would be more competent at handling Australia's foreign policy?



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## Better at managing Trump and Xi

Foreign policy does not often figure heavily into Australian federal election campaigns. However, global dislocation in 2025 has focussed public attention on Australia's relationships with its main security ally, the United States under President Donald Trump, and main trading partner, China under President Xi Jinping.

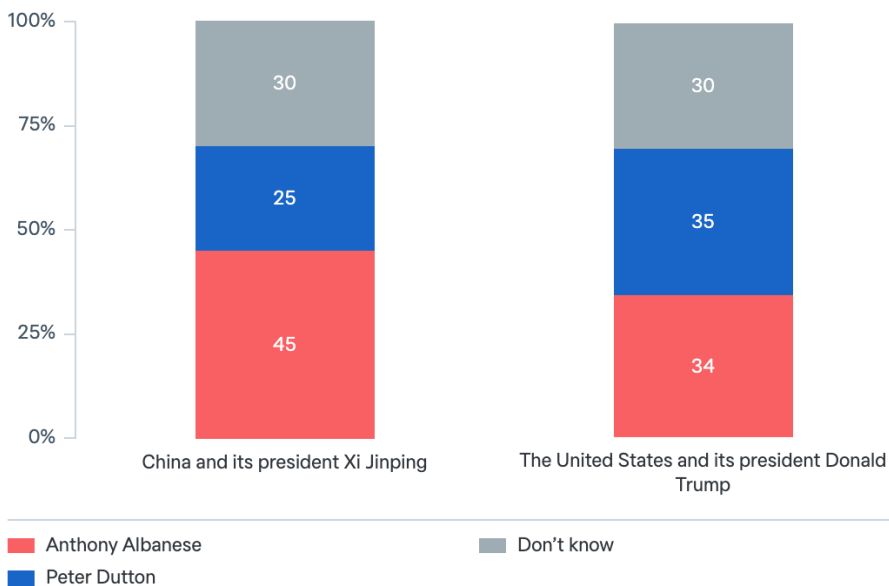
Australians are almost evenly split on whether Peter Dutton (35%) or Anthony Albanese (34%) would be better as prime minister at managing Australia's relationship with the United States and Donald Trump.

By contrast, Anthony Albanese (45%) enjoys a 20-point lead over Peter Dutton (25%) in Australians' confidence in him to manage the relationship with China and Xi Jinping.

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### 2025 election: relationships with Trump and Xi

Do you think Anthony Albanese or Peter Dutton would be better as prime minister at managing Australia's relationship with:



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## Methodological note

This pre-release of select results from the 2025 Lowy Institute Poll reports the results of a nationally representative online and telephone survey of 2117 adults across Australia, conducted between 3 and 16 March on behalf of the Lowy Institute by the Social Research Centre (SRC). The survey uses the Life in Australia™ panel, currently the only probability-based online panel in Australia.

On a simple random sample of 2117 responses, the margin of error is approximately 2.1%. 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 1.23.

This year, the sampling methodology for the Lowy Institute Poll was adjusted to improve the precision of estimates pertaining to political leaning. This involved selecting a sub-sample of the Social Research Centre's Life in Australia™ panel, so that probabilities of selection were in proportion to a sampling weight that combines demographic data from the Census and Australian Electoral Commission data on past vote (2022). The changes resulted in an overall weighting efficiency of 81% compared to 79% in 2024.

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Cover image: Billy Huynh/Unsplash

Explore the data at [poll.lowyinstitute.org](https://poll.lowyinstitute.org)

Published 16 April 2025

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Version 2025-04-14.5D589F7