



Methodology Statement

Brotherhood of St Laurence – Understanding Australians' Perceptions of Poverty - March 2025

This research complies with the [Australian Polling Council Quality Mark standards](#).

Item	Response
Research company	89 Degrees East
Client commissioned research	Brotherhood of St Laurence
End client	Brotherhood of St Laurence
Fieldwork dates	7 February 2025 - 13 February 2025
Mode of data collection	Online recruited from a research panel (100%)
Target population	Australians aged 18+
Sample size	n=1,629
Is voting intention published?	No

Item	Response
Effective sample size after weighting applied	N/A (n=1,629)
Margin of error associated with effective sample size	2.4% at 95% confidence level
Variables used in weighting	Unweighted
Weighting method used	Hard target quotas (age, gender, location) in line with ABS (2021).
Full question text, responses categories and randomisation	See below.
Proportion of landline/mobile completed interviews	N/A
Source of online sample	From a commercial permission-based panel

Positioning of voting intention questions in the questionnaire? Q13 (mid-survey)

How were undecided voters handled? Grouped "Don't know / undecided"

2PP calculation method N/A

Full Text of Published Questions

Q10. How would you describe you or your household's financial situation?

5 PT SCALE: Very stressed, somewhat stressed, getting by, somewhat comfortable, very comfortable

Q11. In the past 2 years have you ever experienced any of the following due to cost of living pressures? *Select all that apply.*

1. Delayed or changed significant life goals (e.g. getting married, having children, moving overseas)
2. Put off making a major purchase (e.g. house, car).
3. Reduced spending on non-essential items (e.g. eating out, entertainment, or hobbies).
4. Cut back on essential expenses like food or energy usage.
5. Moved to a more affordable area or living situation.
6. Borrowed money or gone into debt to make ends meet.
7. Skipped or delayed paying bills (e.g. utilities, phone, or credit card).
8. Been unable to afford necessary healthcare (e.g. doctor visits, medications, x-rays etc).
9. Experienced persistent stress or anxiety related to financial insecurity.
10. Relied on food banks or charitable organisations to access food or other basic necessities.
11. Been at risk of losing housing due to financial hardship.
12. Been unable to afford school/education costs for myself or my children (uniforms, camps, excursions etc).
13. None of the above. **[Exclusive select]**

Q12. Have you ever received income support payments?

Examples include: JobSeeker, Newstart, Youth Allowance, Austudy, Carer Payment, Disability Support Pension, Parenting Payment, Age Pension

1. Yes, I currently receive income support.
2. Yes, I have received income support in the past (not anymore).
3. No, I have never received income support.
4. Prefer not to say

ASK CITIZENS ONLY

Q13. If a federal election were held today, which party would receive your first preference vote?

1. Liberal Party
2. National Party
3. Australian Labor Party
4. The Greens
5. Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party
6. An independent or other minor party
7. Don't know / undecided

Q15. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

5 PT SCALE: Strongly disagree > Strongly agree

RANDOMISE

14. The community sector should receive more public funding from the government.
15. Community organisations are good at helping address problems that the government and private sector ignore.

16. Overall, the world is a better place because of the work done by community organisations.
17. The community sector would be able to serve the public more effectively with more government funding.
18. The community sector should work towards reforming our society to make it more equitable and just.
19. The community sector should speak out on social and political issues of importance.
20. People in the community sector (often working in not-for-profits) should be paid the same as if they were working at a similar level outside the sector.
21. I feel optimistic about what the next generation will achieve in this world.
22. The main role of the community sector is to help people who are most in need of support.
23. Things are generally improving in society.

Q16. Which is closest to your view? Select one.

Randomise order. Don't know at bottom.

1. Poverty is a major issue that affects many Australians.
2. Poverty is an issue, but it only affects a small number of Australians.
3. Poverty mostly affects people in other countries, not Australians.
4. Don't know.

Q17. Which sounds MOST RIGHT? Choose one.

Randomise order.

24. It's especially important to support people living in poverty during a cost of living crisis. [CRISIS = POVERTY MORE IMPORTANT]

OR

25. Addressing poverty is less important at a time when the majority of Australians are struggling with the cost of living. [CRISIS = POVERTY LESS IMPORTANT]

Q18. In your view, which of these scenarios are examples of people experiencing poverty? Select all that apply.

Randomise order.

A person who...

1. ... regularly does not have enough money to buy food.
2. ... is finding it difficult to get a secure job.
3. ... does not have a safe and comfortable place to live.
4. ... is unhappy with the salary at their current job.
5. ... has limited access to education or skills-training opportunities.
6. ...grocery shops on a strict budget.
7. ...does not feel safe and secure in their day to day life.
8. ...lacks social connection and community.
9. ...is concerned about rising expenses such as bills.
10. ...has poor health and limited access to health care.
11. ... is experiencing mental ill-health with limited access to support.
12. ...can rarely afford to or eat out at restaurants.
13. ...does not own their own car.

Q19. Which of the following do you think contribute MOST to ongoing poverty in Australia?

Select three.

Show 50% of sample top to bottom and 50% of sample bottom to top, keep order.

1. Individuals not trying hard enough and making bad choices.
2. People relying too much on welfare payments.
3. Bad luck.
4. Lack of support from family.
5. Not having a job.
6. Lack of education or opportunities to develop skills.
7. The situation that you were born into, including family trauma.
8. Living with chronic illness and/or disability.
9. Low wages and/or lack of secure work.
10. Lack of government support for people in need.
11. Decisions made by governments and politicians.

12. Decisions made by large corporations and businesses.
13. Discrimination (e.g. on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, disability)
14. An unfair system designed to advantage wealthy people.

Q20. Which sounds MOST RIGHT? Choose one.

Randomise order.

26. Poverty can limit people's choices and make it harder to live a safe and secure life. [POVERTY LIMITS CHOICE]

OR

27. The life we end up living comes down to the choices we make for ourselves and our families. [INDIVIDUAL DRIVE]

Q21. Which sounds MOST RIGHT? Choose one.

Randomise order.

28. Anyone who works hard and makes good choices can do well in life. [MERITOCRACY]

OR

29. If our society rewarded effort fairly, we wouldn't see so many hardworking people struggling to make ends meet. [UNFAIR SYSTEMS]

Q22. Which sounds MOST RIGHT? Choose one.

Randomise order.

No matter where we start in life ...

30. ... we all have the power to take control of our lives, put in the work and achieve our goals. [BOOTSTRAPS]

OR

31. ... we all deserve access to safe housing, fair pay, and the things we need to live a meaningful life. [HUMANITY]

Q23. Which sounds MOST RIGHT? Select one.

Randomise order.

- a. Dependence on government handouts has created a culture where some communities don't even try to help themselves. [PATHOLOGY OF POVERTY]

OR

- b. The way we have set up government systems in Australia makes life harder for some communities, trapping them in poverty. [SYSTEMS]

Q24. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

5 PT SCALE: Strongly disagree > Strongly agree
RANDOMISE

32. If every person worked hard and took responsibility for their own lives, poverty would not be a problem in Australia. [INDIVIDUAL DRIVE]
33. Our economic systems unfairly benefit some while failing others. [UNFAIR SYSTEMS]
34. Communities and cultures that don't prioritise hard work are more likely to experience poverty. [PATHOLOGY OF POVERTY]
35. The choices we have made as a society have created systems that make life easier for some people and harder for others. [SYSTEMS]
36. People living in poverty are faced with enormous challenges which they meet with creativity, love and resilience. [HUMANITY]
37. The more opportunities you have, the less likely you are to experience poverty.
38. Struggling to afford basics doesn't mean someone is lazy—it means our economy isn't working for all Australians.
39. Most Australians now understand the daily struggles of poverty due to the rising cost of essentials.
40. It feels like more people in my community are living in poverty these days.
41. Efforts to reduce poverty will help ease the pressures of the cost of living for all Australians.

Q25. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

5 PT SCALE: Strongly disagree > Strongly agree

RANDOMISE

We can reduce poverty in Australia...

42. ...by educating people in poverty about how to make better decisions for themselves and their families. [INDIVIDUAL DRIVE]
43. ... by working with communities in poverty to shift from a culture of dependence towards self-respect and self-reliance. [PATHOLOGY OF POVERTY]
44. ...by choosing to redesign our policies and systems so that they work for all of us, not just for billionaires/ the uber rich / the wealthy. [UNFAIR SYSTEMS/SYSTEMS]
45. ... if we start with treating people in poverty with dignity and respect. [HUMANITY]
46. ... by working together to address all forms of injustice such as gender inequality and racial inequality that give some people more opportunities than others. [SOLIDARITY]

Q26. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

5 PT SCALE: Strongly disagree > Strongly agree
RANDOMISE

47. The Government should increase the rate of income support payments.
48. The Government should invest in early childhood education so every child can access high-quality education from an early age no matter their family's income.
49. The Government should do more to help people with disability to access the support they need.
50. The Government should provide more tailored support to make it easier for people out-of-work to find a job.
51. Employers should do more to employ people with barriers to work (e.g. young people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people who have experience long-term unemployment)
52. Government should be doing more to help low-income households transition to electricity and more efficient appliances, to reduce the impact of high energy bills

Q27. Is there anyone in your life living in poverty or who has lived in poverty in the past (in Australia)?

Select all that apply.

1. Yes, myself.
2. Yes, a close friend/family member.
3. Yes, someone else I know (i.e. colleague, neighbour, someone in my community)
4. No, no one.
5. Prefer not to say

Q28. Do you have any experiences or thoughts about poverty in Australia that you'd like to share? This could relate to your opinion, perceptions and/or personal stories.

Reminder: Your responses are anonymous.

53. Yes [Box to type up to 200 words]
54. No, thank you.

