

Wednesday, 2 July 2019

## Australians see the Environment as the World's biggest problem but in Australia it's the Economy

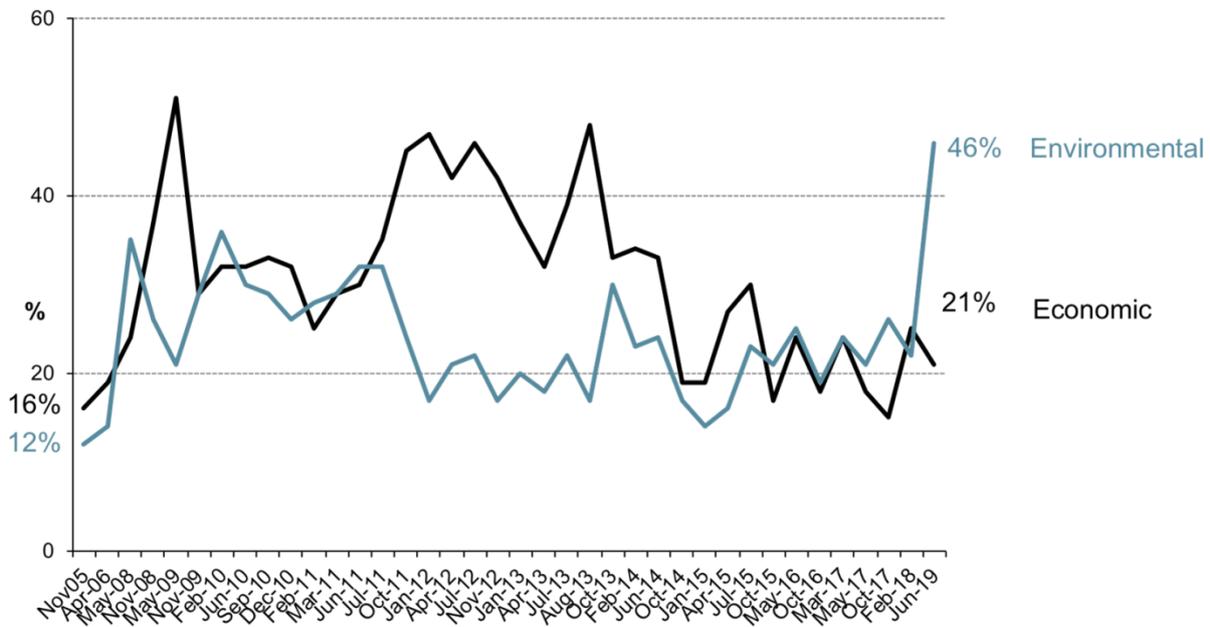
In mid-2019 new in-depth research exploring the concerns of Australians has found Australians regard Environmental concerns as the major problems facing the world at large but Economic concerns remain more important within Australia.

Now 46% of Australians mentioned some form of Environmental concern as the most important problem facing the World more than doubling since early 2018 (22%). This was enough to overtake the still important Economic concerns on 21%, down 4%.

However in Australia Economic concerns remain the top problem mentioned by 34% of Australians, up 2% since early 2018. Environmental concerns are now mentioned by 24%, up from 11%.

Roy Morgan interviewed a representative cross-section of 638 Australian electors who were asked: "What do you think is the most important problem facing the **World** today?" and then "What do you think is the most important problem facing **Australia** today?"

### Most important issues facing the World



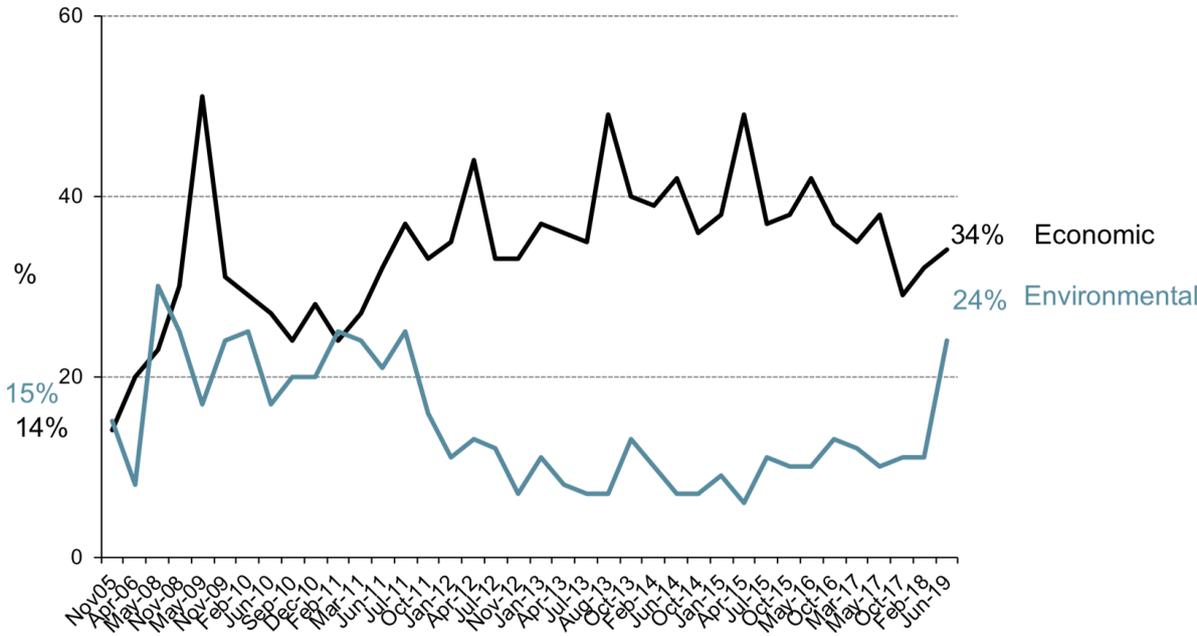
**Source:** Roy Morgan interviewed a representative cross-section of 638 Australians in June 2019.

When considering the wider **World** quantified thematic analysis of the verbatim responses of a nationally representative sample of 638 Australians found the Environment mentioned by just under 46% of Australians, led by the issue of Global warming (34%) and including Pollution/Rubbish, Famine/Food shortages, Water conservation/Murray-Darling water problems was the primary theme to emerge.

A further 21% of Australians mentioned Economic issues such as Poverty and the gap between rich and poor, Over-population, Economic problems, Cost of living issues, Unemployment and Globalisation/ Fairer world trade and Trade wars.

Other themes to emerge include a range of Social issues mentioned by 11% of respondents including Social apathy, Moral decline, Family breakdowns, Crime, Law and order, Drugs and drug abuse, Education and Social welfare. Terrorism/War/Security problems were mentioned by 4% and Government/Leadership problems were mentioned by 4% of respondents.

# Most important problems facing Australia



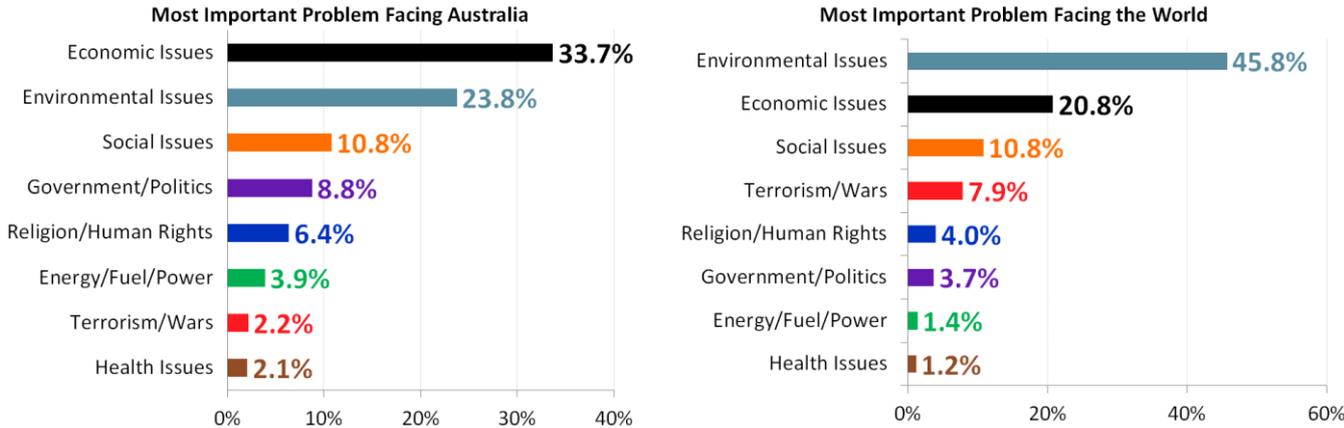
Source: Roy Morgan interviewed a representative cross-section of 638 Australians in June 2019.

Economic Issues led by Unemployment, Cost of living, Economic problems, Poverty and the gap between rich and poor, Homelessness/ Lack of housing and Housing affordability were mentioned by almost 34% of Australians as the most important problems facing **Australia**.

Environmental Issues including Global warming, water conservation and problems with the Murray-Darling, Drought, Pollution and Rubbish were mentioned by a further 24% of respondents.

These further themes emerged:

- 11% of respondents mentioned concerns related to Social issues which includes Social apathy/Family breakdowns/Moral decline, Educational issues, Crime/Law and Order, Social welfare/Welfare dependency;
- Government, Politics and Leadership issues were mentioned by just under 9% of Australians;
- Religion, Immigration and Human Rights which includes the contentious issues surrounding asylum seekers and refugees were mentioned by over 6% of Australians;
- Under 4% mentioned issues surrounding the Energy Crisis, Energy and Power supply, Electricity grid and Fossil fuel.



Source: Roy Morgan interviewed a representative cross-section of 638 Australians in June 2019.

A full breakdown of what each broad category comprises can be viewed below.

**Michele Levine, Chief Executive Officer Roy Morgan, says:**

*“In mid 2019 the Environment has re-emerged as a huge issue for Australians particularly when it comes to a global issue. Nearly half of Australian respondents mentioned an Environmental issue (46%) when asked to nominate the most important problem facing the **World** to more than double the second-placed Economic issues (21%).*

*“This represented a huge increase from 18 months ago in early 2018 when the Environment was mentioned by just 22% of respondents while 25% mentioned Economic issues.*

*“The Environment played a large role in the recent Federal Election although not in the way some may have imagined with the fight of the Adani coal-mine in central Queensland ultimately proving a winner for the Coalition. The local focus on ‘jobs’ in Queensland won out over concerns about the carbon dioxide emissions from more coal-mining and this is reflected in how Australians judge Environmental and Economic issues in an Australian context.*

*“Over a third of Australians, 34%, mentioned an Economic issue as the biggest problem facing **Australia** in mid-June comfortably ahead of Environmental issues mentioned by just under a quarter, or 24%, of Australians.*

*“Economic issues which resonate in Australia include Unemployment mentioned by 7% of Australians, Cost of living issues/Rising prices/Lack of wage growth (5%), Economic problems (5%), Poverty and the gap between rich and poor (4%), Homelessness/Lack of housing (3%), Housing affordability (2%) and Foreign ownership and investment/Selling our assets (2%).”*

The research was conducted in Australia, during June 2019 with a nationally representative sample of 638 men and women aged 14 or over. Respondents were asked: “What do you think is the most important problem facing the **World** today?” and “What do you think is the most important problem facing **Australia** today?”

These findings come from a special Roy Morgan study of Australians’ attitudes towards issues facing **Australia** and the **World** in the future. The research conducted was both **qualitative** (in that people were asked to use their own words) and **quantitative** (in that the ‘open-ended’ responses were analysed and ‘coded’ so that the results could be counted and reported as percentages).

**More information about the breakdown of these issues amongst different age groups, genders, states and regions, generations and Roy Morgan’s leading market segmentation tools are available for purchase.**

**For comments or more information about Roy Morgan’s data, please contact:**

**Roy Morgan – Enquiries**

**Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309**

[askroymorgan@roymorgan.com](mailto:askroymorgan@roymorgan.com)

**The main themes highlighted cover a wide range of specific issues listed here.**

**Economic Issues:** Financial problems, Cost of living, Rising prices, Money issues, Unemployment, Taxation (General), Mining Tax, Other Taxes, Poverty, The gap between rich and poor, Economic problems, Housing affordability, Homelessness/Lack of housing, Over-population, Globalisation, Fairer world trade and others.

**Religion/Human Rights:** Religion, Religious fundamentalism, Human rights, Refugees, Asylum seekers, Boat people, Refugee and asylum problems, Detention of refugees, Immigration/Immigration policy, Intolerance, Racism, Racial tension, Aboriginal issues/health/rights, Multiculturalism, Integration and Assimilation and others.

**Government/Politics:** Government, Politics, Leadership, Political system, Government spending, Courage to lead, Lack of vision, Politicians, Malcolm Turnbull, Barnaby Joyce, Bill Shorten, Donald Trump, other politicians and others.



**Social Issues:** Social apathy, Family breakdowns, Selfishness, Moral decline, Social welfare, Welfare dependency, Youth issues – Homelessness, apathy, discipline, Drugs and drug abuse, Education, Crime, Law and order, Anger, Violence, Aggression and others.

**Environmental Issues:** Global warming, Climate change, Water conservation, Pollution, Rubbish, Famine, Food shortages, Cutting down rainforests, Desertification, Concerns about Global warming/Climate change are exaggerated and other Environmental issues.

**Energy/Fuel/Power:** Energy crisis, Energy infrastructure, Power stations, Power supply Energy supply, Power crisis, Coal-fired power stations, Renewable energy, Wind-power, Solar-power, Electricity prices, Sustainable management of natural resources, Depletion of Fossil fuels, Petrol prices.

**Terrorism/Wars:** Wars, Conflicts, Middle East, North Korea, Iraq,, Syria, Africa, Afghanistan, Ukraine, ISIS, Terrorism, Terrorists, Al-Qaeda, Bombings, Shootings, Security, Safety, World peace, UN.

**Health Issues:** Hospitals, Private health insurance (PHI), Health cover, Aged care, Disability care, Health system, General Health services and other Health-related issues.

**About Roy Morgan**

Roy Morgan is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan has over 75 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

**Margin of Error**

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2