



Polling - Right to Disconnect

February 2024

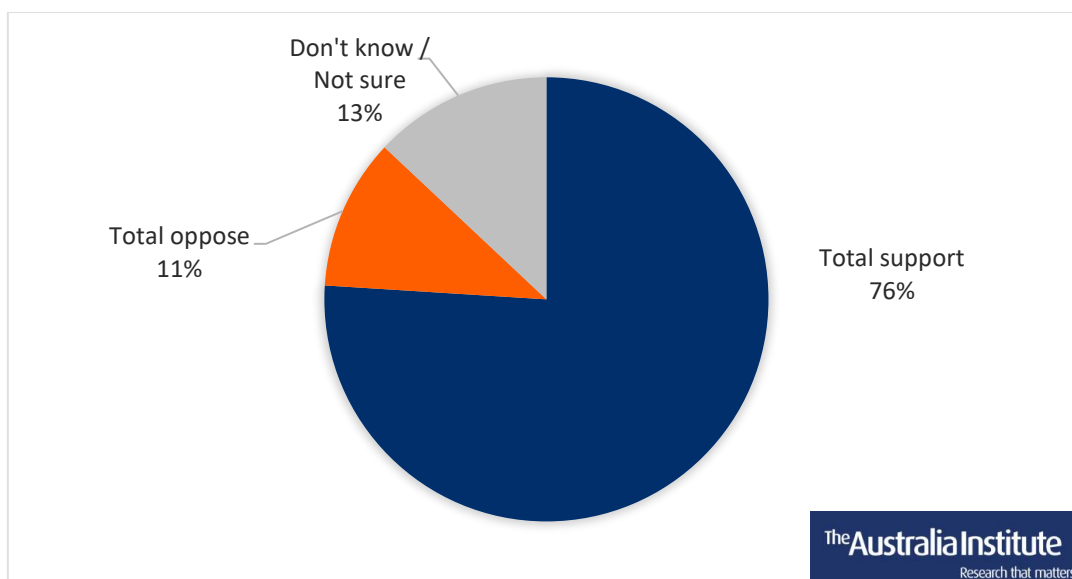
Key results

The Australia Institute's Centre for Future Work surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,017 Australians about a right to disconnect from work. Survey respondents were asked if they would support or oppose the federal government legislating a right to disconnect that would direct employers to avoid contacting workers outside of work hours, unless in an emergency.

The results show that:

- Three in four Australians (76%) support the federal government legislating a right to disconnect.
- One in nine Australians (11%) oppose legislating a right to disconnect.
- A majority of Australians across all voting intentions support legislating a right to disconnect (61% to 90%).

Figure 1: Legislating a right to disconnect



Respondents were first told

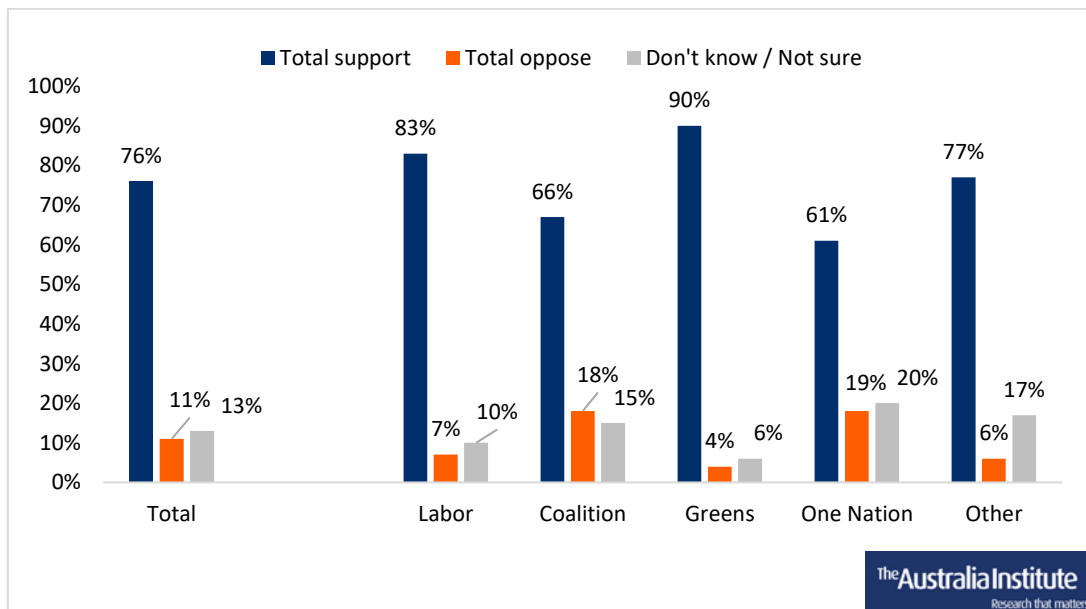
In recent years various Australian unions, including the Police Association Victoria, have negotiated a “right to disconnect” from work. This directs employers to avoid contacting workers outside of work hours, unless in an emergency.

They were then asked if they would support or oppose the Federal Government legislating a similar “right to disconnect” nationally.

As shown in Figure 2, a majority of people of all voting intentions support legislating a right to disconnect.

- Support is highest among Greens voters (90%) and Labor voters (83%).
- Two in three Coalition voters (66%) support legislating a right to disconnect, over three times as many as oppose legislating a right to disconnect (18%).
- Three in four Independent/Other voters (77%) and three in five One Nation voters (61%) support legislating a right to disconnect.
- One in nine Australians (11%) oppose legislating a right to disconnect.

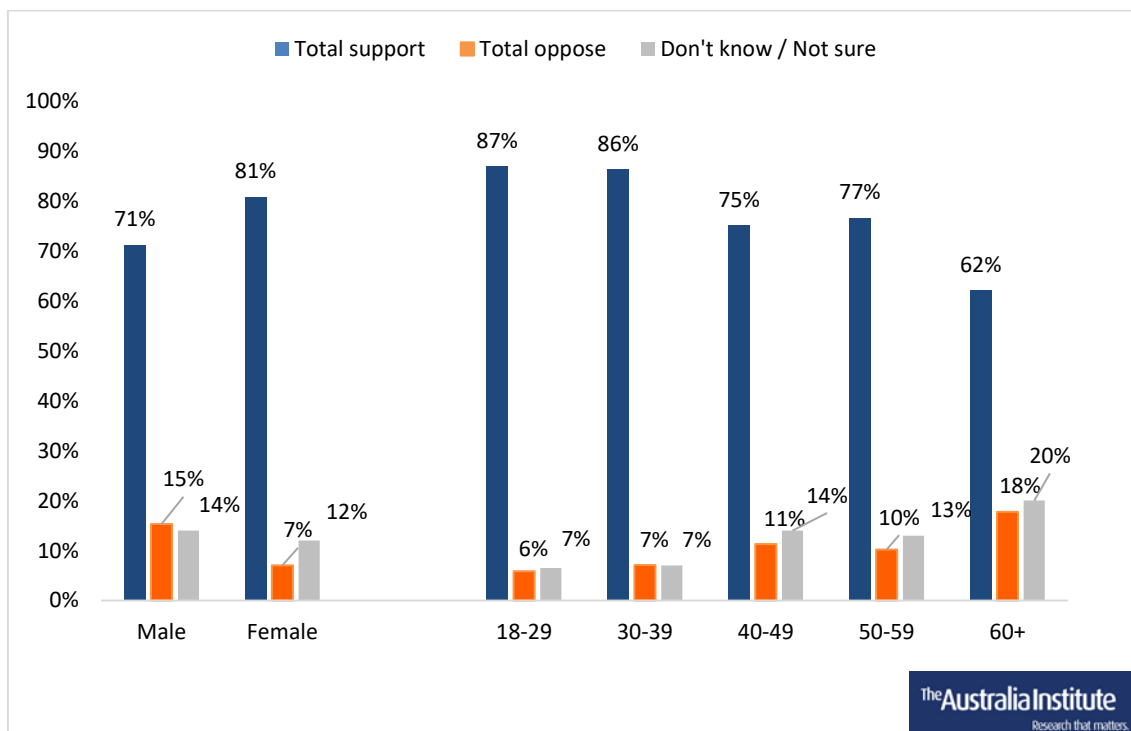
Figure 2: Legislating a right to disconnect by voting intention



Support for legislating a right to disconnect is high among both women and men and among people of all ages, as shown in Figure 3:

- Four in five women (81%) and seven in 10 men (71%) support legislating a right to disconnect.
- Support is highest among people aged 18–29 (87%) and 30–39 (86%).
- Three in every four people aged 40–49 (75%) and 50–59 (77%) support legislating a right to disconnect.
- Three in five people aged 60 and older (62%) support legislating a right to disconnect, more than three times as many as oppose (18%).

Figure 3: Legislating a right to disconnect by gender and age



The Australia Institute survey was conducted between 23 and 29 January 2024. Subsequent to this, on 12 February 2024, legislation introducing a right to disconnect from work was passed in the Australian Parliament as part of the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Bill 2023.

Detailed results

Preceding questions in the poll are expected to have influenced the results of the questions published here. The questions, and the response options for each question, are as follows:

Do you think that the Fair Work Commission should be able to set minimum hourly pay and some minimum standards of work for the following types of workers?

Response options: Should be able, Should not be able, Don't know/Not sure

1. Shop assistants
2. Drivers for rideshare services like Uber
3. People paid to deliver parcels or meals
4. Truck drivers using company-owned trucks
5. Truck drivers using their own trucks
6. Aged care or disability service workers working in care facilities
7. Aged care or disability service workers working in people's houses
8. Self-employed tradespeople (such as plumbers or electricians)

Paid sick leave, paid annual leave and minimum notice are only provided to workers with permanent jobs and not to casual employees (who work with no guarantee of regular or continuing hours).

Which, if any, of the following do you think casual employees should be entitled to receive?

Response options: Entitled, Not entitled, Don't know/Not sure

1. Paid leave in case of sickness
2. Paid annual leave
3. Minimum notice of job termination or dismissal

Some labour advocates have proposed a "right to disconnect" for workers. Generally, this refers to rules protecting workers from being interrupted by work during their non-work hours.

If workers in Australia had a “right to disconnect” what would be the most important aspects for you?

Response options: select all that apply

1. Leaving work on time
2. Not being contacted on the weekend
3. Not being contacted while on leave (for example annual or sick leave)
4. Not being required to work on weekends
5. None of the above
6. Don't know/Not sure
- 7.

In recent years various Australian unions, including the Police Association Victoria, have negotiated a “right to disconnect” from work. This directs employers to avoid contacting workers outside of work hours, unless in an emergency.

Would you support or oppose the Federal Government legislating a similar “right to disconnect” nationally?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>
Strongly support	33%	28%	38%	34%	32%	31%	40%
Support	43%	43%	42%	41%	42%	47%	41%
Oppose	8%	10%	6%	7%	9%	6%	7%
Strongly oppose	3%	5%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	14%	12%	14%	14%	11%	8%

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Coalition</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>One Nation</i>	<i>Other</i>
Strongly support	33%	34%	25%	49%	35%	36%
Support	43%	49%	42%	41%	26%	41%
Oppose	8%	5%	13%	4%	9%	3%
Strongly oppose	3%	2%	5%	0%	9%	3%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	10%	15%	6%	20%	17%

	<i>Total</i>	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Strongly support	33%	40%	44%	28%	36%	23%
Support	43%	47%	43%	47%	41%	39%
Oppose	8%	6%	5%	7%	5%	12%
Strongly oppose	3%	0%	2%	5%	5%	5%
Don't know / Not sure	13%	7%	7%	14%	13%	20%