

PRESS RELEASE

Gladys Berejiklian remains preferred choice as NSW Premier – *The Sydney Morning Herald* Nine News Ipsos poll

Sydney, Australia, October 25, 2020 — A majority (58%) of people in NSW say Gladys Berejiklian remains their preferred choice as State Premier, while 19% would prefer Opposition Leader, Jodi McKay, in the role, according to *The Sydney Morning Herald* Nine News Ipsos Poll.

The preference for Berejiklian as State Premier divides along party lines, with support increasing to 86% among Coalition voters and dropping to 40% among Labor voters.

Leaders' approval ratings

Almost two-thirds (64%) of people in NSW approve of the way in which Berejiklian is performing her role as State Premier; 29% strongly approve and 35% tend to approve. Her approval ratings are significantly higher among metro residents than those in regional areas (67% and 58%, respectively), among those over 40 compared to younger people (70% and 54%, respectively), and among higher income earners (with an annual household income of \$105k+), 72%. Unsurprisingly, her approval ratings are also higher among Coalition voters, than among Labor or Greens voters (85%, 53% and 39%, respectively).

One in five (22%) approve of the performance of Jodi McKay as NSW Opposition Leader, while 25% disapprove. More than half (54%) either do not have an opinion on McKay's performance as Opposition Leader, or say they don't know (41% and 13%, respectively). Among Labor voters, her approval rating increases to 39%, however almost half (47%) of Labor voters say they neither approve nor disapprove of her performance or say they do not know.

Similarly, 18% approve of John Barilaro's performance as Nationals leader, and 35% disapprove. Almost half (48%) neither approve nor disapprove, or do not know. His approval ratings are significantly higher among male voters (25%), among younger voters aged under 40 (25%) and those on medium (\$40,000 - \$105,000) to low (<\$40,000) annual household incomes (22%).

Preferred NSW leader

When asked whether they would prefer Gladys Berejiklian or Jodi McKay as NSW State Premier, 58% prefer Berejiklian and only one in five (19%) mention McKay. Among Coalition voters, the preference for Berejiklian as Premier rises to 86%. Among Labor voters, more would prefer Berejiklian as Premier than the Labor party leader, Jodi McKay (40% and 37%, respectively).

Handling of the pandemic

There is strong support (74% satisfied) for how the State Government has handled the coronavirus pandemic in NSW, with 34% very satisfied and 40% fairly satisfied. Coalition voters are significantly more likely to be satisfied with the State Government's handling of the pandemic at 86%.

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Only 17% say they are dissatisfied. Men are more likely to say this (20%), as are Labor and Greens voters (both 21%).

Gladys Berejiklian's relationship with Daryl Maguire

When asked about the NSW State Premier's secret, long-standing relationship with ex-MP Daryl Maguire and his alleged corrupt activity, a quarter (25%) believe Berejiklian should resign, while 63% do not think she should resign. Support for the Premier to stay in office is significantly higher among women (70%), older people aged over 40 (70%), and Coalition voters (81%).

Just over a third (36%) believe the Premier had at least a fair amount of knowledge about Maguire's involvement in the alleged corrupt activity at the time of their relationship. Almost half (47%) believe she knew 'not very much' about it or 'nothing at all'.

Perceptions of Berejiklian's awareness of Maguire's involvement correlate with party support, with only a quarter (25%) of Coalition voters saying she knew 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' about his alleged activity. This increases to half among Labor and Greens voters (51% and 52% respectively).

Seven in ten (71%) believe Berejiklian's reputation has been damaged 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' by her association with Maguire. Only a quarter (24%) believe there has been 'not very much' or no damage to her reputation. Labor and Greens voters are more likely to say that her reputation has been damaged at least 'a fair amount' (79% and 83%, respectively).

Were Berejiklian to resign, the NSW public have no clear preference for who should succeed her, with half (49%) saying they do not know. This is significantly higher among women (59%) and those on low annual household incomes of less than \$40,000 (57%). One in five (22%) prefer Andrew Constance as the next Premier, 15% mention Dominic Perrottet and one in ten (10%) say Rob Stokes.

Ipsos Australia Public Affairs Director, Jess Elgood, said: "Despite the pandemic, and the recent revelations about Gladys Berejiklian's personal life, she retains the confidence of people in NSW. She is our preferred Premier and we believe the State Government has done a good job in handling the pandemic. That said, her relationship with Daryl Maguire has damaged her reputation in the eyes of voters."

Notes to editors

Technical details

These are the findings of an online survey of a representative sample of 863 adults in NSW, aged 18+, between 21st - 23rd October 2020. $\pm 3.4\%$ is the maximum margin of sampling error that might apply to this sample. The data are weighted to reflect the population distribution.



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