

Poll reveals majority of Australians want long weekend, not January 26 holiday

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A majority of Australians want a guaranteed long weekend to celebrate Australia Day instead of January 26, a new poll has revealed, as the nation prepares to celebrate this weekend.



There is majority support in all regions of Australia. Picture NewsWire / Monique Harmer

Each year the debate about scraping January 26 sparks, as First Nations people protest to replace the date with a Day of Mourning which marks invasion and dispossession.

The new national YouGov polling, commissioned by Future Super on behalf of Clothing The Gaps and the Australian Long Weekend campaign, says Aussies want a public holiday on the second-last Monday of January (18–24 January), creating a fixed summer long weekend.

“These poll results show that Australians are ready and support changing the date,” Laura Thompson, chief executive and co-founder of Clothing The Gaps, said.

Ms Thompson, a Gunditjmara woman, says an Australian long weekend offers a practical solution by creating distance from January 26, a Day of Mourning for First

Nations people, while allowing for a national celebration that is inclusive and respectful.



Aussies want to enjoy Australia Day over a fixed long weekend, rather than on January 26. Picture: NewsWire / Nikki Short

Support was the strongest in the 18-24 year-old category, with 70 per cent polling for a fixed Australian long weekend over January 26.

WA led the nation, with 57 per cent backing the long weekend to celebrate Australia Day.

NSW, Victoria and QLD showed strong majority support as over 50 per cent voted to change the date and create a fixed long weekend.

“Australians are tired of the division surrounding January 26, and when offered a practical, commonsense alternative like an Australian Long Weekend, the majority of Australians are ready to move forward,” she said.

Voters showed a majority support in all regions of Australia, including the inner metropolitan 55 per cent, outer metropolitan 55 per cent, provincial cities and towns 54 per cent and rural Australia 54 per cent.

Phil Jenkyn, the co-convener of the Australia Long Weekend, said this option was “about finding a solution that works”.

“An Australian Long Weekend is a practical, commonsense way to move forward without continuing the harm caused by January 26,” Mr Jenkyn said.

“The results reflect the state of the nation, with a majority seeking a way to honour a national celebration without the division associated with January 26,” he said.



For First Nations people, January 26 marks invasion and dispossession, not a national celebration. Picture: NewsWire / Brenton Edwards

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<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/breaking-news/poll-reveals-majority-of-australians-want-long-weekend-not-january-26-holiday/news-story/d70f50e8e60d37474bea42fc5ead9f3c>