

# Research paper on why voting should remain compulsory in australia

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Australia, officially known as the Commonwealth of Australia, is found in the Southern hemisphere of the Australian continent. Since 1st January, 1901, when Australia became a federation, the Commonwealth of Australia has maintained a stable liberal democratic political system. The country is a constitutional monarchy and has federal government.

The federal government of Australia comprises of three branches; the legislature (which is made up of the Parliament, the Senate and the House of Representatives), the executive (made up of the Federal Executive Council), and the judiciary (consisting of the High Court of Australia and other federal courts).

Australia, being a democratic country, has got its own electoral system. The Australian electoral system has got some distinctive features which are preferential voting, compulsory voting, and proportional voting. Preferential voting is used for most of the elections; for the upper and lower houses, for the municipal elections, as well as for the federal and state elections. In this type of election, the voters get to vote for the person of their choice either on paper or electronically.

In the past, Australia had a record of low voter turnout. This led the Australian government to consider making voting a compulsory exercise in the country. The constitution was revised to allow for the placement of a law that makes voting compulsory.

Compulsory voting in Australia has been received with mixed feelings. Some politicians, especially the conservative ones have tried to fight for the abolition of compulsory voting. Their efforts have not bore fruits and the Australian government has stood its ground that voting remains a

compulsory exercise in the country.

Voting in Australia should remain compulsory in the country due a number of reasons. Most importantly, compulsory voting increases the legitimacy of the elections and the government that takes power. When the voter populace is low, the chances that a self-centered individual or group will vote themselves into power are very high. This is the major hidden motive of politicians who are against compulsory voting in Australia.

Another reason why voting in Australia should remain compulsory is to safeguard the democratic rights of the Australian citizens. In every democratic country, Australia being one of them, all citizens who have acquired the voting age, 18 years, have the right to vote for leaders of their choice. Besides voting being a democratic right, the voter can decide spoil their vote or to vote for the political party of their choice. This further legitimizes the government.

Voting in Australia should remain compulsory because voting is a civic duty like any other duty that the citizens are supposed to do. Other civic duties include paying of taxes compulsory attendance of school. Not fulfilling any of the civic duties makes one a disobedient citizen who is punishable by law. It being compulsory for everybody who has attained 18 years of age to vote reduces the strain of politicians to persuade people to vote. The politicians are only left with the responsibility of conducting their campaigns. This is a control measure of politicians buying the votes from people to stop them from voting.

Compulsory voting compels everybody of voting age to take part in the political activities of the country. More to that, it is easier for the government

to make policies based on the elections, the total electoral count is a representative count of Australian citizens.

However, it is against democracy for the Australian government to force its people to vote. A citizen has the right to decide whether to vote or not, and who to vote for. This is a right that the government in Australia has totally disregarded. Besides it being undemocratic for the Australian citizens to be forced to vote, there are increased chances that the count of spoilt votes will be high. It is also very expensive to make follow ups of who failed to vote and why they did not vote.

## **Worksheet**

1. What is the official name of Australia?
2. Where is Australia located?
3. Give a brief history of the country.
4. What type of government does Australia have?
5. Does the Australian government have branches or departments? If yes, what is each branch comprised of?
6. Is Australia a democratic country and does it have an electoral commission?
7. What are some of the special features of the Australian Electoral System?
8. Who is supposed to vote?
9. What is preferential voting? Where is it commonly practiced and how is it done? What are some of its limitations?
10. Is it compulsory for everybody to vote in all elections that are held in the country?

11. Why does the government insist on compulsory voting?
12. Is everybody in support of compulsory voting in Australia?
13. What steps does the Australian government take to ensure that voting remains compulsory in the country?
14. What are the limitations for making elections compulsory in Australia?
15. Is it right for the Australian government to force its people to vote?