



Essential Report

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Executive Summary

This short report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The omnibus was conducted online from the 13th to the 18th of January and attracted 1003 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting preference, this week we asked people to rate their preferred Prime Minister out of Kevin Rudd and Malcolm Turnbull. This week we also asked the Australian public who they believe to have been the best Prime Minister of Australia since the World War Two era.

This week we ask the Australian public to consider whether they think in the next 12 months their personal financial situation, job security and level of personal debt will change for the better or for the worse.

Given the upcoming inauguration of Barack Obama, this week we ask the Australian public whether they think the incoming US President will bring about major change to the Government of the US.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 10).

Please note not all tables total 100% due to rounding.



Federal politics – voting intention

Q. If there was a Federal election held today, to which party would you probably give your first preference?

Q. If you 'don't know' on the above question, which party are you currently leaning to?

* 1791 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	32%		
National	3%		
Total Lib/Nat	35%	41%	-
Labor	50%	59%	-
Greens	8%		
Family First	3%		
Other/Independent	5%		

NB. The data in the above table is derived from our weekly first preference voting question. Respondents who select 'don't know' as their first preference are not included in the results.

* Sample is the culmination of two week's data.



Better Prime Minister

Q. Who do you think would be the better Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd or Malcolm Turnbull?

	22/9	27/10	24/11	This week
Kevin Rudd	45%	60%	57%	56%
Malcolm Turnbull	25%	19%	21%	20%
No opinion	30%	22%	21%	23%

Kevin Rudd maintains his preferred Prime Minister status over Malcolm Turnbull (56% v 20%).

People's preference tended to follow party lines – Labor voters are more likely than Coalition voters to support their leader – 95% of Labor voters prefer Kevin Rudd and 60% of Coalition voters prefer Malcolm Turnbull.

Females are more likely to think that Kevin Rudd would make a better Prime Minister (59%), while males are more likely to think that Malcolm Turnbull would make a better Prime Minister (26%).



Australia's best Prime Minister

Q. Choosing from the following list, who do you think has been Australia's best Prime Minister?

Prime Minister	Term in office	%
John Curtin	7 Oct 1941 - 5 Jul 1945	4%
Ben Chifley	13 Jul 1945 - 19 Dec 1949	2%
Robert Menzies	19 Dec 1949 - 26 Jan 1966	11%
Harold Holt	26 Jan 1966 - 19 Dec 1967	1%
John Gorton	10 Jan 1968 - 10 Mar 1971	1%
William McMahon	10 Mar 1971 - 5 Dec 1972	1%
Gough Whitlam	5 Dec 1972 - 11 Nov 1975	9%
Malcolm Fraser	11 Nov 1975 - 11 Mar 1983	3%
Bob Hawke	11 Mar 1983 - 20 Dec 1991	12%
Paul Keating	20 Dec 1991 - 11 Mar 1996	8%
John Howard	11 Mar 1996 - 3 Dec 2007	28%
Kevin Rudd	3 Dec 2007 – present	20%

The top five Prime Ministers rated amongst those surveyed are John Howard (28%), Kevin Rudd (20%), Bob Hawke (12%), Robert Menzies (11%) and Gough Whitlam (9%).

63% of Coalition voters rate John Howard as Australia's best Prime Minister, Labor voters were more likely to rate Kevin Rudd as the best Australian Prime Minister (32%) followed by Bob Hawke at 16%. 25% of Green voters rated Gough Whitlam as the best Australian Prime Minister.

Respondents in the 25 – 34 year age group were more likely to rate Kevin Rudd as the best Australian Prime Minister (34%). People aged 50 years and over were more likely to prefer Robert Menzies (19%), while respondents aged 18 – 24 were more likely to rate Gough Whitlam as the best Australian Prime Minister (17%).

56% of respondents nominated a Labor Prime Minister compared to 44% who nominated a Liberal.



Financial situation

Q. Thinking about the next 12 months - In 12 months time, do you think you will be financially better off than you are now, financially worse off or about the same?

	%
Financially better off	18%
Financially worse off	30%
About the same	42%
Don't know	10%

Most people surveyed think that in the next 12 months time, they will be financially about the same than they are now (42%). 30% think they will be financially worse off.

Those more likely to think they will be financially worse off are more likely to be people aged 50 years and over (39%) and not working (34%), while people more likely to think they will be financially better off are more likely to be aged 18 – 24 (26%) and in full time work (23%).



Job security

Q. In 12 months time, do you think – when it comes to job security –you will be much more secure; somewhat more secure; somewhat less secure; much less secure or about the same?

	%
Total more secure	8%
Total less secure	22%
Much more secure	3%
Somewhat more secure	5%
About the same	44%
Somewhat less secure	15%
Much less secure	8%
Not working	14%
Don't know	10%

The majority of people surveyed think when it comes to job security, they think they will be in 'about the same' position in the next 12 months time, while 22% think they will be in a less secure position.

Respondents aged 35 – 49 years are more likely to think they will be somewhat less secure/much less secure when it comes to job security in the next 12 months time (29%), while respondents aged 18 – 24 are more likely to think that their job situation will be much more secure/somewhat more secure in the next 12 months time (14%).

58% of respondents in full time work think that their job security in the next 12 months time will be about the same, while those in part time work are more likely to think that their job security will be somewhat less secure/much less secure (31%).

55% of respondents earning \$1000 - \$1600 per week and 54% earning \$1600 + per week are more likely to think that their job security will be about the same in the next 12 months.



Personal debt

Q. And in 12 months time, do you think your level of debt including loans and credit cards will have increased a lot, a little, decreased a lot, a little or stayed about the same?

	%
Total more	20%
Total decreased	33%
Increased a lot	7%
Increased a little	13%
Stayed about the same	38%
Decreased a little	24%
Decreased a lot	9%
Don't know	8%

20% of people think that their level of debt, including loans and credit cards will have increased a lot/increased a little and 33% think their level of debt will decrease.

27% of people earning less than \$600 per week think that their level of debt will increase a lot/a little over the next 12 months.

41% of respondents in the 35 – 49 age group think that their level of debt will decrease by a little/by a lot in the next 12 months.



US Politics

Q. Do you think that the new US President Barack Obama will bring about major change to the Government of the US, some change, a little change or no change at all?

	%
Major change	28%
Some change	40%
A little change	14%
No change	6%
Don't know	11%

68% of people surveyed think that the new US President, Barack Obama will bring about major/some change to the Government of the US.

Females are more likely to be more optimistic about the new president – 33% of women think that Barack Obama will bring major change to the governing of the US, while 26% of men think that Barack Obama will bring little/no change.



Appendix One – Methodology

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a weekly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Your Source is an Australian social and market research company specializing in recruitment, field research, data gathering and data analysis. Your Source holds Interviewer Quality Control Australia (IQCA) accreditation, Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO) membership and World Association of Opinion and Marketing Research Professionals (ESOMAR) membership. Senior Your Source staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behavior.

Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct research on a week by week basis since the 19th of November 2007. Each Monday, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses issues that are topical. From there a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated each week (such as political preference and social perspective), while others are unique to each week and reflect prominent media and social issues that are present at the time.

Your Source has a self managed consumer online panel of 109 500. The majority of panel members have been recruited using off line methodologies, effectively ruling out concerns associated with online self selection. Your Source has validation methods in place that prevent panelist over use and ensure member authenticity. Your Source randomly selects 18+ males and females (with the aim of targeting 50/50 males/females) from its Australia wide panel. An invitation is sent out to approximately 7000 – 8000 of their panel members. The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000 + responses. The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Wednesday of each week and closed on the following Tuesday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points (referred to as 'Zoints').

EMC uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data. The data is weighted against Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

