



EssentialReport

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Level 8, Suite 10
377 Sussex Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone 02 8280 9100
Mobile 0448 801 044

With data supplied by



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 16th to the 22nd of February and attracted 1175 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting preference, this week we asked respondents whether they think that economic conditions in Australia will improve or get worse over the next 12 months and what people are most concerned about resulting from the global financial crisis. This week we seek to ascertain whether the Australian public believes that the Government would be right in calling an early election if the Opposition continues to oppose a number of the Government's financial measures. We ask the Australian public whether they agree or disagree that the Federal Government should take control of primary health services such as nursing, dental care and general practice from the states. This week we also ask the Australian public to rate their preferred Prime Minister out of Kevin Rudd or Peter Costello.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 9)

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?

* 2160 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	30%		
National	2%		
Total Lib/Nat	32%	38%	- 1%
Labor	52%	62%	+ 1%
Greens	8%		
Family First	2%		
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.



Economic conditions in Australia over the next 12 months

Q. Over the next 12 months do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much the same?

	1 Dec 08	23 Feb 09
Total better	21%	19%
Total worse	61%	65%
Get a lot better	2%	2%
Get a little better	19%	17%
Get a little worse	45%	42%
Get a lot worse	16%	23%
Stay much the same	13%	12%
No opinion	5%	4%

65% of people surveyed think that over the next 12 months, economic conditions in Australia will get a little worse/a lot worse, while 19% think that economic conditions will get a little better/a lot better.

The number of people that think economic conditions over the next 12 months in Australia will get a lot worse/a little worse has increased by four percentage points since we last asked this question at the end of 2008.

Respondents aged 50 years and over were most likely to think that economic conditions in Australia will get a little worse/a lot worse over the next 12 months (71%).

Labor voters were more likely to think that economic conditions in Australia over the next 12 months will get a lot better/a little better (28%) while Coalition voters were more likely to think that economic conditions in Australia over the next 12 months will get a lot worse/a little worse (77%).



Concerns relating to the current global financial crisis

Q. Thinking about the current global financial crisis, which of the following are you most concerned about?

	27 Oct 08	1 Dec 08	12 Jan 09	23 Feb 09
Increasing unemployment	23%	29%	32%	38%
Value of superannuation and investments falling	34%	32%	32%	27%
Businesses closing down	12%	13%	12%	16%
Higher inflation	27%	20%	18%	14%
No opinion	5%	6%	5%	6%

When it comes to the global financial crisis, increasing unemployment is concerning most people (38%), followed by the value of superannuation and investments falling (27%).

The number of people concerned with increasing unemployment has consistently increased over the four months that we have asked this question, increasing by 15 percentage points since we first asked this question in October 2008.

Respondents aged 50 years and over were most likely to be concerned with value of superannuation and investments falling as a result of the global financial crisis (40%).

56% of 18 – 24 year olds and 49% of 25 – 34 year olds were most concerned about increasing unemployment as a result of the global financial crisis.

Labor voters were more likely to be concerned about increasing unemployment as a result of the global financial crisis (42%), while Coalition voters were more likely to be most concerned about businesses closing down (22%).

Respondents employed on a part time basis were more likely to be most concerned about increasing unemployment as a result of the global financial crisis as (46%).



Government's financial measures and an early election

Q. If the Opposition continues to oppose the Government's financial measures, do you think Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified in calling an early election?

	%
Yes	38%
No	34%
Don't know	27%

38% of Australians surveyed think that the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified calling an early election if the Opposition continues to oppose the Government's financial measures and 34% do not think an early election would be justified if the Opposition continues to oppose the Government's financial measures.

46% of Labor voters compared with 39% of Coalition voters think the calling of an early election is justified if the Opposition continues to oppose the Government's financial measures.



Federal Government control of primary health care

Q. Do you agree or disagree that the Federal Government should take control of primary health services such as nursing, dental care and general practice from the states?

	%
Total agree	73%
Total disagree	11%
Strongly agree	33%
Agree	40%
Disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	2%
Don't know	16%

An overwhelming majority (73%) of those surveyed agree/strongly agree that the Federal Government should take control of primary health services such as nursing, dental care and general practice from the states.

Respondents aged 50 years and over were most likely to strongly agree that the Federal Government should take control of primary health services such as nursing, dental care and general practice from the states (40%).

Labor voters were more likely to strongly agree/agree that the Federal Government should take control of primary health services such as nursing, dental care and general practice from the states (82%), while Coalition voters were more likely to strongly disagree/disagree that the Federal Government should take control of primary health services from the states (17%).



Better Prime Minister

Q. Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd or Peter Costello

	8 Sept 08	23 Feb 09
Kevin Rudd	53%	62%
Peter Costello	27%	21%
Don't know	20%	17%

Kevin Rudd leads Peter Costello as preferred Prime Minister 62% v 21%.

Peter Costello's rating as preferred Prime Minister has decreased six percentage points since we last asked this question in September 2008.

The majority (94%) of Labor voters prefer Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister. 61% of Coalition voters think Peter Costello would make a better Prime Minister than Kevin Rudd, 22% of Coalition voters 'don't know' who would make a better Prime Minister and 17% prefer Kevin Rudd over Peter Costello.

Rudd v Turnbull 9 February 2008 -

	9 Feb 09
Kevin Rudd	60%
Malcolm Turnbull	20%
No opinion	20%

When we asked the Australian public earlier this month who they think would make a better Prime Minister out of Malcolm Turnbull or Kevin Rudd, the Prime Minister led the Opposition Leader 60% to 20%. Hence, there is no significant difference between the ratings of Malcolm Turnbull and Peter Costello when matched against Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister.



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.

