



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 28th of April to the 3rd of May and attracted 1066 respondents.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting intention, this week we ask the Australian public for their views on how Australia will fair in the global financial crisis. This week we also ask a series of questions related to the upcoming Federal budget. We ask the Australian public whether they think Australia should increase the number of refugees taken in per year and whether the Rudd Government's policy on asylum seekers is too tough, about right or not tough enough. Lastly, given the recent political problems in some Pacific nations such as Fiji, we ask people if they think Australia should become more involved in the affairs of Pacific nations or if we should leave them to sort out their own affairs.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 11).

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?

*2000 sample size

| 2 week average | % | 2PP | 2PP shift from last week |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Liberal | 34% | | |
| National | 3% | | |
| Total Lib/Nat | 37% | 43% | + 1% |
| Labor | 47% | 57% | - 1% |
| Greens | 8% | | |
| Family First | 2% | | |
| Other/Independent | 6% | | |

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.



Global financial crisis and Australia's current economic situation

Q. Which of the following is closest to your view of the global financial crisis and Australia's current economic situation?

| | 16 March 09 | This week |
|---|-------------|-----------|
| It will affect some people but things will start to improve this year | 19% | 20% |
| It will affect quite a lot of people and will not improve for a couple of years | 48% | 53% |
| It will affect a lot of people and may last several years | 25% | 20% |
| Don't know | 8% | 7% |

More than half (53%) of those surveyed think that the global financial crisis and Australia's current economic situation will affect quite a lot of people and will not improve for a couple of years. This is an increase by 5% since we last asked this question in March 2009. The number of people that think the global financial crisis will affect a lot of people and Australia's economic situation will last several years has decreased by 5% since we last asked this question in March.

Coalition voters were more likely than Labor voters to think that the global financial crisis and Australia's current economic situation will affect quite a lot of people and will not improve for a couple of years (58% v 53%).

Labor voters were more likely than Coalition voters to think that the global financial crisis and Australia's current economic situation will affect some people but things will start to improve this year (24% v 19%).

Older respondents were more likely than younger respondents to think that the global financial crisis and Australia's current economic situation will affect some people but things will start to improve this year (24% 50 + year olds v 14% 18 – 24 year olds).



Federal budget

Q. Thinking about the Government budget set to be announced soon, which of the following is the most important thing the Government needs to do?

| | % |
|---|-----|
| Assist those on low incomes by increasing payments to pensioners and the unemployed | 26% |
| Stimulate the economy by cutting income taxes | 25% |
| Cut spending so we don't go further into debt | 24% |
| Stimulate the economy by giving assistance to businesses | 15% |
| Don't know | 10% |

When it comes to the Federal budget people were generally split on what they think is the most important thing that the Government needs to do – 26% support assisting those on low incomes by increasing payments to pensioners and the unemployed, 25% support stimulating the economy by cutting income taxes, and 24% think the Government should cut spending so we don't go further into debt. The option that garnered the least amount of support was stimulating the economy by giving assistance to business (15%).

Labor voters were more likely to think the most important thing for the Government to do in the upcoming Federal budget is assist those on low incomes by increasing payments to pensioners and the unemployed (32%), while Coalition voters were more likely to think the most important thing the Government needs to do in the upcoming Federal budget is cut spending so we don't go further into debt (38%).

Respondents earning \$1600 + per week were more likely to think the most important thing for the Government to do in the upcoming Federal budget is stimulate the economy by cutting income taxes (31%). More than half (52%) of those surveyed earning \$600 or less per week think that the most important thing for the Government to do in the upcoming Federal budget is assist those on low incomes by increasing payments to pensioners and the unemployed.

Respondents aged 50 years and over were more likely to think the most important thing for the Government to do in the upcoming Federal budget is assist those on low incomes by increasing payments to pensioners and the unemployed (41%), while people aged 18 -24 were more likely to think that the most important thing for the Government to do in the upcoming Federal budget is cut spending so we don't go further into debt (41%)



Budget measures

Q. If you had to choose, which of the following budget measures would you support?

| | % |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Increase taxes on high income earners | 49% |
| Cut Government spending | 42% |
| Don't know | 9% |

When it comes to budget measures, more people support an increase in taxes on high income earners over cuts to Government spending (49% v 42%).

Labor voters were more likely to support an increase in taxes on high income earners (61%), while Coalition voters were more likely to support cuts to Government spending (61%).

Respondents earning \$1600+ per week were more likely to support cuts to Government spending (56%), while respondents earning \$600 or less per week were more likely to support increasing taxes on high income earners in the Federal budget (61%)



Budget measures

Q. If you had to choose, which of the following budget measures would you support?

| | % |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Increase pensions by \$30 | 68% |
| Keep the first home buyers grant | 26% |
| Don't know | 6% |

If people had to choose between increasing pensions by \$30 or retaining the first home buyers grant in the budget, significantly more people are in favour of increasing pensions by \$30 (68% v 26%).

Older respondents were more likely to support the budget measure of increasing pensions by \$30 (76% of respondents in the 35 - 49 age group and 82% of people aged 50 + year olds), while younger respondents were more likely to support keeping the first home buyers grant (46% 18 – 24 year olds and 40% 25 -34 year olds).

There were no significant differences in terms of voter identification and which budget measure was supported.



Australia's annual refugee intake

Q. Over the last few years, Australia has accepted about 13,000 refugees per year. Do you think Australia should increase the number of refugees we take in, decrease the number of refugees or should the number of refugees we accept stay about the same?

| | % |
|---------------|-----|
| Increase | 10% |
| Decrease | 62% |
| Stay the same | 24% |
| Don't know | 5% |

62% of people surveyed think that Australia should decrease the number of refugees that we accept, 24% think the amount of refugees Australia takes should stay the same.

Older respondents were more likely than younger respondents to think that Australia should decrease the number of refugees Australia we take in (67% 50 + year olds v 47% 18 – 24 year olds).

Coalition voters were more likely than Labor voters to think that Australia should decrease the number of refugees we take in (71% v 62%). Green voters were more likely to think the number of refugees Australia accepts should stay the same (36%).



Rudd Government asylum seeker policy

Q. Do you think the Rudd Government's policies on asylum seekers are too tough, too soft or about right?

| | % |
|-------------|-----|
| Too tough | 4% |
| Too soft | 55% |
| About right | 26% |
| Don't know | 15% |

More than half (55%) of those surveyed think the Rudd Government's policies on asylum seekers are too soft.

Coalition voters were more likely to think the Rudd Government's policies on asylum seekers are too soft (77%), while Labor and Green voters were more likely to think that the Rudd Government's policies on asylum seekers is about right (37% Labor voters and 42% of Green).

Older respondents were more likely than younger respondents to think the Rudd Government's policies on asylum seekers are too soft (61% 50 + year olds v 38% 18 – 24 year olds).



Australia's role in the Pacific

Q. Considering the recent political problems in some Pacific nations such as Fiji, do you think Australia should become more involved in the affairs of Pacific nations or should we leave them to sort out their own affairs?

| | % |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Become more involved | 22% |
| Leave them to sort out own affairs | 62% |
| Don't know | 16% |

Given the recent political problems in some Pacific nations such as Fiji, more than half (62%) of those surveyed think that Australia should leave the Pacific nations to sort out their own affairs, 22% think that Australia should become more involved in the affairs of Pacific nations.

Labor voters were more likely than Coalition voters to think that Australia should leave Pacific nations to sort out their own affairs (66% v 61%).

Older respondents were more likely than younger respondents to think that Australia should leave Pacific nations to sort out their own affairs (66% 50 + year olds v 44% 18 – 24 year olds).



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.

