



# Essential Report

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With data supplied by



## **Executive Summary**

This 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 27<sup>th</sup> of October to the 1<sup>st</sup> of November and attracted 1,122 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting intention, this week we ask the Australian public a series of questions related to asylum seekers, in particular for their level of agreement regarding a range of statements that have been made about the issue, whether they think the Rudd Government is doing a good job at handling the issue of asylum seekers and whether the public think the Liberal party would do a better job at handling the issue if they were in government. This week we also ask a question about climate change – whether people think it is caused by human activity or whether it is a normal fluctuation in earth’s temperatures.

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?*

\*2,007 sample size

<b>2 week average</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2PP</b>	<b>2PP shift from last week</b>
Liberal	33%		
National	2%		
<b>Total Lib/Nat</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>41%</b>	-
<b>Labor</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>59%</b>	-
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.



**Public support for statements made about refugees and asylum seekers**

*Q. The Federal Government is currently working with the Indonesian government to stop asylum seekers entering Australian waters. For each of the below statements that have been made about current incident of asylum seekers, please indicate your level of agreement.*

	<b>Total agree</b>	<b>Total disagree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
The Federal Government is doing the right thing in discouraging people-smuggling and turning back the boats	<b>66%</b>	<b>14%</b>	40%	26%	20%	9%	5%
There is a real prospect that terrorists are on board these boats so the Federal Government must prevent them from entering the country	<b>56%</b>	<b>16%</b>	30%	26%	28%	9%	7%
The Federal Government is weak on border protection which is why more boats are entering Australian waters	<b>52%</b>	<b>21%</b>	26%	26%	26%	15%	6%
The Federal Government should be allowing legitimate refugees to enter the country and contribute to our nation	<b>45%</b>	<b>25%</b>	15%	30%	30%	14%	11%
The recent influx of asylum seekers on route to Australia are people fleeing persecution and their refugee status should be processed immediately by the Australian Government	<b>31%</b>	<b>37%</b>	11%	20%	32%	22%	15%
The Federal Government should be showing more compassion towards the current influx of refugees and asylum seekers in the same way the Fraser Government did in the 1970s when it allowed refugees to immigrate to Australia at a quick pace after the Vietnam War	<b>23%</b>	<b>48%</b>	8%	15%	29%	27%	21%

66% of people surveyed agree that the Federal Government is doing the right thing in discouraging people-smuggling and turning back the boats. Just over half (56%) think there is a real prospect that terrorists are on board these boats so the Federal Government must prevent them from entering the country. 52% think that the Federal Government is weak on border protection which is why more boats are entering Australian waters.



Just under half (45%) think the Federal Government should be allowing legitimate refugees to enter the country and contribute to our nation.

Labor and Coalition voters were more likely than Green voters to think the Federal Government is doing the right thing in discouraging people-smuggling and turning back the boats (72% Labor, 69% Liberal v 51% Green).

Coalition voters were more likely to agree with the statement that the Federal Government is weak on border protection which is why more boats are entering Australian waters (79%), while Labor voters were more likely to disagree (32%). However, 40% of Labor voters agree with this statement.

Green voters were more likely than Labor and Coalition voters to agree that the Federal Government should be allowing legitimate refugees to enter the country and contribute to the nation (62% Green v 47% Labor, 45% Liberal).



## Country of origin

*Q. Which country do you think most of the asylum seekers who have been trying to get into Australia in recent weeks are from?*

	%
China	2%
Indonesia	27%
Iraq	6%
Iran	2%
Sri Lanka	63%

63% of people surveyed think that most of the asylum seekers who have been trying to get into Australia in recent weeks are from Sri Lanka and 27% think they are from Indonesia. 6% think they are from Iraq, 2% think they are from China and 2% think Iran.

People aged 55 years and over were more likely than those in other age groups to think that most of the asylum seekers who have been trying to get into Australia in recent weeks are from Sri Lanka (79%), as were males (67%) and Coalition voters (70%).

Respondents who were aware that the current asylum seekers were from Sri Lanka were more likely to agree that the Federal Government should be allowing legitimate refugees to enter the country and contribute to our nation. 51% of people aware that the most recent asylum seekers are from Sri Lanka (compared to 35% of those not aware) agree that the Federal Government should be allowing legitimate refugees to enter the country and contribute to our nation.



## Rudd Government handling of the asylum seeker issue

Q. Overall, how would you rate the record of the Rudd Government when it comes to dealing with the issue of asylum seekers in Australia?

	%
<b>Excellent/good</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Not so good/poor</b>	<b>55%</b>
Excellent	3%
Good	33%
Not so good	30%
Poor	25%
Don't know	10%

Just over half (55%) of those surveyed rate the Rudd Government's record on handling the issue of asylum seekers as not so good/poor, 36% rate the Government's handling as excellent/good and 10% don't know.

Results followed party lines – Labor voters were more likely to rate the Rudd Government's handling as excellent/good (58%), while Coalition voters were more likely to rate it as not so good/poor (81%). 34% of Labor voters and 65% of Green voters rate the Government's performance on this issue as not so good or poor.



## Liberal Party and asylum seekers

Q. Do you think a Liberal Government would do a better, worse or much the same job in dealing with the issue of asylum seekers and refugees in Australia?

	%
Better	21%
Worse	26%
Much the same	40%
Don't know	13%

40% of people think a Liberal Government would do much the same job in dealing with the issue of asylum seekers and refugees in Australia, 21% think they would do a better job and 26% think a Liberal Government would do a worse job.

Coalition voters were more likely to think a Liberal Government would do a better job (54%), while Labor (43%) and Green (41%) voters were more likely to think a Liberal Government would do a worse job.

35% of Liberal voters and 42% of Labor voters think a Liberal Government would do much the same job in dealing with the issue of asylum seekers and refugees in Australia.

People aged 55 years and over were more likely than those in other age groups to think that the Liberal Government would do a better job at dealing with the issue of asylum seekers (30%).



## Statements about the treatment of asylum seekers

Q. Which of the following statements is closer to your view?

	%
The reason for the recent influx of asylum seekers arriving by boat to Australia is because the Rudd Government has softened their boarder protection policies	41%
Nearly all refugees are coming from places such as Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, places that have seen an escalation in violence and persecution that have pushed these people to flee their homelands	59%

Just over half (59%) of those surveyed agree with the view that nearly all refugees are coming from places such as Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, places that have seen an escalation of violence and persecution that have pushed these people to flee their homelands. 41% agree with the view that the reason for the recent influx of asylum seekers arriving by boat to Australia is because the Rudd Government has softened their border protection policies.

Males were more likely to agree with the view that suggests the reason for the recent influx of asylum seekers because of soft border protection approach of the Rudd Government (45%), while females were more likely to agree with the view that push factors such as violence and persecution result in refugees (63%).

Coalition voters were more likely to agree with the view that the Rudd Government has softened their border protection policies and this is the reason for the recent influx of asylum seekers (69%), while Labor (74%) and Green (83%) voters were more likely to be of the view that refugees are coming from places that have seen an escalation in violence and persecution that have pushed people to flee their homelands.

People aged 18 – 24 were more likely than those in other age groups to agree with the view that emphasizes push factors when it comes to explaining the issue of refugees (71%).



## Climate change

*Q. Do you agree that there is fairly conclusive evidence that climate change is happening and caused by human activity or do you believe that the evidence is still not in and we may just be witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate which happens from time to time?*

	%
Climate change is happening and is caused by human activity	53%
We are just witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate	34%
Don't know	13%

Just over half (53%) of people surveyed think that climate change is happening and is caused by human activity, 34% think that what we are witnessing is a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate and 13% don't know.

People aged 25 – 34 were more likely to think climate change is caused by human activity (67%) while those aged 55 years and over were more likely to think what we are witnessing is a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate (44%).

Labor (63%) and Green (85%) voters were more likely to think climate change is caused by human activity, while Coalition voters were more likely to think what we are witnessing is a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate (54%).



## **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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 Tuesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. 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.

