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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 survey was conducted online from 6th to 10th April 2011 and is based on 1,084 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on political leaders, the Federal Budget, Tony Abbott's welfare proposal and the policies of the Labor Party and the Greens.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix on page 12.

Please note that due to rounding, not all tables necessarily total 100% and subtotals may also vary.



Federal politics – voting intention

Q. If a Federal Election was held today to which party will you probably give your first preference vote? If not sure, which party are you currently leaning toward?

Q. If don't know -Well which party are you currently leaning to?

sample size =1,925

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Liberal		45%	43%	43%	43%
National		2%	3%	3%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	43.6	47%	46%	46%	46%
Labor	38.0	35%	37%	36%	35%
Greens	11.8	10%	10%	10%	11%
Other/Independent	6.6	8%	7%	8%	8%

2PP	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	49.9%	54%	52%	53%	53%
Labor	50.1%	46%	48%	47%	47%

NB. The data in the above tables comprise 2-week averages derived the first preference/leaning to voting questions. Respondents who select 'don't know' are not included in the results. The two-party preferred estimate is calculated by distributing the votes of the other parties according to their preferences at the 2010 election.



Approval of Julia Gillard

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Julia Gillard is doing as Prime Minister?

	Kevin Rudd	Julia Gillard										
	31 May 2010	5 Jul	19 Jul	16 Aug	20 Sep	18 Oct	22 Nov	20 Dec	17 Jan 2011	14 Feb	14 Mar	11 Apr
Total approve	41%	48%	52%	46%	45%	45%	43%	43%	51%	48%	41%	37%
Total disapprove	47%	27%	30%	40%	37%	37%	38%	40%	36%	41%	46%	50%
Strongly approve	7%	14%	11%	13%	12%	10%	7%	10%	8%	9%	7%	7%
Approve	34%	34%	41%	33%	33%	36%	36%	33%	43%	39%	34%	30%
Disapprove	25%	13%	17%	24%	21%	20%	23%	24%	24%	25%	22%	25%
Strongly disapprove	22%	14%	13%	16%	16%	17%	15%	16%	12%	16%	24%	25%
Don't know	12%	26%	18%	13%	19%	18%	18%	17%	14%	11%	13%	13%

37% (down 4%) approve of the job Julia Gillard is doing as Prime Minister and 50% (up 4%) disapprove – a change in net rating from -5 to -13 over the last 4 weeks.

78% of Labor voters approve (down 9%) and 12% disapprove (up 5%).

By gender – men 37% approve/53% disapprove, women 36% approve/47% disapprove.

Approval of Tony Abbott

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader?

	18 Jan 2010	29 Mar	5 Jul	16 Aug	20 Sep	18 Oct	22 Nov	20 Dec	17 Jan 2011	14 Feb	14 Mar	11 Apr
Total approve	37%	33%	37%	41%	43%	39%	40%	39%	42%	38%	38%	36%
Total disapprove	37%	50%	47%	44%	37%	45%	40%	39%	37%	46%	47%	48%
Strongly approve	5%	8%	8%	9%	12%	8%	6%	9%	7%	8%	7%	7%
Approve	32%	25%	29%	32%	31%	31%	34%	30%	35%	30%	31%	29%
Disapprove	20%	28%	23%	22%	21%	22%	22%	21%	22%	24%	24%	25%
Strongly disapprove	17%	22%	24%	22%	16%	23%	18%	18%	15%	22%	23%	23%
Don't know	26%	16%	16%	15%	19%	17%	19%	22%	20%	16%	16%	17%

36% (down 2%) approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader and 48% (up 1%) disapprove.

69% of Coalition voters approve and 17% disapprove.

By gender – men 40% approve/46% disapprove, women 31% approve/48% disapprove.

Better Prime Minister

Q. Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister out of Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott?

	5 Jul 2010	20 Sep	20 Dec	17 Jan 2011	14 Feb 2011	14 Mar 2011	11 Apr 2011	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Kevin Rudd v Tony Abbott 21 Jun 10
Julia Gillard	53%	47%	45%	47%	48%	44%	42%	86%	8%	75%	47%
Tony Abbott	26%	35%	34%	32%	31%	33%	33%	2%	72%	5%	30%
Don't know	21%	18%	21%	21%	20%	23%	24%	12%	20%	20%	23%

42% believe Julia Gillard would make the better Prime Minister and 33% prefer Tony Abbott – a net decrease for Julia Gillard of 2% on last month's figures (from +11% to +9%).

Men favour Julia Gillard over Tony Abbott 42%/38% and women 42%/29%.

Reason for Budget Deficit

Q. The Federal Government is currently running a budget deficit, but intends to return to surplus in 2012-13. Which of the following do you think is most responsible for the deficit?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Poor economic management by the Government	23%	5%	43%	8%
The cost of the Government's GFC stimulus packages	19%	19%	20%	21%
Big companies not paying their fair share of taxes	17%	29%	6%	30%
Spending on big projects like the National Broadband Network	14%	8%	18%	10%
Lower tax revenues because of the Global Financial Crisis	13%	25%	4%	19%
Don't know	15%	14%	9%	11%

Overall, respondents believe the main reasons for the budget deficit are poor economic management by the Government (23%), the cost of the Government's GFC stimulus (19%) and big companies not paying their fair share of taxes (17%).

Labor voters were most likely to blame big companies not paying their fair share of taxes (29%) and lower tax revenues because of the GFC (25%) while Liberal/National voters blame poor economic management by the Government (43%). Greens voters tended to blame big companies not paying their fair share of taxes (30%).

Measures to Return to Surplus

Q. In order to meet their commitment to return to surplus in 2012-13, which measures should the Government take?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Increase taxes for big corporations	63%	79%	51%	77%
Reduce tax breaks for high income earners	51%	57%	46%	67%
Cut “middle class welfare” such as the Baby Bonus, first home buyers grant and Family Tax Benefit payments	36%	33%	41%	39%
Reduce defence spending	32%	36%	26%	51%
Cut spending on unemployment and disability benefits	21%	15%	31%	11%
It does not need to return to surplus so quickly	38%	39%	36%	57%

Overall, the most favoured means of returning the budget to surplus were increasing taxes for big corporations (63%) and reducing tax breaks for high income earners (51%). Both these measures were strongly favoured by Labor and Greens voters.

Although support was less strong, these two measures were also the most preferred among Liberal/National voters.

Note, although 38% thought that the budget does not need to return to surplus so quickly, some of these respondents also agreed with some of the measures listed.

Tony Abbott's Welfare Proposal

Q. Tony Abbott has proposed changes to Australia's welfare system – including cutting back the pension for people whose disabilities can be treated, suspending the dole for young people in areas where job vacancies have not been filled and making work-for-the-dole mandatory for those under 50 receiving unemployment benefits for more than six months.

Do you think Tony Abbott's proposal will significantly reduce unemployment in Australia or will it just make things more difficult for the unemployed and people on disability benefits?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Will reduce unemployment	36%	18%	61%	20%
Will just make things difficult for the unemployed and people on disability benefits	47%	67%	24%	74%
Don't know	17%	15%	16%	6%

36% believe that Tony Abbott's changes to the welfare system will reduce unemployment and 47% think they will just make things difficult for the unemployed and people on disability benefits.

The only groups more likely to think it would reduce unemployment were Liberal/National voters (61%/21%), full-time workers (43%/39%) and those on income over \$1,600 pw (48%/36%). 59% of those on incomes under \$1,000 pw agreed that it will just make things difficult for the unemployed and people on disability benefits.

Party Trust to Handle Benefits/pensions

Q. Which party would you trust more to handle welfare issues like unemployment benefits and disability pensions?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Labor Party	34%	75%	6%	53%
Liberal Party	31%	4%	66%	8%
No difference	25%	16%	21%	26%
Don't know	10%	55	6%	13%

34% trust the Labor Party more to handle welfare issues and 31% trust the Liberal Party more. 25% think there is no difference.

The Liberal Party is trusted more by people earning \$1,600+ pw (40% to 29%) while those on incomes under \$1,000 pw favor the Labor Party 39% to 22%.



Difference between Labor and Greens Policies

Q. How much difference do you think there is between the policies of the Labor Party and the Greens?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
They are completely different	8%	10%	10%	12%
Different on most issues	15%	15%	16%	26%
Different of some and similar on some	41%	54%	33%	47%
Similar on most issues	14%	7%	22%	8%
They are exactly the same	5%	2%	7%	1%
Don't know	17%	13%	13%	5%

19% think the Labor and Greens policies are similar or exactly the same, 23% think they are mostly or completely different and 41% think they are different on some and the similar on some issues.

Labor voters are more likely to think they are different on some and similar on some (54%), Liberal/National voters more likely to think they are similar or the same (29%) and Greens voters more likely to think they are different (38%).

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 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 over 100,000 members. 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.

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.

