



28 November 2011



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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 between the 23rd and 27th November 2011 and is based on 1,042 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the US President's visit, benefits of the mining boom, international trade and the Federal budget.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in the appendix on page 11.

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 = 1,898 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Liberal		44%	44%	46%	45%
National		3%	3%	3%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	43.6%	47%	47%	48%	48%
Labor	38.0%	34%	35%	34%	34%
Greens	11.8%	10%	10%	10%	11%
Other/Independent	6.6%	9%	8%	7%	8%

2PP	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	49.9%	55%	54%	55%	54%
Labor	50.1%	45%	46%	44%	46%

NB. The data in the above tables comprise 2-week averages derived from 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.



Rating of Prime Minister during Barack Obama Visit

Q. How would you rate the performance of the Prime Minister Julia Gillard during the recent visit by US President Barack Obama?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total good	38%	76%	16%	51%
Total poor	23%	2%	42%	10%
Very good	12%	36%	2%	6%
Good	26%	40%	14%	45%
Average	31%	18%	37%	32%
Poor	8%	-	15%	5%
Very poor	15%	2%	27%	5%
Don't know	7%	3%	5%	7%

Overall, the Prime Minister's performance during the recent visit by US President Barack Obama was rated positively.

38% rated her performance during the recent visit by US President Barack Obama as good and 23% rated it poor. 31% thought it was average.

76% of Labor voters and 51% of Greens voters rated it good, while 42% of Liberal/National voters rated it poor and 37% rated it as average.

43% of women rated her performance goods compared to 33% of men.



Rating of Opposition Leader during Barack Obama Visit

Q. How would you rate the performance of the Opposition Leader Tony Abbott during recent visit by US President Barack Obama?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total good	18%	9%	31%	2%
Total poor	30%	49%	9%	54%
Very good	4%	2%	7%	-
Good	14%	7%	24%	2%
Average	37%	32%	46%	26%
Poor	14%	17%	7%	24%
Very poor	16%	32%	2%	30%
Don't know	15%	10%	13%	17%

Overall, the Opposition Leader's performance during the recent visit by US President Barack Obama was rated negatively.

18% rated his performance during the recent visit by US President Barack Obama as good and 30% rated it poor. 37% thought it was average.

Liberal/National voters were more likely to rate it as average (46%) - only 31% rated it good.

There was little difference between the ratings of men and women.



Groups that Benefit from Mining Boom

Q. How much do the following groups benefit from the current boom in Australia's mineral exports?

	Benefit a lot	Some benefit	A little benefit	No benefit	Don't know
Mining company executives	68%	10%	5%	3%	14%
Mining company shareholders	48%	28%	7%	3%	14%
Foreign companies	42%	25%	8%	3%	23%
Federal government	37%	35%	10%	2%	15%
State governments	31%	38%	12%	2%	16%
Regional communities	12%	30%	29%	10%	17%
All Australians	11%	29%	32%	13%	16%

The main beneficiaries of the current boom in Australia's mineral exports were thought to be mining company executives (68% benefit a lot), mining company shareholders (48%) and foreign companies (42%). Only 11% thought that all Australians benefit a lot and 12% thought regional communities benefit a lot.

Views were mostly similar across demographics.

Labor voters were a little more likely to think that there was a lot of benefit to all Australians (18%) and mining company shareholders (53%).

Liberal/National voters were a little more likely to think that there was a lot of benefit to State Governments (37%) and the Federal Government (46%).



Groups that Should Benefit from Mining Boom

Q. And should the following groups receive more or less benefit from the current boom in minerals exports or is the current benefit they receive about right?

	Should benefit more	Should benefit less	Current benefit about right	Don't know
All Australians	68%	1%	15%	16%
Regional communities	58%	6%	19%	17%
State governments	30%	17%	32%	20%
Federal government	27%	23%	30%	20%
Mining company shareholders	12%	28%	41%	18%
Foreign companies	4%	56%	18%	22%
Mining company executives	4%	57%	21%	18%

A majority of respondents think there should be more benefits to all Australians (68%) and regional communities (58%). A majority also believe there should be less benefit to mining company executives (57%) and foreign companies (56%).

75% of Labor voters, 65% of Liberal/National voters and 84% of Greens voters think all Australians should benefit more.



International Trade

Q. Should another country's political system and human rights record influence Australia's trade with that country or should we trade with any country regardless of their political system or human rights record?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Political system and human rights record should influence trade	66%	71%	64%	83%
Should trade with any country	18%	18%	24%	9%
Don't know	16%	11%	13%	7%

66% believe that another country's political system and human rights record should influence Australia's trade with that country and 18% think we should trade with any country regardless of their political system or human rights record.

The position that political system and human rights record should influence trade was supported by 75% of women and 57% of men.



Return to Surplus

Q. Do you think it is more important for the Government to return the budget to surplus by 2012/13 as planned - which may mean cutting services and raising taxes - OR should they delay the return to surplus and maintain services and invest in infrastructure?

	April 4	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Return to surplus by 2012/13, cut services, raise taxes	14%	13%	13%	19%	7%
Delay return to surplus, maintain services, invest in infrastructure	69%	71%	76%	68%	82%
Don't know	17%	15%	11%	13%	11%

13% support the return to surplus by 2012/13 if it means cutting services and raising taxes and 69% think the Government should delay the return to surplus and maintain services and investment. Opinions are unchanged since this question was asked in April.

No more than 19% of any demographic or voter group supported the return to surplus by 2012/13.



Measures Government should take to Return to Surplus

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

	April 4	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Increase taxes for big corporations	63%	72%	81%	65%	86%
Reduce tax breaks for high income earners	51%	59%	63%	57%	64%
Reduce defence spending	32%	37%	32%	37%	67%
Cut “middle class welfare” such as the Baby Bonus, first home buyers grant and Family Tax Benefit payments	36%	35%	31%	40%	29%
Cut spending on unemployment and disability benefits	21%	21%	15%	28%	13%
It does not need to return to surplus so quickly	38%	58%	65%	56%	61%

The most favoured measures for returning the budget to surplus were increasing taxes for big corporations (72%) and reducing tax breaks for high-income earners (59%).

Labor voters were more likely to support increasing taxes for big corporations (81%).

Liberal/National voters were more likely to support cutting spending on unemployment and welfare benefits (28%), and cutting “middle class welfare” (40%).

Since this question was last asked in April, support has increased for increasing taxes for big corporations (+9%) and reducing tax breaks for high income earners (+8%).

However, the major change since April has been a substantial increase in support for the position that the Government does not need to return to surplus so quickly - up 20% to 58%. This position is supported by 65% of Labor voters and 56% of Liberal/National voters.



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.

