

# The Essential Report

13 August 2013





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**Date:** 13 August 2013

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**Prepared by:** Essential Research

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**Data supplied:**



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the Association of Market and Social Research Organisations.



Our researchers are members of  
the Australian Market and Social Research Society

## About this poll

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 the 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> August and is based on 1,022 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on party leaders and national debt.

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

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 = 1,899 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 15/7/13	2 weeks ago 29/7/13	Last week 5/8/13	This week 13/8/13
Liberal		42%	41%	40%	40%
National		4%	3%	3%	3%
<b>Total Lib/Nat</b>	<b>43.6%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>38.0%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Greens	11.8%	7%	9%	9%	8%
Other/Independent	6.6%	8%	8%	10%	10%

2 Party Preferred	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 15/7/13	2 weeks ago 29/7/13	Last week 5/8/13	This week 13/8/13
<b>Liberal National</b>	<b>49.9%</b>	52%	51%	51%	<b>51%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>50.1%</b>	48%	49%	49%	<b>49%</b>

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.

## Approval of Kevin Rudd

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

	Julia Gillard 11 Jun 13	Kevin Rudd 15 Jul	Kevin Rudd 13 Aug
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>43%</b>
Strongly approve	10%	18%	11%
Approve	27%	32%	34%
Disapprove	21%	15%	21%
Strongly disapprove	33%	20%	22%
Don't know	9%	16%	12%

Kevin Rudd's approval ratings have fallen since last measured 4 weeks ago. 45% (down 5%) approve of the job Kevin Rudd is doing as Prime Minister and 43% (up 8%) disapprove – a change in net rating from +15 to +2.

88% of Labor voters approve (up 3%) and 6% disapprove (up 2%).

By gender – men 49% approve/43% disapprove, women 42% approve/43% disapprove. In net terms this represents a shift with men from +19 to +6 and with women from +10 to -1.

## Approval of Tony Abbott

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

	18 Jan 2010	5 Jul	20 Dec	14 June 2011	12 Dec	12 Jun 2012	10 Dec	11 Mar 2013	11 Jun	15 Jul	13 Aug
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>51%</b>
Strongly approve	5%	8%	9%	6%	6%	6%	8%	7%	10%	11%	9%
Approve	32%	29%	30%	32%	26%	26%	25%	30%	30%	28%	28%
Disapprove	20%	23%	21%	25%	25%	24%	25%	22%	17%	21%	21%
Strongly disapprove	17%	24%	18%	23%	28%	30%	31%	29%	32%	30%	30%
Don't know	26%	16%	22%	15%	14%	13%	12%	12%	11%	11%	11%

Tony Abbott's approval ratings have dropped slightly over the past month. 37% (down 2%) approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader and 51% (no change disapprove – a change in net rating from -12 to -14 over the last 4 weeks.

76% (up 1%) of Coalition voters approve and 14% (no change) disapprove.

By gender – men 45% approve/47% disapprove, women 31% approve/55% disapprove. In net terms this represents a shift with men from -7 to -2 and with women from -16 to -24.

## Better Prime Minister

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

	Gillard/ Abbott 11 Jun 13	Rudd/ Abbott 15 Jul 13	Rudd/ Abbott 13 Aug 13 Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Julia Gillard/Kevin Rudd	39%	50%	47%	92%	7%	68%
Tony Abbott	40%	35%	35%	3%	76%	7%
Don't know	21%	15%	18%	5%	17%	25%

47% (down 3%) believe Kevin Rudd would make the better Prime Minister and 35% (no change) prefer Tony Abbott.

Men prefer Kevin Rudd 47%/39% and women prefer Kevin Rudd 47%/30%.

## Australia's national debt

Q. Compared to other developed countries, do you think Australia's national debt is higher, lower or about the same?

	6 May 13	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
<b>Total higher</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Total lower</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>54%</b>
A lot higher	9%	10%	5%	15%	3%
A little higher	16%	15%	10%	22%	15%
About the same	18%	19%	18%	19%	7%
A little lower	29%	24%	23%	27%	21%
A lot lower	19%	22%	36%	11%	33%
Don't know	10%	10%	9%	6%	21%

25% think that Australia's National debt is higher than other developed countries and 46% think it is lower - 19% think it about the same. These figures are very similar to the results when this question was previously asked in May.

A majority of Labor (59%) and Greens voters (54%) think our debt is lower than other countries while Liberal National voters were split - 38% think it is lower and 37% think it is higher.

Those with higher levels of education were more likely to think Australia's debt was lower - 20% of respondents with university degrees thought it was higher and 53% thought it was lower.



## Importance of reducing debt

Q. Do you think it is more important to reduce Australia's national debt or to maintain government spending on services and projects?

	6 May 13	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Australia's debt higher	Australia's debt about the same	Australia's debt lower
More important to reduce debt	46%	48%	28%	72%	23%	76%	48%	37%
More important to maintain spending	40%	35%	51%	20%	60%	18%	32%	49%
Don't know	14%	17%	21%	9%	17%	6%	20%	14%

48% think it is more important to reduce Australia's debt and 35% think it is more important to maintain Government spending on services and projects. This represents a shift away from maintaining spending since this question was previously asked in May.

51% (down 10%) of Labor voters and 60% (up 1%) of Greens voters favour maintaining spending while 72% (up 5%) of Liberal/National voters think it is more important to reduce debt.

76% of those who think Australia's debt is higher compared to other countries think we should reduce debt while 49% of those who think our debt is lower think we should maintain spending.

## Raise taxes or cut spending

Q. Do you think the Government should raise taxes or cut spending to reduce the national debt or should they do neither?

	6 May 13	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Raise taxes	13%	<b>6%</b>	7%	3%	14%
Reduce spending	55%	<b>45%</b>	32%	64%	24%
Both	na	<b>21%</b>	21%	21%	22%
Neither	20%	<b>18%</b>	28%	9%	29%
Don't know	12%	<b>10%</b>	12%	4%	10%

In order to reduce debt, 45% think the Government should reduce spending, 6% think they should raise taxes and 21% think they should do both. 18% think they should do neither.

64% of Liberal/National voters think the Government should reduce spending compared to 32% of Labor voters and 24% of Greens voters.

(Note the category “both” has been added to this question since it was previously asked)

## Where Government should reduce spending

If “Reduce spending” or “both” -

Q. In which of the following areas should the Government reduce spending?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Foreign aid	76%	72%	82%	43%
The arts	70%	65%	76%	29%
Subsidies for business	59%	65%	57%	58%
Private schools	59%	63%	56%	38%
Welfare support	43%	33%	53%	17%
The environment	36%	22%	49%	12%
Defence	34%	36%	30%	68%
Support for manufacturing industries	32%	31%	34%	37%
Border security	18%	18%	17%	43%
Universities	18%	12%	25%	9%
Public transport	14%	11%	18%	14%
Roads	12%	10%	11%	33%
Public schools	9%	7%	12%	12%
Pensions	9%	6%	11%	15%
Health and hospitals	5%	6%	5%	9%

Of those who think spending should be reduced, 76% think spending on foreign aid should be reduced, 70% the arts, 59% subsidies for business and 59% private schools.

The areas least likely to be nominated for spending cuts were health and hospitals, pensions and public schools.

## Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a weekly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct research on a week-by-week basis since November 2007.

Each week, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses issues that are topical and a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated regularly (such as political preference and leadership approval), while others are unique to each week and reflect 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 panellist 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+ interviews. In theory, with a sample of this size, there is 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population had been polled. However, this assumes random sampling, which, because of non-response and less than 100% population coverage cannot be achieved in practice. Furthermore, there are other possible sources of error in all polls including question wording and question order, interviewer bias (for telephone and face-to-face polls), response errors and weighting. The best guide to a poll's accuracy is to look at the record of the polling company - how have they performed at previous elections or other occasions where their estimates can be compared with known population figures. In the last poll before the 2010 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes were all within 1% of the election results.

The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points. Essential Research 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.

All Essential Research and senior Your Source staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour. Your Source is an Australian social and market research company specializing in recruitment, field research, data gathering and data analysis.

Essential Research is a member of the Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO). 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. Both Essential Research and Your Source are ISO accredited market research companies. This research was conducted in compliance with AS: ISO20252 guidelines.