



Essential Report

Embargo: 16.30, 16th February 2009



Level 8, Suite 10
377 Sussex Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone 02 8280 9100
Mobile 0448 801 044

With data supplied by



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 9th to the 15th of February and attracted 1195 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting preference, this week we asked respondents a series of questions related to the global financial crisis. We ask respondents specifically their concerns around the financial crisis in terms of job security and whether they think Australia can withstand the crisis. We ask the Australian public to rate the performance of the Government and the Opposition in terms of their response to the global financial crisis. This week we attempt to determine which party the Australian public trusts most to manage the economy during the global financial crisis. This week we seek to gauge public opinion regarding the economic stimulus package and public support for specific components of the package. This week we also ask the Australian public a question related to the Liberal party leadership and who people think would make a better leader out of Turnbull or Costello.

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?

* 2096 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	32%		
National	2%		
Total Lib/Nat	34%	39%	-
Labor	51%	61%	-
Greens	8%		
Family First	2%		
Other/Independent	4%		

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.



Concern over job security

Q. How concerned are you that you or some member of your immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so: very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not at all concerned?

	%
Total concerned	62%
Total not concerned	33%
Very concerned	22%
Somewhat concerned	40%
Not at all concerned	29%
Don't know	4%
No employees in immediate family	5%

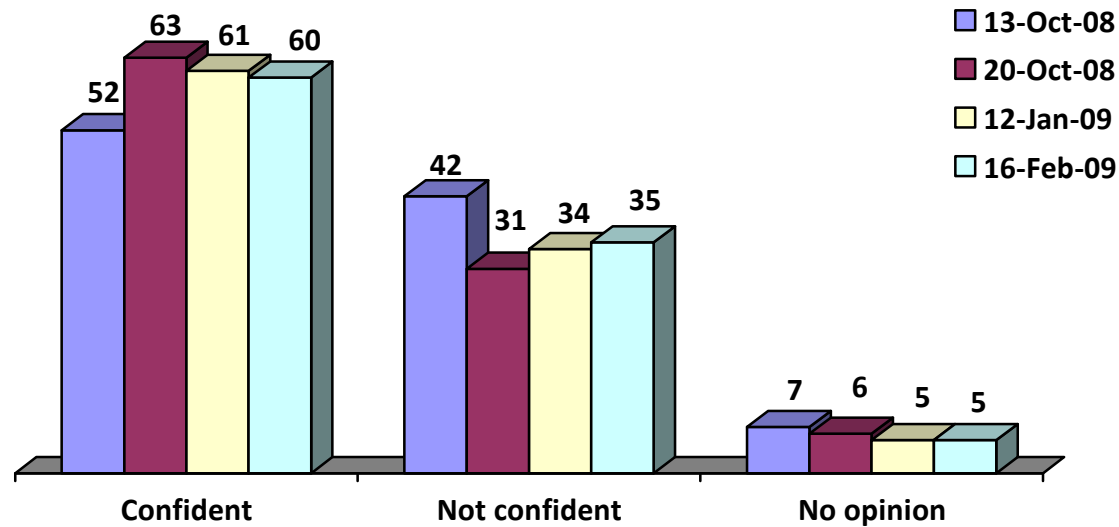
62% of Australians surveyed are very concerned/somewhat concerned that some member of their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so. The level of concern was high amongst all demographic groups.



Australian economy and the global financial crisis

Q. How confident are you that the Australian economy can withstand the current global financial crisis?

	13 Oct 08	20 Oct 08	12 Jan 09	16 Feb 09
Very confident	7%	10%	6%	8%
Quite confident	45%	53%	55%	52%
Not very confident	33%	25%	29%	30%
Not confident at all	9%	6%	5%	5%
No opinion	7%	6%	5%	5%



Confidence that the Australian economy can withstand the current global financial crisis was at its highest 20 October (63% total confident) – this week it has dropped back slightly to 60% total confident.

74% of Labor voters are very confident/quite confident that the Australian economy can withstand the current global financial crisis, compared with 48% of Coalition voters that are very confident/quite confident.

Government and Opposition performance in regards to the global financial crisis

Q. Do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of the Government's performance in regard to the global financial crisis?

Q. Do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of the Opposition's performance in regard to the global financial crisis?

	Government		Opposition	
	3 Nov 08	16 Feb 09	3 Nov 08	16 Feb 09
Total approve	63%	64%	31%	35%
Total disapprove	18%	22%	35%	44%
Strongly approve	14%	18%	4%	6%
Approve	49%	46%	27%	29%
Disapprove	12%	16%	25%	27%
Strongly disapprove	6%	6%	10%	17%
Don't know	19%	14%	34%	22%

This week, 64% of people surveyed strongly approve/approve of the Government's performance in regard to the global financial crisis compared with 35% of people that strongly approve/approve of the Opposition's performance.

Since we last asked this question in November 2008, there has been a decrease in the number of people that 'don't know' in terms of the performance of both the Government and the Opposition in regards to the global financial crisis.

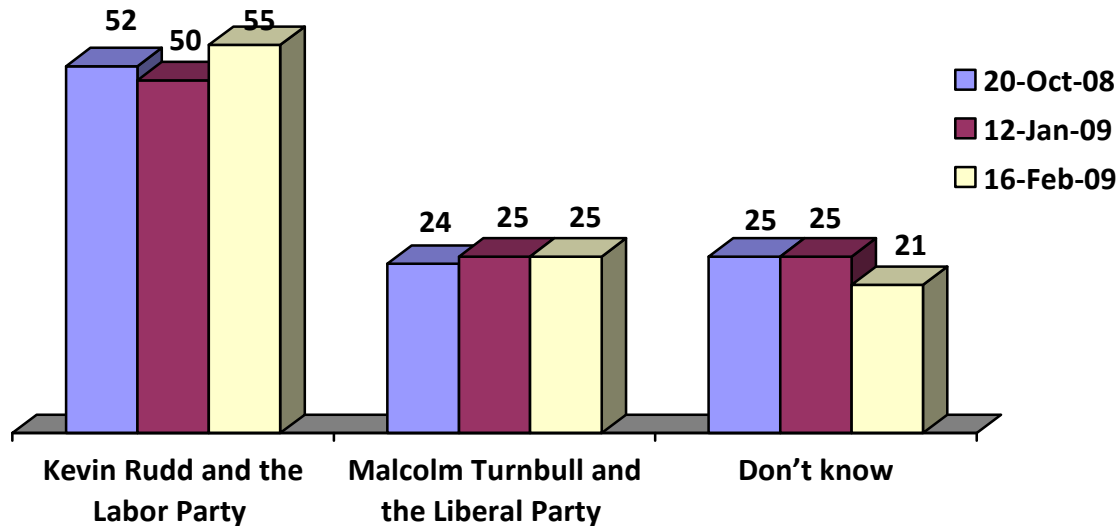
The number of people that disapprove of the performance of the Opposition in regards to the global financial crisis has increased 9 percentage points since we asked this question in November. This compares with a 4 percent increase in the number of people that disapprove of the performance of the Government's in regards to the global financial crisis.



Trust to handle the economy during the financial crisis

Q. Who do you trust more to handle the economy during the financial crisis?

	20 Oct 08	12 Jan 09	16 Feb 09
Kevin Rudd and the Labor Party	52%	50%	55%
Malcolm Turnbull and the Liberal Party	24%	25%	25%
Don't know	25%	25%	21%



More than half (55%) of those surveyed trust Kevin Rudd and the Labor Party to handle the economy during the financial crisis compared with 25% that trust Malcolm Turnbull and the Liberal Party. There has been a 5% increase in the number of people that trust Kevin Rudd and the Labor Party to handle the economy during the financial crisis since we last asked this question in January.

Respondents aged 50 years and over were more likely to trust Malcolm Turnbull and the Liberal Party (31%) as were respondents earning \$1600 or more per week (35%).

Government stimulus package

Q. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd says it is absolutely necessary to undertake the expenditures contained in his Stimulus Package to re-invigorate Australia's economy and prevent any loss of jobs. Liberal Leader Malcolm Turnbull says that while we must take action, some of the expenditures that the Rudd Government proposes are unnecessary and wasteful. Which view do you agree with most?

	%
Kevin Rudd's	51%
Malcolm Turnbull's	33%
Don't know	16%

51% of Australians agree with the Prime Minister's view that it is absolutely necessary to undertake the expenditures contained in his Stimulus Package to re-invigorate Australia's economy and prevent any loss of jobs. There is some support for Turnbull's view that while we must take action, some of the expenditures that the Rudd Government proposes are unnecessary and wasteful (33%).

Support for Turnbull's view is most evident amongst older people (42% of those 50 years and over) and Coalition voters (73%).



Support for components of Government stimulus package

Q. Do you support or oppose the following parts of the Government's latest economic stimulus package?

	Total support	Total oppose	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know
\$12.7 billion for bonuses of \$950 for people on low and middle incomes	66%	18%	34%	32%	13%	10%	8%	2%
\$14.7 billion for school building construction and maintenance	84%	3%	49%	35%	10%	2%	1%	2%
\$6.6 billion for public and community housing	73%	7%	37%	36%	17%	5%	2%	3%
\$3.9 billion for free ceiling insulation for 2.7 million homes	46%	24%	21%	25%	26%	14%	10%	4%
\$2.7 in tax breaks for small businesses	72%	8%	32%	40%	18%	5%	3%	3%

In regards to the Government's latest economic stimulus package, our results show that there is strongest support for infrastructure. 84% of Australians surveyed strongly support/support \$14.7 billion for school building construction and maintenance and 73% strongly support/support \$6.6 billion for public and community housing.

Labor voters were most likely to support \$14.7 billion for school building construction and maintenance (93% strongly support/support).

People on incomes of less than \$600 per week were most likely to support \$6.6 billion for public and community housing (81% strongly support/support).

85% of Labor voters and 81% of Green voters strongly support/support \$6.6 billion of the stimulus package being directed at public and community housing.



Opposition leadership

Q. Who do you think would make the better leader of the Opposition, Malcolm Turnbull or Peter Costello?

	%
Malcolm Turnbull	26%
Peter Costello	37%
Don't know	37%

37% of Australians surveyed think that Peter Costello would make a better leader of the Opposition than Malcolm Turnbull, 37% do not know and 26% prefer Malcolm Turnbull.

Coalition voters favoured Costello over Turnbull - 46% to 36%. Labor voters also favoured Costello over Turnbull - 37% to 22%.



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.

