



Essential Report

19 October 2009



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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 12th to the 18th of October and attracted 1100 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting intention, this week we ask a series of questions related to the Australian economy, the Government's handling of it and the economic stimulus. We also ask the public whether they think the Liberal Party would have done a better job at handling the economic crisis and the Australian economy over the past two years if they, rather than the Labor Party, had been in power. This week we ask a series of questions related to the interest rates.

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?

*1903 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	34%		
National	3%		
Total Lib/Nat	37%	42%	-%
Labor	49%	58%	-%
Greens	7%		
Family First	2%		
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.



Rudd Government and the Australian economy

Q. Overall, how would you rate the performance of the Rudd Government at handling the Australian economy?

	%
Excellent/good	66%
Not so good/poor	29%
Excellent	13%
Good	53%
Not so good	19%
Poor	10%
Don't know	6%

66% of people surveyed rate the performance of the Rudd Government at handling the Australian economy as excellent/good, 29% rate it as not so good/poor and 6% don't know.

Results followed party lines – Labor voters were more likely to rate the performance of the Rudd Government at handling the Australian economy as excellent/good (94%), while Coalition voters were more likely to rate it as not so good/poor (63%). However, 34% of Coalition voters rate the performance of the Government at handling the Australian economy positively.



Rudd Government and the global financial crisis

Q. How do you think the Rudd Government is addressing the global financial crisis?

	13 Oct 08	20 Oct 08	12 Jan 09	16 Mar 09	28 Apr 09	16 June 09	19 Oct 2009
Total well	52%	63%	61%	58%	56%	63%	68%
Total poor	42%	31%	34%	33%	30%	27%	23%
Very well	7%	10%	6%	12%	8%	14%	17%
Quite well	45%	53%	55%	46%	48%	49%	51%
Quite poorly	33%	25%	29%	22%	18%	17%	16%
Very poorly	9%	6%	5%	11%	12%	10%	7%
No opinion	7%	6%	5%	9%	13%	9%	9%

68% of people surveyed think the Rudd Government is addressing the global financial crisis very well/quite well, 23% think it is being addressed quite poorly/very poorly and 9% have no opinion.

The number of people that think the Rudd Government is addressing the global financial crisis well has increased five percentage points since we last asked this question in June, and is sixteen percentage points higher than when we first asked this question in October last year.

The results followed party lines – Labor voters were more likely to think the Rudd Government is addressing the crisis well (94%), while Coalition voters were more likely to think the Government is addressing it poorly (52%). However, 40% of Coalition voters think the Rudd Government is addressing the crisis well.



Australian economy and the global financial crisis

Q. Do you think the Australian economy is over the worst of the slowdown resulting from the global financial crisis and is starting to improve or do you think it will still get worse before it starts to improve?

	20 Jul 09	24 Aug 09	This week
Starting to improve	52%	62%	68%
Will get worse	31%	23%	17%
Don't know	17%	16%	14%

68% of people surveyed think that the Australian economy is over the worst of the slowdown resulting from the global financial crisis and things are starting to improve, 17% think that things will get worse and 14% don't know.

The number of people that think things are improving has increased six percentage points since we last asked this question in August and sixteen percentage points since July.

Labor voters were more likely to think that the Australian economy is over the worst of the slowdown and is starting to improve (81%), while Coalition voters were more likely to think things will get worse (28%).

Males were more likely than females to think things are starting to improve (72% v 65%).



Liberal Party and the economic crisis

Q. If the Liberal Party had been in power over the past two years, do you think they would have done a much better, somewhat better, somewhat worse or much worse job than the Rudd Labor Government has done in dealing with the economic crisis?

	%
Total better	36%
Total worse	41%
Much better	9%
Somewhat better	27%
Somewhat worse	24%
Much worse	17%
Don't know	23%

41% of people surveyed think that if the Liberal Party had been in power over the last two years, they would have done a worse job than the Rudd Labor Government has done in dealing with the economic crisis, 36% think they would have done a better job and 23% don't know.

Results followed party lines – Labor voters were more likely to think the Liberal Party would have done a worse job (70%), and Coalition voters were more likely to think the Liberal Party would have done a better job (80%).

56% of Green voters think the Liberal Party would have done a worse job at dealing with the economic crisis if they had been in power over the past two years, and 23% of Greens think the Liberal Party would have done a better job.



The economic stimulus package

Q. The Liberal Opposition says that Australia's economy would have turned around without the stimulus package which the Labor Government put in place. The Rudd Government says that without the stimulus package, Australia would have gone into a much deeper recession and thousands of more Australians would have lost their jobs. Which is closer to your view?

	%
The Labor Government's view	54%
The Liberal Opposition's view	24%
Don't know	22%

Just over half (54%) of those surveyed agree with the Rudd Government's position that had it not been for the stimulus package, Australia would have gone into a much deeper recession and thousands more Australians would have lost their jobs. 24% agree with the Liberal Opposition's view that Australia's economy would have turned around without the stimulus package that the Labor Government had put in place.

Results followed party lines – Labor voters were more likely to agree with the Labor Government's view on the economic stimulus package (89%) and Coalition voters were more likely to agree with the Liberal Opposition's view (65%). Green voters were more likely to agree with the Labor Government's view (69%).

People in full-time work were more likely to agree with the Liberal Opposition's view (31%) as were those earning \$1600 or more per week (31%).



Interest rates

Q. Last week, the Reserve Bank of Australia announced a .25% increase in interest rates. How much of an impact will the interest rate rise have on your personal financial situation?

	%
A very substantial impact	7%
A moderate, but measurable impact	17%
A slight impact	28%
No impact at all	36%
It's too hard to tell at this point in time	7%
Don't know	5%

Just over half (52%) of those surveyed think that the recently announced .25% increase in interest rates will have some impact on their personal financial situation – 7% think the increase will have a substantial impact, 17% think it will have a moderate but measurable impact and 28% think it will have a slight impact. 36% think the increase will have no impact, 7% think it is too hard to tell at this point in time and 5% don't know.

People aged 25 – 34 were more likely than those in other age groups to think the increase in interest rates will have a substantial/moderate/slight impact (63%), while those aged 55 years and over were more likely to think it will have no impact on their personal financial situation (50%).

Males were more likely than females to think the increase will have a substantial/moderate/slight impact on them personally (57% v 49%).

People earning \$1600 or more per week were more likely than those in other income groups to think the interest rate increase will have some level of impact on their personal financial situation (61%).



Interest rates

Q. Some people say that the .25% rise in interest rates is a sign that the economy is beginning to improve and that it reflects a positive trend in the economy. The Liberal Opposition says the rise in interest rates is primarily due to the reckless and excessive stimulus spending of the Rudd Labor Government and has nothing to do with the economic recovery. Which is closer to your view?

	%
The rise in interest rates is a sign the economy is beginning to improve and reflects a positive trend in the economy	55%
The rise in interest rates is primarily due to reckless and excessive stimulus spending of the Rudd Labor Government and has nothing to do with the economic recovery	23%
Don't know	22%

55% of people surveyed think that the rise in interest rates is a sign the economy is beginning to improve and reflects a positive trend in the economy. 23% think that the rise in interest rates is primarily due to a reckless and excessive stimulus spending of the Rudd Labor Government and has nothing to do with economic recovery.

Labor voters were more likely to think that the rise in interest rates is a sign the economy is beginning to improve and reflects a positive trend in the economy (78%), while Coalition voters were more likely to think the rise in interest rates is due to a reckless and excessive stimulus spending of the Government and has nothing to do with economic recovery (52%).

People aged 45 - 54 were more likely to think the increase in interest rates reflect a positive trend in the economy (62%), while those aged 55 years and over were more likely to think it has nothing to do with economic recovery (30%).



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 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.

