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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 12th October to 17th October 2010 and is based on 1,041 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the Murray Darling Basin, approval of leaders, better Prime Minister, questions on the economy and personal economic security and rating of environmental issues.

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 = 1,901

First preference/leaning to	6 months ago	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Liberal	37%	42%	42%	42%	42%
National	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Total Lib/Nat	39%	45%	44%	44%	44%
Labor	42%	40%	42%	41%	40%
Greens	11%	9%	8%	8%	9%
Other/Independent	8%	6%	7%	7%	7%

2PP	6 months ago	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	46%	50%	49%	49%	50%
Labor	54%	50%	51%	51%	50%

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	5 Jul	19 Jul	26 Jul	2 Aug	9 Aug	16 Aug	20 Sep	18 Oct
Total approve	41%	48%	52%	49%	46%	45%	46%	45%	45%
Total disapprove	47%	27%	30%	33%	38%	40%	40%	37%	37%
Strongly approve	7%	14%	11%	12%	10%	13%	13%	12%	10%
Approve	34%	34%	41%	37%	36%	32%	33%	33%	36%
Disapprove	25%	13%	17%	19%	23%	24%	24%	21%	20%
Strongly disapprove	22%	14%	13%	14%	15%	16%	16%	16%	17%
Don't know	12%	26%	18%	17%	15%	15%	13%	19%	18%

45% approve of the job Julia Gillard is doing as Prime Minister and 37% disapprove – showing no change from last months ratings.

89% of Labor voters approve and 3% disapprove.

By gender – men 45% approve/41% disapprove, women 45% approve/35% disapprove.

Approval of Tony Abbott

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

	18 Jan	22 Feb	29 Mar	3 May	31 May	5 Jul	2 Aug	16 Aug	20 Sep	18 Oct
Total approve	37%	45%	33%	39%	35%	37%	38%	41%	43%	39%
Total disapprove	37%	36%	50%	43%	50%	47%	48%	44%	37%	45%
Strongly approve	5%	12%	8%	5%	5%	8%	8%	9%	12%	8%
Approve	32%	33%	25%	34%	30%	29%	30%	32%	31%	31%
Disapprove	20%	20%	28%	24%	28%	23%	27%	22%	21%	22%
Strongly disapprove	17%	16%	22%	19%	22%	24%	21%	22%	16%	23%
Don't know	26%	18%	16%	18%	16%	16%	14%	15%	19%	17%

39% (down 4%) approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader and 45% (up 8%) disapprove – a shift from a net rating of +6% to -6%.

74% (down 5%) of Coalition voters approve and 13% (up 6%) disapprove.

By gender – men 40% approve/47% disapprove, women 37% approve/41% disapprove.

Better Prime Minister

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

	5 Jul 10	19 Jul 10	26 Jul 10	2 Aug 10	9 Aug 10	16 Aug 10	20 Sep 10	18 Oct 10	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Kevin Rudd v Tony Abbott 21 Jun 10
Julia Gillard	53%	50%	51%	48%	45%	46%	47%	49%	92%	9%	81%	47%
Tony Abbott	26%	27%	26%	30%	33%	35%	35%	33%	2%	75%	4%	30%
Don't know	21%	23%	23%	22%	21%	19%	18%	17%	6%	16%	15%	23%

49% believe Julia Gillard would make the better Prime Minister and 33% prefer Tony Abbott – a widening of the gap from 12% to 16% since last month's figures. This is the largest gap since the 2 August survey.

Men favour Julia Gillard over Tony Abbott 50%/34% and women 49%/33%.

The Economy

Q. Over the next 12 months do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much the same?

	1 Dec 08	15 Jun 09	5 Oct 09	18 Jan 10	29 Mar 10	28 Jun 10	18 Oct 10
Total better	21%	43%	66%	53%	54%	33%	40%
Total worse	61%	37%	15%	19%	19%	31%	30%
Get a lot better	2%	5%	8%	9%	9%	5%	6%
Get a little better	19%	38%	58%	44%	45%	28%	34%
Get a little worse	45%	28%	11%	14%	13%	23%	20%
Get a lot worse	16%	9%	4%	5%	6%	8%	10%
Stay much the same	13%	17%	15%	24%	22%	30%	24%
No opinion	5%	3%	4%	4%	6%	7%	6%

40% think economic conditions in Australia will get better over the next 12 months and 30% think they will get worse – a net improvement of 8% since this question was last asked in June.

Younger people are more optimistic than older people – of those aged under 35, 50% think conditions will get better and 20% worse.

54% of Labor voters think conditions will get better and 15% worse while 32% of Coalition voters think conditions will get better and 42% worse.

Personal financial situation

Q. Over the next 12 months do you think your personal financial situation will get better, get worse or stay much the same?

	29 Mar 10	28 Jun 10	18 Oct 10
Total better	40%	29%	33%
Total worse	23%	31%	29%
Get a lot better	8%	5%	6%
Get a little better	32%	24%	27%
Get a little worse	17%	21%	21%
Get a lot worse	6%	10%	8%
Stay much the same	33%	37%	32%
No opinion	4%	4%	5%

33% think their own personal financial situation will get better over the next 12 months and 29% worse – 32% think they will stay much the same. This is a little more optimistic than the June result – an increase from net -2% to +4%.

Among full-time workers 41% think their situation will get better and 27% worse while those who are not working are more pessimistic – 27% better/32% worse/36% much the same.

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?

	16 Feb 09	27 Apr 09	8 Jun 09	5 Oct 09	18 Jan 10	29 Mar 10	28 Jun 10	18 Oct 10
Total concerned	62%	67%	52%	49%	45%	39%	43%	40%
Very concerned	22%	24%	13%	14%	12%	10%	9%	11%
Somewhat concerned	40%	43%	39%	35%	33%	29%	34%	29%
Not at all concerned	29%	23%	35%	40%	40%	45%	38%	42%
Don't know	4%	5%	6%	6%	8%	7%	12%	10%
No employees in the immediate family	5%	5%	8%	5%	8%	9%	7%	7%

40% were concerned that they or some member of their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so and 42% were not at all concerned – a net positive movement of 7% since the last survey in June.

Full-time workers (40% concerned/48% not concerned) were more optimistic than part-time workers (53% concerned/37% not concerned).

Most important environmental problem

Q. Which of these do you think is the most important environmental problem facing Australia today?

Q. And which would you say is the second most important?

	Most important	Second most important	Total
Water supply	33%	20%	53%
The health of rivers and waterways	17%	21%	38%
Pollution	14%	17%	31%
Climate change	16%	14%	30%
Loss of native habitat	8%	11%	19%
Logging of native forests	4%	8%	12%
Greenhouse gases	2%	6%	8%
Don't know	6%	2%	6%

Water supply (53%) and the health of rivers and waterways (38%) were considered the most important environmental problems facing Australia today.

Younger respondents were more likely to nominate climate change (36% of aged under 45) while 47% of those aged 45+ nominated the health of rivers and waterways. Water supply was the top issue for all segments except Green voters who nominated climate change as their most important issue (51%).

Murray Darling Basin

Q. The Murray-Darling system is in crisis because for decades state governments have allocated too much water from the river for irrigation, affecting the environment and communities further down the river. Which of the following Government actions do you most support?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Leave existing water allocations in place	17%	14%	24%	6%
Purchase water rights from irrigators willing to sell	36%	37%	39%	34%
Compulsorily buy water rights from irrigators and farmers	17%	19%	13%	36%
Don't know	29%	29%	25%	24%

Only 17% believe that existing water allocations in the Murray-Darling system should be maintained and 53% think the Government should buy back water rights either compulsorily (17%) or from irrigators willing to sell (36%).

Support for maintaining existing allocations was a little higher among Liberal voters (24%). Among Greens voters 36% support compulsorily buying rights and 34% support buying rights from irrigators willing to sell.

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.

