

# THE LOWY INSTITUTE POLL 2010



## Australia and the World **PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY**

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**LOWY INSTITUTE**  
FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY

# Executive Summary

The 2010 Lowy Institute Poll reports the results of a nationally representative opinion survey of 1,001 Australian adults conducted in Australia between 6 and 21 March 2010.<sup>1</sup> It is the sixth annual Lowy Poll.

## Rudd Government foreign policy report card

Asked to give the government a mark out of ten for its handling of various foreign policy issues, Australians gave it a just above average six out of ten for responding to the Global Economic Crisis.

Australians said it had done only an average job (five out of ten) combating climate change and it got failing grades for handling the arrival of asylum seekers by boat and dealing with Japanese whaling (both rating four out of ten). It was rated highest (7 out of 10) for maintaining a strong alliance with the United States.

While more Australians were very concerned about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat than last year (52% compared with 43%), the overall level of concern (78%) remained steady.

Sixty-nine per cent of Australians said the government paid too little attention to their opinions in making foreign policy.

## China

A large majority (73%) of Australians agreed China's growth has been good for Australia – up ten points since 2008. But 69% also agreed China's aim is to dominate Asia – up from 60% in 2008.

An increasing percentage of Australians said the government is allowing too much investment from China (57%, up from 50% last year) and almost half (46%) said it was likely China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years, up five points since 2009 (52% now said it was unlikely).

Sixty-six per cent disagreed Australia was doing enough to pressure China to improve human rights.

## UN Security Council bid

Despite the priority the government has given to Australia's UN Security Council bid, only 34% of Australian adults said it was a very important foreign policy goal, ranking it second-last on a list of twelve goals.

## Nuclear weapons in Australia

The vast majority (84%) of Australians were against Australia developing nuclear weapons, but, if some of Australia's near neighbours began to develop them, opposition fell to 57% (with 42% in favour of Australia doing the same).

## Indonesia as a threat

Indonesia began its transition to multi-party democracy in 1998, but asked whether Indonesia is more of a threat to Australia or less of a threat than it was 15 years ago, or has there been no change, 38% of Australians said there has been no change. Thirty-three per cent said Indonesia was more of a threat. Just 27% said it was less of a threat.

## Australia's place in the world

Australians were divided about where Australia fits in the world. Thirty-two per cent said Australia was more a part of Asia, 31% the Pacific and 31% said it was not really part of any region (5% said Europe).

## Climate change

The priority Australians give to tackling climate change remains at its lowest level since this question was first asked in 2007. In 2007, it ranked as the equal-highest foreign policy goal with 75% of Australians saying it was a very important goal.

This year a bare majority (53%) said it was very important (56% said this last year). It ranked behind goals like improving Australia's relationships with its Pacific neighbours (61%) and controlling illegal immigration (62%).

However, a large majority (72%) of Australians agreed Australia should take action to reduce its carbon emissions before a global agreement is reached, but are not prepared to pay much for it.

A majority were either only prepared to pay \$10 or less extra per month on their electricity bill to help solve climate change (25%) or were not prepared to pay anything (33%, up from 21% in 2008).

## Indian students

Nearly three quarters (74%) of Australians said Australia's relationship with India has been damaged following the attacks on Indian students and 36% said relations with India were now worse than when the government was elected (only 12% said they were better). Forty-five per cent said they were about the same.

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# Australia and the World

## Foreign policy

### RUDD GOVERNMENT REPORT CARD

**Fig. 1: Rudd Government report card**

This year the Rudd Government will complete its first term in office. What mark out of ten would you personally give the Rudd Government for its performance in handling each of the following issues – with ten meaning it has done an excellent job, five an average job and one a very poor job? Firstly ...

Maintaining a strong alliance with the United States .....	7/10
Responding to the Global Economic Crisis .....	6/10
Ensuring Australia’s national security is maintained .....	6/10
Promoting good relations with China .....	6/10
Getting Australia’s voice heard on the international stage .....	6/10
Combating climate change .....	5/10
Handling the arrival of asylum seekers by boat .....	4/10
Dealing with Japanese whaling .....	4/10

Australia is in an election year – with the Rudd Government due to complete its first term in office. Asked to give the government a mark out of ten for its handling of eight foreign policy issues (where ten meant the government had done an ‘excellent job’, five an ‘average job’ and one ‘a very poor job’) Australian adults were not effusive in their praise.

The highest mean mark was a seven out of ten for ‘maintaining a strong alliance with the United States’. The government was marked just above average or below on the remaining seven issues.

Despite avoiding a recession at home in the face of recent global economic turmoil, the Australian public gave the government a just above average mark of six out of ten for ‘responding to the Global Economic Crisis’.

Australians also gave the government six out of ten for ‘ensuring Australia’s national security is maintained’, ‘promoting good relations with China’ and ‘getting Australia’s voice heard on the international stage’.

For its efforts ‘combating climate change’, Australians said the government had done an ‘average job’, with a five out of ten rating.

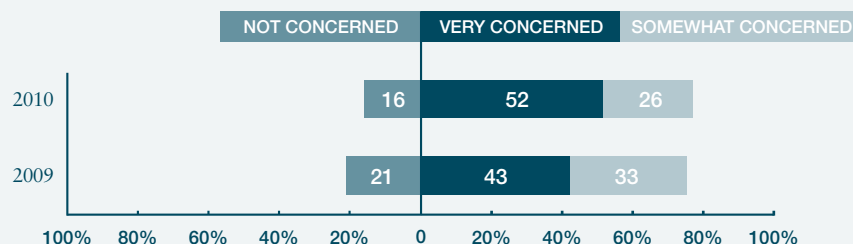
The Rudd Government got failing grades for ‘handling the arrival of asylum seekers by boat’ and ‘dealing with Japanese whaling’ (both rating four out of ten).

#### ASYLUM SEEKERS

More Australians (52%) were ‘very concerned’ about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat’ than last year (43%). The overall level of concern (those very

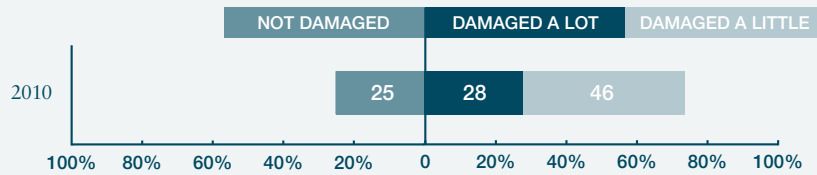
**Fig. 2: Concern about asylum seekers**

Now a question about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. Are you concerned or not concerned about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat or do you have no view on this?



**Fig. 3: Indian students**

And now about India. Do you personally think Australia's relationship with India has been damaged or has not been damaged following the recent attacks on Indian students in Australia?



and somewhat concerned) remained at a similar level (78% in 2010 compared with 76% in 2009). Concern over asylum seekers increased with the age of respondents. Only 33% of those aged 18 to 29 years said they were 'very concerned' compared with 66% of those 60 years of age or older.

**INDIAN STUDENTS**

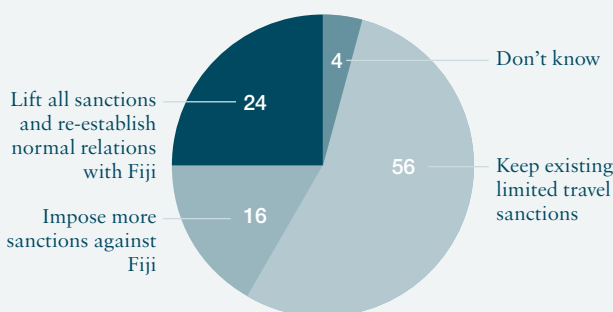
Attacks on Indian students in Australia presented the government with another major foreign policy challenge.

A large majority (74%) of Australians said 'Australia's relationship with India has been damaged' following the attacks, with 28% saying it had been 'damaged a lot' and 46% saying it had been 'damaged a little'. Just one quarter (25%) of Australians said the relationship had 'not been damaged'. Women were more likely than men to say the relationship with India had been damaged (79% compared with 68%).

**FIJI SANCTIONS**

**Fig. 4: Fiji sanctions**

Now for Fiji. The military took over in Fiji in 2006 and has continued to rule the country since then. Following this takeover the Australian government imposed limited travel sanctions on Fiji and supported the suspension of Fiji from the Commonwealth. Which one of the following approaches do you think the Australian government should now take with the regime in Fiji regarding sanctions:



Fiji has emerged as an example of the limits of Australia's influence in its region. After the 2006 military coup, Australia imposed travel sanctions against the regime and has worked to isolate it internationally. But the Bainimarama government shows no sign of shifting its stance.

When presented with three options for dealing with the regime, the majority of Australians were supportive of the government's approach with 56% saying it should 'keep existing limited travel sanctions'. However, a quarter (24%) preferred the government to 'lift all sanctions and re-establish normal relations with Fiji'. Just 16% said it should 'impose more sanctions against Fiji'.

Men and women differed somewhat in their preferred approach to Fiji. A majority (65%) of females said the Australian government should 'keep existing limited travel sanctions' compared with 46% of males. Males were more than twice as likely as females to say the government should 'impose more sanctions against Fiji' (24% compared with 9%).

**POPULATION SIZE**

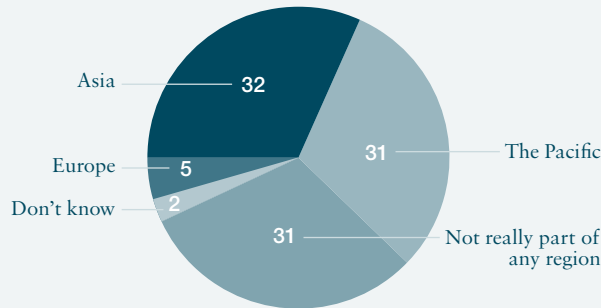
Australia's population growth and weight in the world has sparked recent debate after the Treasurer Wayne Swan circulated an Intergenerational Report which estimated Australia's population could reach almost 36 million people by 2050 through a mix of migration and domestic births.<sup>2</sup>

A majority (69%) of Australians wanted Australia's population to be smaller than the 36 million projected in the Intergenerational Report, but at the same time most (72%) wanted a bigger population than the current 22 million. Forty-three per cent said 'the best target population for Australia' was '30 million people', 23% said it was '40 million people' and 6% said it was '50 million people or more'. Just over one fifth (22%) said it should be 'around the current size of 22 million people' and only 4% said it should be 'less than the current size of 22 million people'.

AUSTRALIA'S PLACE IN THE WORLD

**Fig. 5: Australia's place in the world**

Thinking about Australia's place in the world, do you think Australia is more a part of Asia, Europe, the Pacific or, is it not really part of any region?



Australians might want a larger population – but where do they think Australia fits in the world?

Asked whether 'Australia is more a part of Asia, Europe, the Pacific or, is it not really part of any region' Australians were divided about where it fitted. Thirty-two per cent said Asia, 31% the Pacific and 31% said it was 'not really part of any region'. Just 5% said Europe.

The division within the general public on Australia's place in the world was matched by division among the generations. Just 15% of 18 to 29 year olds said Australia was more a part of Asia, with 46% saying it was 'not really part of any region'. By contrast, a greater proportion (42%) of those 60 years of age or older said Australia was more a part of Asia, with only 15% saying it was 'not really part of any region'.

**FEELINGS TOWARDS OTHER COUNTRIES**

To put Australia's foreign policy in context, this year's poll repeated a question the Lowy Institute has asked since 2006 on feelings towards other countries. Of the 19 countries Australians were asked to rate their feelings towards on a 0-100 scale, New Zealand continued to be the most warmly regarded country (84°). Canada came in just behind in second place with a very high 82°. The third-highest rated country was France at 70°.

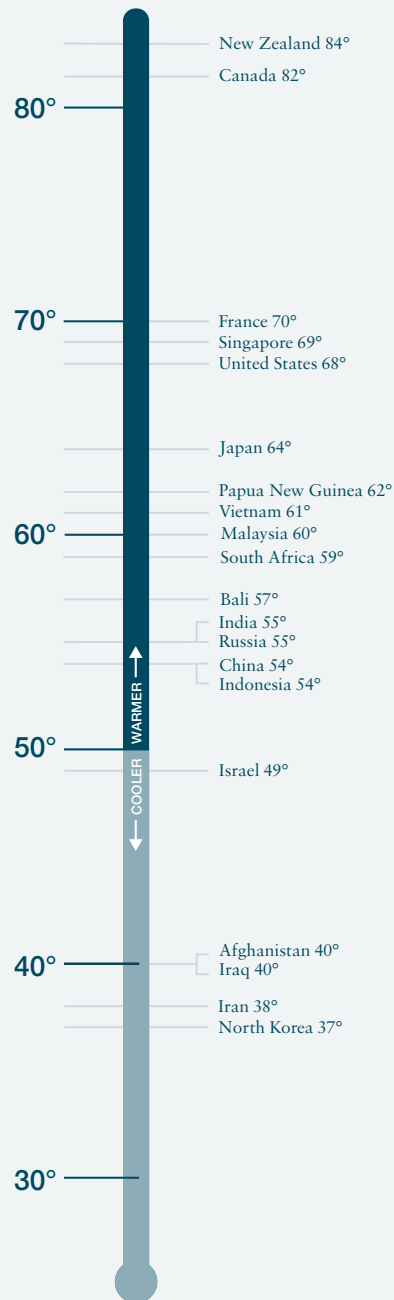
Feelings towards the United States remained warm at 68°, constant with last year (67°) but well up from 60° in 2007.

This year there was an improvement in feelings towards Indonesia. Since this question was first asked in 2006, Indonesia has never rated above 50°. Polling this year was conducted during, and in the wake of, the visit to Australia by the Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and Indonesia scored 54°, up from 49° last year, putting it on the same level as China (54°), India (55°) and Russia (55°),

**Fig. 6: Feelings towards other countries**

Please rate your feelings towards some countries, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred: the higher the number the more favourable your feelings are toward that country. If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country, please say so.

Using the same scale, please rate your feelings towards Bali.



but still behind other ASEAN members like Singapore (69°), Vietnam (61°) and Malaysia (60°).

When asked to use the same scale to rate their feelings towards Bali, Australians gave Bali a moderately warm 57°.

Australians were coolest in their feelings towards Afghanistan (40°), Iraq (40°), Iran (38°) and North Korea (37°).

**BILATERAL RELATIONS UNDER THE RUDD GOVERNMENT**

The Rudd Government has been active on the international stage, but has also faced challenges managing key bilateral relationships, ranging from the attacks on Indian students to differences with Japan over whaling.

To test Australians’ overall impressions of its handling of these relationships they were asked if Australia’s relations with China, Indonesia, the United States, Japan and India were ‘now better, or now worse, since the Rudd Government was elected in November 2007, or are Australia’s relations about the same?’.

The country for which the greatest number of Australians felt there was an improvement in relations was China, with 46% saying relations were either ‘a lot better’ (13%) or ‘a little better’ (33%) and just 10% saying they were either ‘a little worse’ (9%) or ‘a lot worse’ (1%). Forty-one per cent said relations were ‘about the same’.

Over a third (36%) of Australians said the relationship with Indonesia was a lot or a little better, with just 13% saying it was a lot or a little worse. Older Australians were more likely than younger Australians to say relations with Indonesia were better: 48% of those 60 years of age or older said it was a lot or a little better compared with 27% of 18 to 29 year olds. Men were also more likely than women to say they were a lot or a little better (41% compared with 32%).

More Australians said the relationship with the United States was a lot or a little better rather than a lot or a little worse (34% compared with 9%) but a majority (56%) said it was ‘about the same’.

More Australians said relations with Japan and India had become worse since the Rudd Government was elected than said they had become better. For Japan, 20% said they were a lot or a little worse compared with 16% who said they were a lot or a little better (59% said relations were ‘about the same’). Thirty-six per cent said relations with India were a lot or a little worse compared with just 12% who said they were a lot or a little better (45% said relations were ‘about the same’). Men were more likely than women to see relations with India as a lot or a little worse (41% compared with 32%).

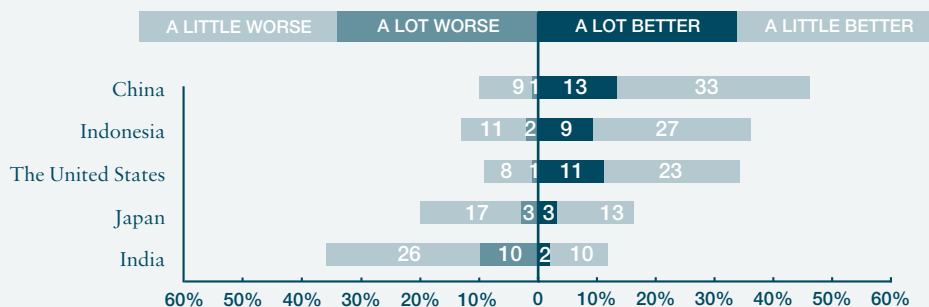
**INDONESIA AS A DEMOCRACY AND A THREAT**

Australians were warmer in their feelings towards Indonesia this year than in any other year the Lowy Institute has conducted polling (see p. 5), but another question in this year’s poll showed just how much work still needs to be done to improve relations.

Indonesia began its transition to multi-party democracy in 1998, but when asked whether ‘Indonesia is more open and democratic or, less open and democratic today compared to say 15 years ago or is it about the same?’ a majority (53%) said it was either ‘about the same’ (39%) or ‘less open’ (14%). Forty-one per cent said it was ‘more open’. Older Australians (those 60 years or older) were more likely than younger Australians (18 to 29 years of age) to say Indonesia was ‘more open’ (48% compared with 34%). Men were also more likely than women to say it was ‘more open’ (45% compared with 37%).

**Fig. 7: Bilateral relations under the Rudd Government**

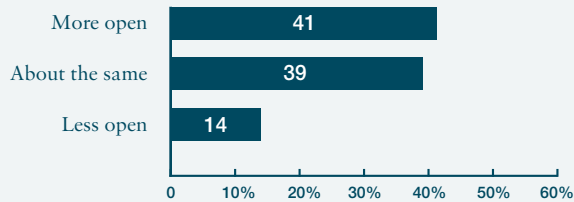
Do you think Australia’s relations with each of the following countries are now better, or now worse, since the Rudd Government was elected in November 2007, or are Australia’s relations about the same? Firstly...#



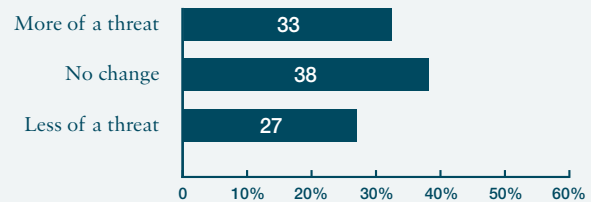
#This chart excludes those saying ‘about the same’.

**Fig. 8: Attitudes towards Indonesia**

Now some questions on Indonesia. Do you think Indonesia is more open and democratic or, less open and democratic today compared to say 15 years ago or is it about the same?



Do you think Indonesia is more of a threat to Australia or less of a threat than it was 15 years ago, or has there been no change?



Asked whether ‘Indonesia is more of a threat to Australia or less of a threat than it was 15 years ago, or has there been no change’ 38% of Australians said there has been ‘no change’ and 33% said it was ‘more of a threat’. Just 27% said it was ‘less of a threat’. Women were more likely than men to say Indonesia was now ‘more of a threat’ (40% compared with 26%).

#### FOREIGN POLICY GOALS

At a big-picture level, the overwhelming majority of Australians continue to feel safe – with 92% saying they feel either ‘safe’ (50%) or ‘very safe’ (42%) – and optimistic about the economic outlook – with 86% reporting they are ‘very optimistic’ (19%) or ‘optimistic’ (67%) ‘about Australia’s economic performance in the world over the next five years’. That is the same overall level of optimism as last year – the highest level of optimism recorded since Lowy Institute polling began in 2005.

But what do Australians think Australia’s foreign policy should be trying to achieve?

Despite their confidence about Australia’s economic performance over the next five years, of 12 possible foreign policy goals the two top-ranked were ‘protecting the jobs of Australian workers’ (79% saying it was ‘very important’) and ‘strengthening the Australian economy’ (74%).

‘Combating international terrorism’ ranked third, with 73% saying it was a ‘very important’ goal followed by ‘helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons’ (72% down from 78% in 2009). Females and older Australians were somewhat more likely than males and younger Australians to say both these goals were ‘very important’.

The biggest downwards movement since 2009 was ‘protecting Australian citizens abroad’ which went from 69% to 62% saying it was ‘very important’.

The priority given to ‘tackling climate change’ remained at its lowest level since this question was first asked in 2007.

In 2007, it ranked as the equal-highest foreign policy goal with 75% of Australians saying it was a ‘very important’ goal. This year a bare majority (53%) said it was ‘very important’ (56% said this last year). It was much more likely to be identified as ‘very important’ by younger Australians than by older Australians: 70% of 18 to 29 year olds and 54% of those aged 30 to 44 years compared with just 40% of those 60 years old or older. Women were also more likely than men to say it was ‘very important’ (58% compared with 48%).

‘Tackling climate change’ ranked 10th out of the 12 goals offered behind objectives such as ‘improving Australia’s relationships with its immediate neighbours in the Pacific’ (61%) and ‘controlling illegal immigration’ (62%). For this latter goal there was a marked gap between the generations, with 72% of those 60 years old or older saying it was ‘very important’ compared with 55% of 18 to 44 year olds.

Fifty-four per cent of Australians said ‘helping countries in our region to reduce poverty’ was a ‘very important’ goal. However, Australians earning \$67,600 a year or more were less likely (47%) to say this. Women were more likely than men to say this was ‘very important’ (60% compared with 48%). The goal of ‘promoting Australian businesses overseas’ – the first time this goal has been offered – was considered ‘very important’ by 56% of Australians.

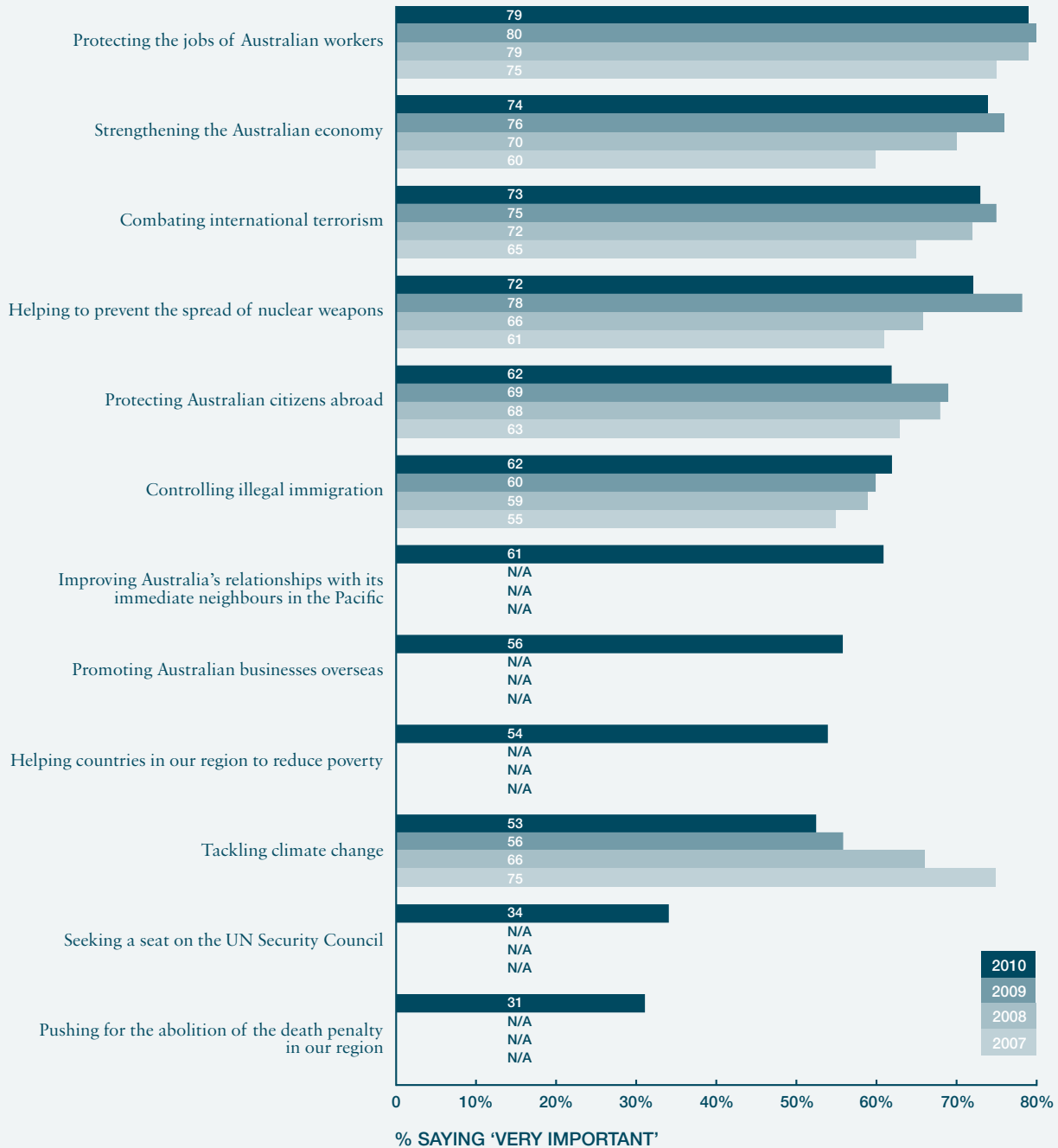
Despite the priority the government has given to seeking a UN Security Council seat, only one third (34%) of Australians said it was a ‘very important’ goal, ranking it second-last on the list of 12 goals. Forty per cent of women said it was ‘very important’ (compared with 28% of men).

The lowest ranking of the 12 possible goals was ‘pushing for the abolition of the death penalty in our region’ which 31% of Australians said was ‘very important’.



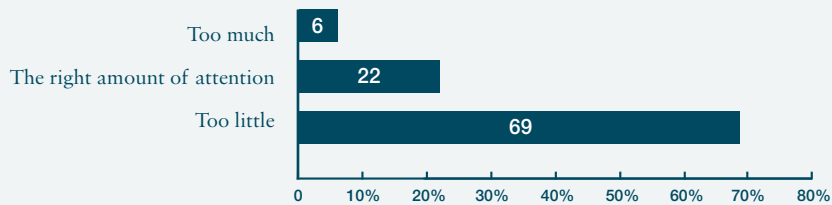
**Fig. 9: Foreign policy goals**

Thinking about what Australian foreign policy should be trying to achieve, I am going to read a list of goals, and ask you to tell me how important each one is for Australia. Please say whether you think each issue is very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important.



**Fig. 10: Attention paid to public opinion**

And about foreign policy and how much attention the government pays to the opinions of people like yourself in comparison to the opinions of foreign policy experts. Do you personally think the government pays too much, too little or the right amount of attention to the opinions of people such as yourself in making foreign policy?



**ATTENTION PAID TO PUBLIC OPINION**

The Australian public has clear views about Australia’s foreign policy goals but feels these are not listened to by government. Sixty-nine per cent of Australians said the government paid ‘too little’ attention to their opinions ‘in comparison to the opinions of foreign policy experts’. One fifth (22%) of Australians said it paid ‘the right amount’ of attention to their views and just 6% said it paid ‘too much’ attention.

Older Australians and women were more likely than younger Australians and men to say government paid ‘too little’ attention to their views: 74% of those 45 years old or older compared with 59% of 18 to 29 year olds. For women and men the difference was 73% compared with 65%.

**China**

**THE WORLD’S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER?**

China’s growing influence is being felt across Australia, from increasing Chinese investment (albeit from a low base) to pressure on Australian leaders not to meet the Dalai Lama. China was singled out as a potential threat in the debate over Australia’s Defence White Paper but was

also widely credited with helping Australia avoid recession during the Global Economic Crisis and has overtaken Japan to become Australia’s largest trading partner.<sup>3</sup> To track Australian attitudes towards China, the 2010 Lowy Poll included a number of questions on China asked in previous years as well as a few new ones.

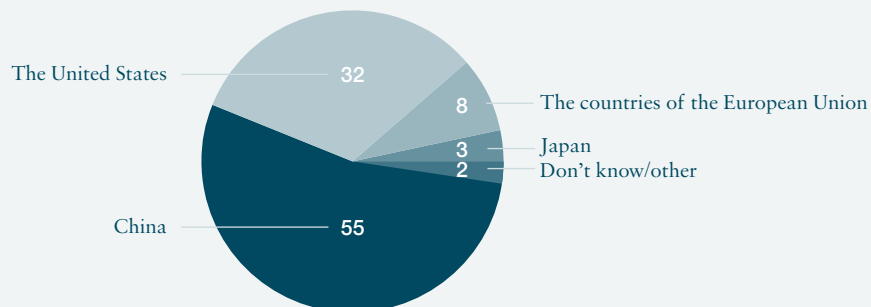
According to IMF estimates, in purchasing power parity terms the EU accounted for 22% of world GDP in 2009, the United States for 20%, China for 12% and Japan for 6%. Measured in US dollar exchange-rate terms the ranking is: the EU (28%), the United States (25%), Japan (9%) and China (8%).<sup>4</sup>

But asked to say whether China, Japan, the countries of the European Union or the United States was ‘the world’s leading economic power’, a majority (55%) of Australians said China. Just one third (32%) said the United States, 8% the countries of the European Union and 3% Japan.

Pew asked the same question as part of a multi-nation poll in 2008 and 2009; the results suggest Australians are considerably more likely than people from other countries to identify China as the world’s leading economic power (see boxed text).

**Fig. 11: World’s leading economic power**

Now about the world’s leading economic power. Today, which one of the following do you think is the world’s leading economic power?



**WORLD'S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER  
– A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**

When it comes to perceptions of which country is the world's leading economic power, Australians are leading the charge by identifying China.

Pew also asked whether China, Japan, the countries of the European Union or the United States was 'the world's leading economic power' as part of a multi-nation survey in 2008 and 2009. In both years, in no country did a majority say China was the world's leading economic power. The largest minority in 2009 was 41% and that was from the Chinese people themselves, followed by 37% in Canada.

Majorities in several countries said the United States was the leading economic power including in South Korea (80%), India (63%), Japan (58%), Turkey (58%), Mexico (55%) and 50% in Indonesia.

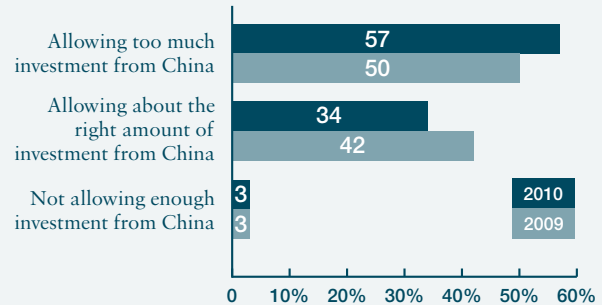
Australia was included in Pew's 2008 survey – with 40% of Australians saying China was the world's leading economic power (the highest percentage of all surveyed countries), 37% the United States, 11% the countries of the European Union and 7% Japan.<sup>5</sup>

**CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIA**

An increasing percentage of Australians said the government was 'allowing too much investment from China' (57% up from 50% last year). Older Australians were more likely than younger Australians to say the government was 'allowing too much investment from China': 64% of those

**Fig. 12: Chinese investment in Australia**

And now about Chinese investment in Australia. Overall, do you think the Australian government is:



45 years of age or older said this compared with 46% of 18 to 29 year olds.

Just one third (34%) of Australians said the government was 'allowing about the right amount of investment from China' (down from 42% last year) and only 3% said it was 'not allowing enough investment from China'.

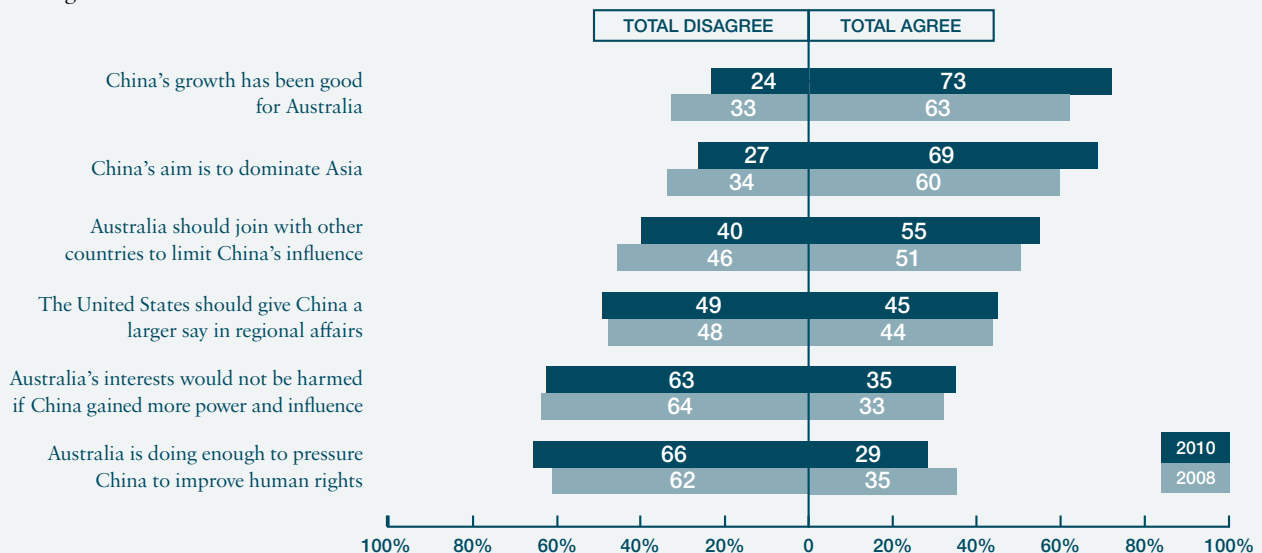
**CHINA'S RISE**

To explore the complexity of the Australia-China relationship, we asked respondents a series of questions first asked in the 2008 Lowy Poll.

The majority (73%) of Australians agreed 'China's growth has been good for Australia', up 10 points since 2008.

**Fig. 13: Attitudes towards China**

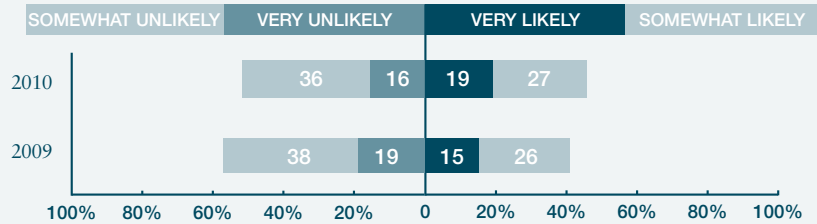
Now a few more questions about China. Please say whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:#



#This chart combines respondents who 'strongly agree' with those who 'agree'. It also combines those who 'strongly disagree' with those who 'disagree'.

**Fig. 14: China as a military threat**

Do you think it is likely or unlikely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years?



But Australians were more ambivalent about the implications of China’s rise. Sixty-nine per cent agreed ‘China’s aim is to dominate Asia’, (up from 60% in 2008) and a majority (55%) agreed ‘Australia should join with other countries to limit China’s influence’ (up from 51% in 2008). Only one third (35%) agreed ‘Australia’s interests would not be harmed if China gained more power and influence’ – around the same level as 2008 (33%).

When it came to whether ‘the United States should give China a larger say in regional affairs’, Australians were divided: 45% agreed it should while 49% disagreed.

China’s human rights record also continued to trouble Australians. Two thirds (66%) disagreed ‘Australia is doing enough to pressure China to improve human rights’.

Across most of the responses women were noticeably more wary about China. For example, 80% of men agreed ‘China’s growth has been good for Australia’ compared with 65% of women. Seventy-five per cent of women agreed ‘China’s aim is to dominate Asia’ compared with 63% of men, and 61% of women agreed ‘Australia should join with other countries to limit China’s influence’ compared with 49% of men.

**CHINA AS A MILITARY THREAT**

Australians were more evenly divided this year over whether ‘China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years’. An increasing proportion of Australians (46%) said it was very or somewhat likely (up five points since last year), while 52% said it was very or somewhat unlikely. Women were more likely than men to say it was very or somewhat likely China would become a military threat (52% compared with 40%). Younger Australians were also more likely than older Australians to say this (54% of 18 to 29 year olds compared with 40% of those aged 45 years old or older).

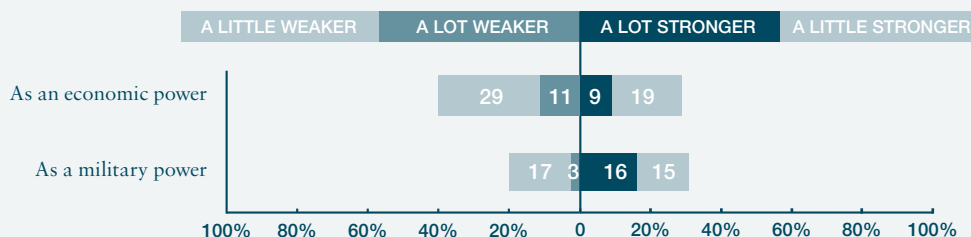
**United States**

**THE UNITED STATES AS AN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER**

The Australian Defence White Paper issued last year expressed concern about ‘any diminution in the willingness or capacity of the United States to act as a stabilising force’.<sup>6</sup> The Global Economic Crisis has also led to discussion of the United States’ decline particularly relative to China.

**Fig. 15: The United States as an economic and military power**

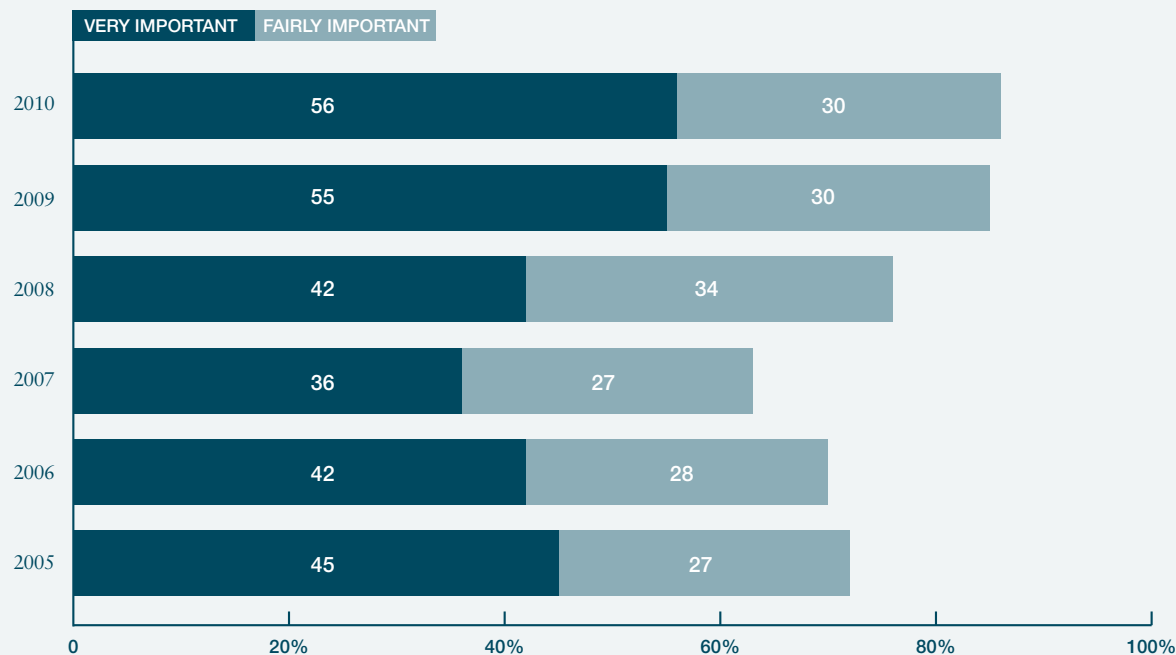
Now about the position of the United States in the world over the next ten years compared to other countries. For each of the following, do you personally think the position of the United States in the world compared to other countries will be stronger or weaker in the next ten years, or will it stay about the same as it is now? Firstly ...<sup>#</sup>



<sup>#</sup>This chart excludes those saying ‘about the same’.

**Fig. 16: Importance of ANZUS**

Thinking now about Australia's alliance relationship with the United States. How important is our alliance relationship with the United States for Australia's security?



To see what Australians thought about the United States' status as an economic and military power, the 2010 Lowy Poll asked whether 'the position of the United States in the world compared to other countries will be stronger or weaker in the next ten years, or will it stay about the same as it is now?'

As 'an economic power' 40% of Australians said the United States would be a lot or a little weaker, compared with 30% who said it would be 'about the same'. Only 28% said it would be a lot or a little stronger. Women were more likely than men to say the United States would be a lot or a little stronger (32% of women compared with 24% of men).

As 'a military power' Australians were more confident in the United States' relative position in the world. Seventy-nine per cent said it would either be 'about the same' (48%) or a lot or a little stronger (31%). Just 20% said it would be a lot or a little weaker. Younger Australians and women were more likely than older Australians and men to say the United States would be a lot or a little stronger (40% of 18 to 29 year olds compared with 25% of those 60 years old or older and 34% of women compared with 28% of men).

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE US ALLIANCE

Last year the Lowy Poll recorded the highest level of support

for the US alliance since our polling began in 2005. This year support for the alliance remained at record high levels with 86% of Australians saying 'Australia's alliance relationship with the United States' was either 'very important' (56%) or 'fairly important' (30%). Older Australians were more likely than younger Australians to say the alliance relationship was 'very important' (68% of those 60 years of age or older compared with 42% of 18 to 29 year olds).

## International Security

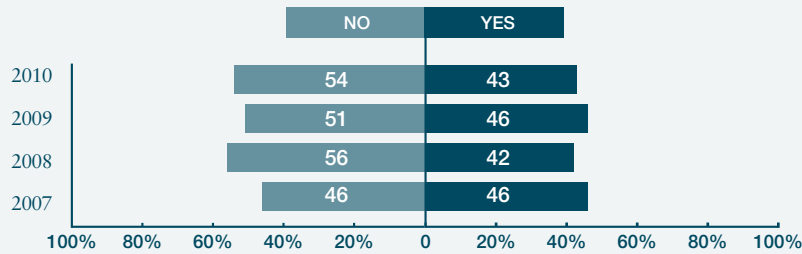
### MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

A majority of Australians remain opposed to Australia's military commitment to Afghanistan. Fifty-four per cent said Australia should not 'continue to be involved militarily in Afghanistan', (compared with 51% last year), while 43% said it should (46% said this in 2009). Women were more likely than men to be opposed to Australia's military involvement (58% compared with 49%).

There was a slight drop in confidence that 'Australia has clear aims in Afghanistan', with 43% of Australians saying they were 'very confident' or 'confident' (down from 47% in 2009 and 50% in 2008). A majority (55%) said they were 'not confident' or 'not at all confident'.

**Fig. 17: Military involvement in Afghanistan**

Now about Afghanistan. Should Australia continue to be involved militarily in Afghanistan?



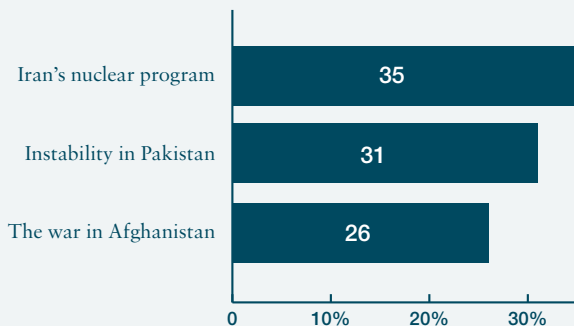
**AFGHANISTAN, IRAN AND PAKISTAN AS THREATS**

Australia’s biggest defence force deployment at present is to Afghanistan, but when asked which of three possible threats – ‘Iran’s nuclear program’, ‘instability in Pakistan’ or ‘the war in Afghanistan’ – is the greatest threat to Australia’s

security at the moment’, Australians were more likely to say ‘Iran’s nuclear program’ (35%) or ‘instability in Pakistan’ (31%) than ‘the war in Afghanistan’ (26%). Australians aged 18 to 29 years of age were the most likely age group to say ‘Iran’s nuclear program’ (47%) was ‘the greatest threat to Australia’s security’.

**Fig. 18: Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan as threats**

Thinking now about Australia’s security. Which one of the following do you think is the greatest threat to Australia’s security at the moment?



**AUSTRALIA DEVELOPING NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

Considerable attention has focused in recent years on the efforts of countries such as North Korea, Iran and Syria to acquire nuclear weapons.

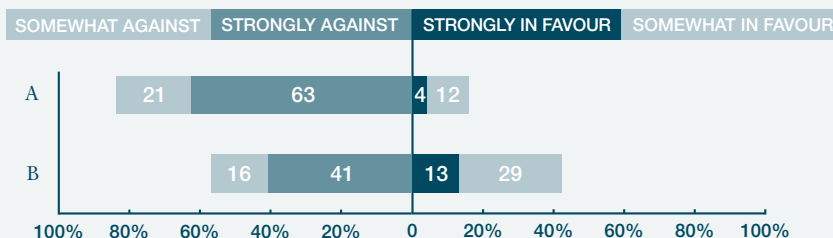
Asked whether they were ‘in favour or against Australia developing nuclear weapons’, the vast majority (84%) were either somewhat or strongly against. Showing the strength of opinion, a majority (63%) said they were ‘strongly against’. Older Australians and women were more likely to be against than younger Australians and men: 87% of those 60 years old or older were somewhat or strongly against compared with 78% of 18 to 29 year olds; for women and men the difference was 87% and 80%.

However, under different circumstances, a significant number of Australians changed their view on developing

**Fig. 19: Nuclear weapons in Australia**

A) Now a question about nuclear weapons. Are you personally in favour or against Australia developing nuclear weapons?

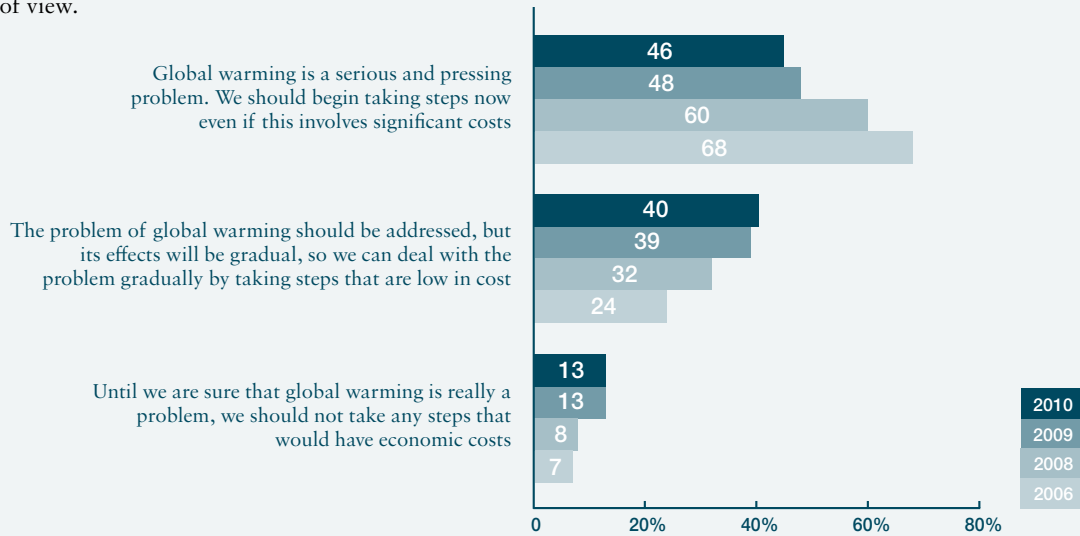
B) If some of Australia’s near neighbours were to begin to develop nuclear weapons, would you then be personally in favour or against Australia also developing nuclear weapons?#



# Question B was only asked of those respondents who answered ‘against’, ‘neither’ or ‘don’t know’ to question A. Those ‘in favour’ in A were included in B as ‘in favour’.

**Fig. 20: Options for dealing with global warming**

Now about global warming. There is a controversy over what the countries of the world, including Australia, should do about the problem of global warming. I'm going to read you three statements. Please tell me which statement comes closest to your own point of view.



nuclear weapons. Asked ‘if some of Australia’s near neighbours were to begin to develop nuclear weapons, would you then be personally in favour or against Australia also developing nuclear weapons’, 42% of Australians were either somewhat or strongly in favour with a much smaller majority (57%) somewhat or strongly against.

### Global Warming

Since the last Lowy Poll world leaders failed to arrive at a binding agreement to reduce emissions at the Copenhagen climate change summit and at the time of fieldwork the Rudd Government’s legislation to introduce an emissions trading scheme in Australia was blocked in the Senate.

Repeating a tracking question, first asked in 2006, that presented Australians with three options for dealing with global warming, support for the most aggressive form of action remained at a record low for a Lowy Poll. Forty-six per cent of Australians said ‘global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even

if this involves significant costs’ (little changed from 2009 when 48% said this). Younger Australians (18 to 29 year olds) were almost twice as likely as older Australians (60 years or older) to say this (59% compared with 31%).

The intermediate proposition that ‘the problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost’ was supported by 40% of Australians.

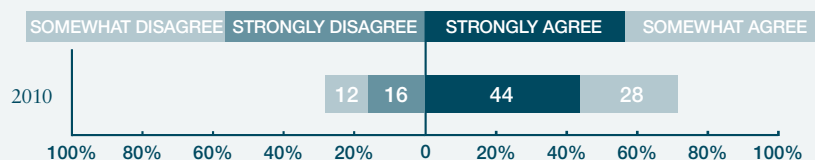
The most skeptical position that ‘until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs’ was supported by 13% of Australians.

#### ACTING BEFORE A GLOBAL AGREEMENT TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS

After fieldwork was completed, the Rudd Government announced plans to cancel the introduction of a Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme until at least 2013. But many Australians still want the government to act.

**Fig. 21: Acting before a global agreement to reduce carbon emissions**

At this stage there is no global agreement to reduce carbon emissions. Do you personally agree, or disagree that Australia should take action to reduce its carbon emissions before a global agreement is reached?



A large majority (72%) of Australians somewhat or strongly agreed ‘that Australia should take action to reduce its carbon emissions before a global agreement is reached’ – with 44% of Australians strongly agreeing. Just over one quarter (28%) somewhat or strongly disagreed.

Younger Australians (18 to 29 years of age) were much more likely than older Australians (60 years old or older) to agree with taking action before a global agreement is reached (89% compared with 52%). There was also a difference between women (77%) and men (66%).

Australians earning \$67,600 per annum or more were slightly less likely to agree with taking early action (64%) compared with Australians earning less.

**WILLINGNESS TO PAY**

Australians might want the government to take action to reduce Australia’s carbon emissions, but they are not prepared to pay much for it. Asked ‘if it helped solve climate change how much extra would you be willing to pay each month on your electricity bill’, rounded to the nearest \$10, the most popular response (33%) was nothing at all, up from 21% when the question was last asked in 2008.

Only 19% were prepared to pay \$21 or more extra a month (the same percentage recorded in 2008).

Older Australians (60 years old or older) were least prepared to pay \$21 extra a month or more (9%) and most likely to say they were not prepared to pay anything at all (43%).

Australians on higher incomes were more willing to pay. Thirty per cent of those earning \$67,600 or more per annum were prepared to pay \$21 or more extra per month compared with 14% of those earning less than \$31,200 per annum.

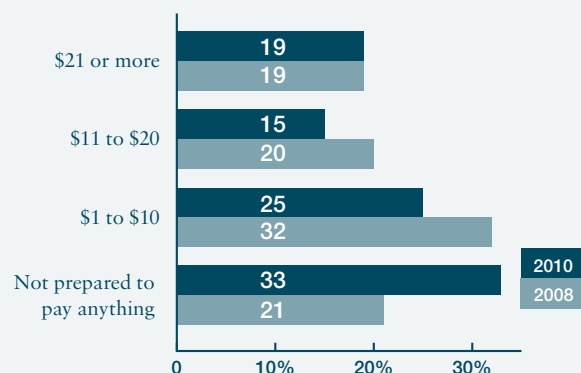
Comparing people’s willingness to pay with their preferred response to global warming, it became apparent that even those Australians who said they wanted immediate action to address the problem were not prepared to pay much to do it. Of the Australians who said ‘global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs’, only 29% were willing to pay \$21 or more extra per month on their electricity bill and 20% were not prepared to pay anything at all.

**FOREIGN AID**

The Rudd Government has committed Australia to increasing its foreign aid to 0.5% of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015-16,<sup>7</sup> but what do Australians think about the size of Australia’s aid program and what it should be trying to achieve?

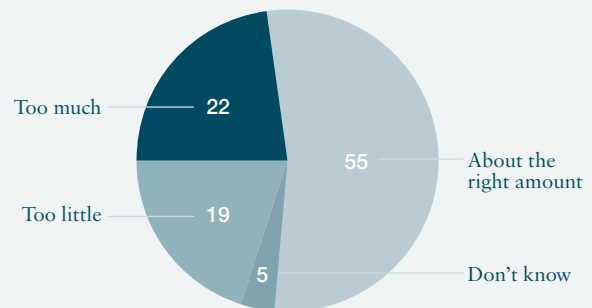
**Fig. 22: Willingness to pay to help solve climate change**

One suggested way of tackling climate change is to increase the price of electricity. If it helped solve climate change how much extra would you be willing to pay each month on your electricity bill? Please say an amount, rounded off to the nearest ten dollars.



**Fig. 23: The scale of Australia’s aid program**

Thinking about the aid the Australian government provides to developing countries. Do you personally think the government is currently giving too much, too little or about the right amount of aid to developing countries?



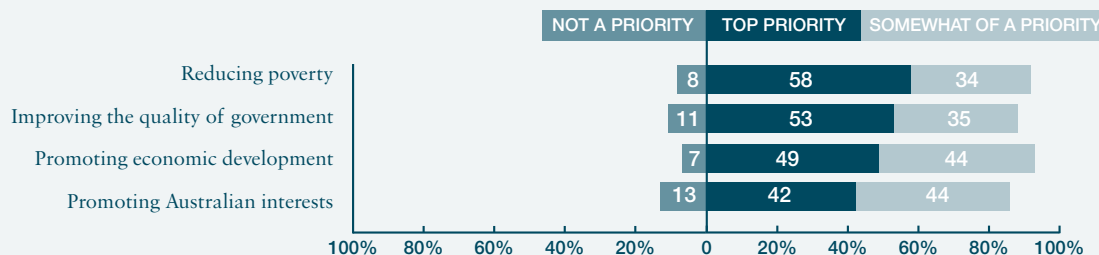
Asked to say whether ‘the government is currently giving too much, too little or about the right amount of aid to developing countries’ a majority (55%) said ‘about the right amount’. Just over one fifth (22%) said it was giving ‘too much’ and about the same percentage (19%) said ‘too little’.

Older Australians (45 years old or older) were three and a half times more likely than younger Australians (18 to 29 years of age) to say the government is currently giving ‘too much’ aid (29% compared with 8%). Men were also more likely to say this than women (26% compared with 17%).



**Fig. 24: Objectives for Australia’s overseas aid program**

Now about four possible objectives for Australia’s overseas aid program. Please say whether you regard each as a top priority, somewhat of a priority or not a priority. Firstly ...



AusAID states the aim of Australia’s overseas aid program ‘is to assist developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development, in line with Australia’s national interest.’<sup>8</sup>

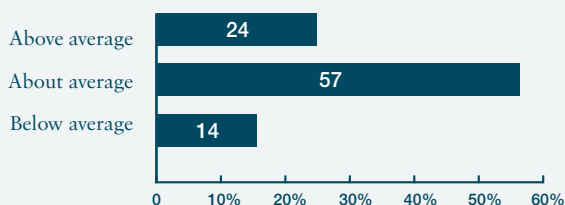
Presented with ‘four possible objectives for Australia’s overseas aid program’, the highest level of support (measured by those saying it was ‘a top priority’) was for ‘reducing poverty’ (58%) followed by ‘improving the quality of government’ (53%) and ‘promoting economic development’ (49%). The least supported option was ‘promoting Australian interests’ (42%).

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND AID**

Papua New Guinea – a former Australian colony – is one of the largest recipients of Australian aid. But the country continues to suffer from serious development and security problems. Asked whether ‘Australia should be doing more, doing less or about the same as it is doing now in Papua New Guinea’ almost half (48%) of the adult population said it should be doing ‘more’ while 42% said ‘about the same’. Just 6% said ‘less’.

**Fig. 25: Morality of Australia’s foreign policy**

Now about Australia’s foreign policy. Do you think that, as compared to other countries, the morality of Australia’s foreign policy is above average, about average, or below average?



**Values**

Lowy polling suggests Australians have a streak of altruism when it comes to foreign policy. This year, for example, Australians placed ‘reducing poverty’ ahead of ‘promoting Australian interests’ as a top priority for Australia’s aid program. But how moral do they think Australian foreign policy is compared to other countries?

Asked if it was ‘above average, about average, or below average’ a majority (57%) of Australians said it was morally ‘about average’. A quarter (24%) said it was ‘above average’ and 14% said it was ‘below average’. Men were more likely than women to say the morality of Australia’s foreign policy was ‘above average’ (29% compared with 18%).

**MORALITY OF AUSTRALIA’S FOREIGN POLICY – A GLOBAL COMPARISON**

Most Australians are pretty modest about the morality of Australia’s foreign policy compared with other countries– with 57% saying it was ‘about average’. But are other countries similarly modest?

WorldPublicOpinion.org asked the same question in 21 nations in a survey released in 2009. In 19 out of 21 of them, the most common answer was that the morality of their nation’s foreign policy was ‘about average’ or ‘below average’.

The countries with the largest proportions saying their foreign policy was ‘above average’ were Jordan (44%), India (40%), Azerbaijan (39%) and China (38%).

The countries with the largest proportions saying the morality of their foreign policy was ‘below average’ were Mexico (54%), South Korea (42%), Argentina (39%), Ukraine (34%) and Nigeria (32%).<sup>9</sup>

# Tables of results

Please note that totals may not add to 100% due to rounding. In these tables each response option has been rounded individually and grouped responses (e.g. those who 'somewhat agree' plus 'strongly agree') have not been rounded at the group level.

Throughout the tables an “\*” represents a response given by less than 0.5% of people.

## RUDD GOVERNMENT REPORT CARD

This year the Rudd Government will complete its first term in office. What mark out of ten would you personally give the Rudd Government for its performance in handling each of the following issues – with ten meaning it has done an excellent job, five an average job and one a very poor job? Firstly ...

	Mean
Maintaining a strong alliance with the United States	<b>7</b>
Responding to the Global Economic Crisis	<b>6</b>
Ensuring Australia's national security is maintained	<b>6</b>
Promoting good relations with China	<b>6</b>
Getting Australia's voice heard on the international stage	<b>6</b>
Combating climate change	<b>5</b>
Handling the arrival of asylum seekers by boat	<b>4</b>
Dealing with Japanese whaling	<b>4</b>

## ASYLUM SEEKERS

Now a question about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. Are you concerned or not concerned about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat or do you have no view on this?

IF CONCERNED - Is that very concerned or somewhat concerned?

	2010	2009
Very concerned	52%	43%
Somewhat concerned	26%	33%
<b>Total: concerned</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>76%</b>
Not concerned	16%	21%
No view either way/Don't know	7%	4%

## INDIAN STUDENTS

And now about India. Do you personally think Australia's relationship with India has been damaged or has not been damaged following the recent attacks on Indian students in Australia?

IF DAMAGED - Is that damaged a lot or damaged a little?

	2010
Damaged a lot	28%
Damaged a little	46%
<b>Total: damaged</b>	<b>74%</b>
Not damaged	25%
Don't know	2%

### FIJI SANCTIONS

Now for Fiji. The military took over in Fiji in 2006 and has continued to rule the country since then. Following this takeover the Australian government imposed limited travel sanctions on Fiji and supported the suspension of Fiji from the Commonwealth. Which **one** of the following approaches do you think the Australian government should now take with the regime in Fiji regarding sanctions?:

	2010
Lift all sanctions and re-establish normal relations with Fiji	<b>24%</b>
Keep existing limited travel sanctions	<b>56%</b>
Impose more sanctions against Fiji	<b>16%</b>
Don't know	<b>4%</b>

### AUSTRALIA'S POPULATION SIZE

Now about the size of Australia's population in the next 40 years or so. Which **one** of the following do you personally think would be the best target population for Australia in the next 40 years?

	2010
Less than the current size of 22 million people	<b>4%</b>
Around the current size of 22 million people	<b>22%</b>
30 million people	<b>43%</b>
40 million people	<b>23%</b>
50 million people or more	<b>6%</b>
None of these	<b>*</b>
Don't know	<b>1%</b>

### AUSTRALIA'S PLACE IN THE WORLD

Thinking about Australia's place in the world, do you think Australia is more a part of Asia, Europe, the Pacific or, is it not really part of any region?

	2010
Asia	<b>32%</b>
The Pacific	<b>31%</b>
Not really part of any region	<b>31%</b>
Europe	<b>5%</b>
Don't know	<b>2%</b>

**FEELINGS TOWARDS OTHER COUNTRIES**

Please rate your feelings towards some countries, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred: the higher the number the more favourable your feelings are toward that country. If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country, please say so.<sup>#</sup>

Using the same scale, please rate your feelings towards Bali.

Country	2010 Mean°	2009 Mean°	2008 Mean°	2007 Mean°	2006 Mean°
New Zealand	<b>84</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Canada	<b>82</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
France	<b>70</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Singapore	<b>69</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>65</b>
United States	<b>68</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>62</b>
Japan	<b>64</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>
Papua New Guinea	<b>62</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>63</b>
Vietnam	<b>61</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Malaysia	<b>60</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>
South Africa	<b>59</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Bali	<b>57</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
India	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>62</b>
Russia	<b>55</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
China	<b>54</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>61</b>
Indonesia	<b>54</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>50</b>
Israel	<b>49</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>
Afghanistan	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Iraq	<b>40</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>44</b>
Iran	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>43</b>
North Korea	<b>37</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>43</b>

<sup>#</sup> In 2006, this question asked respondents about their feelings towards 'countries *and* peoples'.

**BILATERAL RELATIONS UNDER THE RUDD GOVERNMENT**

Do you think Australia’s relations with each of the following countries are now better, or now worse, since the Rudd Government was elected in November 2007, or are Australia’s relations about the same? Firstly ...

IF BETTER - Is that a lot better or a little better?

IF WORSE - Is that a lot worse or a little worse?

	China	Indonesia	The United States	Japan	India
A lot better	13%	9%	11%	3%	2%
A little better	33%	27%	23%	13%	10%
<b>Total: better</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>45%</b>
A little worse	9%	11%	8%	17%	26%
A lot worse	1%	2%	1%	3%	10%
<b>Total: worse</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>36%</b>
Don't know	4%	5%	1%	5%	7%

**INDONESIA AS A DEMOCRACY AND A THREAT**

Now some questions on Indonesia. Do you think Indonesia is more open and democratic or, less open and democratic today compared to say 15 years ago or is it about the same?

	2010
More open	<b>41%</b>
About the same	<b>39%</b>
Less open	<b>14%</b>
Don't know	<b>7%</b>

Do you think Indonesia is more of a threat to Australia or less of a threat than it was 15 years ago, or has there been no change?

	2010
More of a threat	<b>33%</b>
No change	<b>38%</b>
Less of a threat	<b>27%</b>
Don't know	<b>3%</b>

**FEELING OF SAFETY**

Now about world events, how safe do you feel?

	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Very safe	42%	44%	35%	40%	30%	30%
Safe	50%	46%	57%	50%	56%	61%
<b>Total: safe</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>91%</b>
Unsafe	5%	7%	8%	8%	10%	7%
Very unsafe	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%
<b>Total: unsafe</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Don't know	1%	1%	*	1%	*	1%

**ECONOMIC OPTIMISM**

Overall, how optimistic are you about Australia's economic performance in the world over the next five years?#

	2010	2009	2008	2007	2005
Very optimistic	19%	16%	11%	19%	14%
Optimistic	67%	70%	65%	52%	53%
<b>Total: optimistic</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>67%</b>
Pessimistic	10%	11%	19%	9%	8%
Very pessimistic	3%	2%	4%	2%	2%
<b>Total: pessimistic</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Neutral	N/A	N/A	N/A	17%	21%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%

# In 2005 and 2007 a 'neutral' option was included.

## FOREIGN POLICY GOALS

Thinking about what Australian foreign policy should be trying to achieve, I am going to read a list of goals, and ask you to tell me how important each one is for Australia. Please say whether you think each issue is very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important.

2010							
	Very important	Fairly important	<b>Total: important</b>	Not very important	Not at all important	<b>Total: not important</b>	Don't know
Protecting the jobs of Australian workers	79%	18%	<b>97%</b>	2%	1%	<b>3%</b>	*
Strengthening the Australian economy	74%	23%	<b>97%</b>	3%	1%	<b>4%</b>	*
Combating international terrorism	73%	21%	<b>94%</b>	4%	2%	<b>6%</b>	*
Helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons <sup>#</sup>	72%	21%	<b>93%</b>	6%	1%	<b>7%</b>	*
Protecting Australian citizens abroad	62%	33%	<b>95%</b>	4%	1%	<b>5%</b>	*
Controlling illegal immigration	62%	28%	<b>90%</b>	9%	1%	<b>10%</b>	*
Improving Australia's relationships with its immediate neighbours in the Pacific	61%	34%	<b>95%</b>	4%	1%	<b>5%</b>	1%
Promoting Australian businesses overseas	56%	36%	<b>92%</b>	6%	2%	<b>8%</b>	*
Helping countries in our region to reduce poverty	54%	37%	<b>91%</b>	8%	1%	<b>9%</b>	*
Tackling climate change	53%	29%	<b>82%</b>	12%	5%	<b>17%</b>	*
Seeking a seat on the UN Security Council	34%	39%	<b>73%</b>	19%	5%	<b>24%</b>	3%
Pushing for the abolition of the death penalty in our region	31%	28%	<b>59%</b>	26%	14%	<b>40%</b>	2%

<sup>#</sup> In 2008 and 2007 this goal was 'helping to prevent nuclear proliferation'.

Percentage saying 'very important'				
	2010	2009	2008	2007
Protecting the jobs of Australian workers	<b>79%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Strengthening the Australian economy	<b>74%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>60%</b>
Combating international terrorism	<b>73%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>65%</b>
Helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons <sup>#</sup>	<b>72%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>61%</b>
Protecting Australian citizens abroad	<b>62%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>63%</b>
Controlling illegal immigration	<b>62%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>55%</b>
Improving Australia's relationships with its immediate neighbours in the Pacific	<b>61%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Promoting Australian businesses overseas	<b>56%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Helping countries in our region to reduce poverty	<b>54%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Tackling climate change	<b>53%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Seeking a seat on the UN Security Council	<b>34%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Pushing for the abolition of the death penalty in our region	<b>31%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

<sup>#</sup> In 2008 and 2007 this goal was 'helping to prevent nuclear proliferation'.

#### ATTENTION PAID TO PUBLIC OPINION

And about foreign policy and how much attention the government pays to the opinions of people like yourself in comparison to the opinions of foreign policy experts. Do you personally think the government pays too much, too little or the right amount of attention to the opinions of people such as yourself in making foreign policy?

	2010
Too much	<b>6%</b>
The right amount of attention	<b>22%</b>
Too little	<b>69%</b>
Don't know	<b>4%</b>



**WORLD'S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER**

Now about the world's leading economic power. Today, which **one** of the following do you think is the world's leading economic power?

	2010
China	<b>55%</b>
The United States	<b>32%</b>
The countries of the European Union	<b>8%</b>
Japan	<b>3%</b>
Another country	*
None	*
Don't know	<b>1%</b>

**CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIA**

And now about Chinese investment in Australia. Overall, do you think the Australian government is:

	2010	2009
Allowing too much investment from China	<b>57%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Allowing about the right amount of investment from China	<b>34%</b>	<b>42%</b>
Not allowing enough investment from China	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Don't know	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>

**ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHINA**

Now a few more questions about China. Please say whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:

	China's growth has been good for Australia		China's aim is to dominate Asia		Australia should join with other countries to limit China's influence		The United States should give China a larger say in regional affairs		Australia's interests would <b>not</b> be harmed if China gained more power and influence		Australia is doing enough to pressure China to improve human rights	
	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008
Strongly agree	22%	13%	27%	20%	15%	13%	6%	5%	6%	4%	4%	5%
Agree	51%	50%	42%	40%	40%	38%	39%	39%	29%	29%	25%	30%
<b>Total: agree</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Disagree	19%	27%	22%	28%	34%	39%	39%	37%	43%	46%	46%	44%
Strongly disagree	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%	10%	11%	20%	18%	20%	18%
<b>Total: disagree</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>62%</b>
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	6%	4%	3%	6%	7%	2%	3%	5%	3%

**CHINA AS A MILITARY THREAT**

Do you think it is likely or unlikely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years?

IF LIKELY - Is that very likely or somewhat likely?

IF UNLIKELY - Is that very unlikely or somewhat unlikely?

	2010	2009
Very likely	19%	15%
Somewhat likely	27%	26%
<b>Total: likely</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>41%</b>
Somewhat unlikely	36%	38%
Very unlikely	16%	19%
<b>Total: unlikely</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>57%</b>
Don't know	2%	3%

**THE UNITED STATES AS AN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER**

Now about the position of the United States in the world over the next ten years compared to other countries. For each of the following, do you personally think the position of the United States in the world compared to other countries will be stronger or weaker in the next ten years, or will it stay about the same as it is now? Firstly ...

IF STRONGER - Is that a lot stronger or a little stronger?

IF WEAKER - Is that a lot weaker or a little weaker?

	As an economic power	As a military power
A lot stronger	9%	16%
A little stronger	19%	15%
<b>Total: stronger</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>48%</b>
A little weaker	29%	17%
A lot weaker	11%	3%
<b>Total: weaker</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Don't know	1%	1%

**IMPORTANCE OF ANZUS**

Thinking now about Australia's alliance relationship with the United States. How important is our alliance relationship with the United States for Australia's security?

	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Very important	56%	55%	42%	36%	42%	45%
Fairly important	30%	30%	34%	27%	28%	27%
<b>Total: very and fairly important</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>72%</b>
Somewhat important	12%	12%	20%	27%	22%	20%
Not at all important	2%	2%	4%	9%	8%	7%
Don't know	*	*	-	1%	1%	1%

**MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN**

Now about Afghanistan. Should Australia continue to be involved militarily in Afghanistan?

	2010	2009	2008	2007
Yes	<b>43%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>46%</b>
No	<b>54%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>46%</b>
Don't know	<b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Refused	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>1%</b>

Are you confident that Australia has clear aims in Afghanistan?

	2010	2009	2008
Very confident	7%	10%	9%
Confident	36%	37%	41%
<b>Total: confident</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Not confident	38%	34%	33%
Not at all confident	17%	18%	16%
<b>Total: not confident</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Don't know	3%	1%	1%

**AFGHANISTAN, IRAN AND PAKISTAN AS THREATS**

Thinking now about Australia’s security. Which **one** of the following do you think is the **greatest** threat to Australia’s security at the moment?

	2010
Iran’s nuclear program	<b>35%</b>
Instability in Pakistan	<b>31%</b>
The war in Afghanistan	<b>26%</b>
None/Don’t know	<b>8%</b>

**AUSTRALIA DEVELOPING NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

	A) Now a question about nuclear weapons. Are you personally in favour or against Australia developing nuclear weapons?	B) If some of Australia’s near neighbours were to begin to develop nuclear weapons, would you then be personally in favour or against Australia also developing nuclear weapons? <small>NB Question B on nuclear weapons was only asked of those respondents who answered ‘against’, ‘neither’ or ‘don’t know’ to question A. In this analysis those ‘in favour’ in A were also included in B as ‘in favour’.</small>
	IF IN FAVOUR - Is that strongly in favour or somewhat in favour? IF AGAINST - Is that strongly against or somewhat against?	
Strongly in favour	4%	13%
Somewhat in favour	12%	29%
<b>Total: in favour</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>42%</b>
Somewhat against	21%	16%
Strongly against	63%	41%
<b>Total: against</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>57%</b>
Neither/Don’t know	2%	2%

**GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

Now about global warming. There is a controversy over what the countries of the world, including Australia, should do about the problem of global warming. I’m going to read you three statements. Please tell me which statement comes closest to your own point of view.

	2010	2009	2008	2006
Global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs	<b>46%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>68%</b>
The problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost	<b>40%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Don’t know/Refused	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	*	<b>1%</b>

At this stage there is no global agreement to reduce carbon emissions. Do you personally agree, or disagree that Australia should take action to reduce its carbon emissions before a global agreement is reached?

IF AGREE - Is that strongly agree or somewhat agree?

IF DISAGREE - Is that strongly disagree or somewhat disagree?

	2010
Strongly agree	44%
Somewhat agree	28%
<b>Total: agree</b>	<b>72%</b>
Somewhat disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	16%
<b>Total: disagree</b>	<b>28%</b>
Neither/Don't know	1%

One suggested way of tackling climate change is to increase the price of electricity. If it helped solve climate change how much extra would you be willing to pay each month on your electricity bill? Please say an amount, rounded off to the nearest ten dollars.

	18 to 29 years		30 to 44 years		45 to 59 years		60 years or older		Total	
	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008
Not prepared to pay anything	23%	19%	31%	21%	35%	21%	43%	23%	33%	21%
\$1 to \$10	25%	27%	21%	26%	25%	34%	29%	43%	25%	32%
\$11 to \$20	19%	16%	18%	27%	15%	17%	10%	17%	15%	20%
\$21 or more	23%	27%	26%	22%	19%	22%	9%	7%	19%	19%
Don't know/Refused	10%	12%	4%	4%	6%	7%	8%	10%	7%	8%

**CROSS-TABULATION OF WILLINGNESS TO PAY TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE BY ATTITUDE TOWARDS GLOBAL WARMING**

	Global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs	The problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost	Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs
Not prepared to pay anything	20%	39%	66%
\$1 to \$10	25%	28%	18%
\$11 to \$20	18%	14%	7%
\$21 or more	29%	13%	7%
Don't know/Refused	9%	6%	2%

### AUSTRALIA'S OVERSEAS AID PROGRAM

Thinking about the aid the Australian government provides to developing countries. Do you personally think the government is currently giving too much, too little or about the right amount of aid to developing countries?

	2010
Too much	<b>22%</b>
About the right amount	<b>55%</b>
Too little	<b>19%</b>
Don't know	<b>5%</b>

Now about four possible objectives for Australia's overseas aid program. Please say whether you regard each as a top priority, somewhat of a priority or not a priority. Firstly ...

	Reducing poverty	Improving the quality of government	Promoting economic development	Promoting Australian interests
A top priority	<b>58%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>42%</b>
Somewhat of a priority	<b>34%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>44%</b>
Not a priority	<b>8%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Don't know	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

### PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Now a question about Australia helping Papua New Guinea with regards to improving health and education and reducing crime. Do you think Australia should be doing more, doing less or about the same as it is doing now in Papua New Guinea?

	2010
More	<b>48%</b>
About the same	<b>42%</b>
Less	<b>6%</b>
Don't know	<b>5%</b>

### MORALITY OF AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

Now about Australia's foreign policy. Do you think that, as compared to other countries, the morality of Australia's foreign policy is above average, about average, or below average?

	2010
Above average	<b>24%</b>
About average	<b>57%</b>
Below average	<b>14%</b>
Don't know	<b>5%</b>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In some instances findings from the 2010 Lowy Poll were released prior to the formal launch of the poll.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Treasury, *The 2010 intergenerational report*, January 2010, p viii, [http://www.treasury.gov.au/igr/igr2010/report/pdf/IGR\\_2010.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov.au/igr/igr2010/report/pdf/IGR_2010.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, [http://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/stats-pubs/mtd/australia\\_trade\\_1001.pdf](http://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/stats-pubs/mtd/australia_trade_1001.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> IMF World Economic Outlook database, latest version, at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/02/weodata/index.aspx>.

<sup>5</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project, World's leading economic power, <http://pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=17>.

<sup>6</sup> Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*, paragraph 3.17, p 28. [http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/docs/defence\\_white\\_paper\\_2009.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/docs/defence_white_paper_2009.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> AusAID, Australia is doubling the aid program, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/keyaid/mdg.cfm>

<sup>8</sup> AusAID, About Australia's aid program, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/makediff/default.cfm>

<sup>9</sup> WorldPublicOpinion, Most people think their nation's foreign policy is morally no better than average: global poll, January 2009, [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/jan09/WPO\\_MoralityFP\\_Jan09\\_rpt.pdf](http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/jan09/WPO_MoralityFP_Jan09_rpt.pdf).

## About the Lowy Institute Poll

The Lowy Institute Poll was conducted in Australia between 6 and 21 March 2010. A number of the questions in the poll were first asked in previous Lowy Institute polls, or have been adapted from questions asked in those years. Repeating questions in successive years allows us to compare public opinion on a single issue through time, building trend data on important international policy issues.

Some of our questions this year are identical to questions asked previously by other survey organisations, which has allowed for the comparison of public opinion internationally.

## Methodology

For this opinion poll, Field Works Market Research conducted 1,001 interviews between 6 and 21 March 2010. Survey interviews were conducted by telephone. The sample was designed to be nationally representative of all Australians 18 years and older. Quotas were set for each state and territory, with broad age-group and gender quotas. Interviewers continued making calls until each quota was filled.

Within each geographic area, telephone numbers were randomly selected from a regularly updated active residential phone number database. The results were then weighted to reflect the demographic profile of the Australian population aged 18 years and over, using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

These weights were used in the production of all the tables for this report. On a truly random sample of 1,000 the margin of error is 3.1%, which means there is a 95% chance that responses from the sample fall within a range of 3.1% either side of the notional collective response of the whole population. Since this sample was stratified (by state/territory, age-group and sex), the error figure is a guide only. Where the results for a sub-sample are reported, the margin of error is greater.

## Acknowledgements

Several of the questions in this survey were modelled on those developed over the last thirty years by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, a world leader in foreign policy opinion polling. Other questions in this year's survey were derived from Pew and WorldPublicOpinion.org. The fieldwork for the Lowy Institute Poll was managed by Tamara de Silva of Field Works Market Research. Sol Lebovic, Research Consultant, provided technical support, reviewed the questionnaire and helped interpret the data. The survey was funded entirely by the Lowy Institute for International Policy. The Lowy Institute Poll is overseen by the Institute's Executive Director, Michael Wesley, and was managed in 2010 by the Director of the Lowy Poll Project, Fergus Hanson.

The cover image was taken at Carnarvon Gorge, Central Queensland.



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