

The Essential Report

2 September 2013





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About this poll

This report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The survey was conducted online from the 29th August to 1st September and is based on 990 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on firmness of vote, leader approval, best Prime Minister, attributes of party leaders, party trust to handle issues, concerns about economic and other issues.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 16.

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 = 1,856 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 5/8/13	2 weeks ago 19/8/13	Last week 26/8/13	This week 2/9/13
Liberal		40%	41%	40%	41%
National		3%	3%	2%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	43.6%	43%	44%	43%	44%
Labor	38.0%	38%	40%	38%	35%
Greens	11.8%	9%	8%	11%	11%
Other/Independent	6.6%	10%	8%	9%	10%

2 Party Preferred	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 5/8/13	2 weeks ago 19/8/13	Last week 26/8/13	This week 2/9/13
Liberal National	49.9%	51%	50%	50%	52%
Labor	50.1%	49%	50%	50%	48%

NB. The data in the above tables comprise 2-week averages derived from the first preference/leaning to voting questions. Respondents who select 'don't know' are not included in the results. The two-party preferred estimate is calculated by distributing the votes of the other parties according to their preferences at the 2010 election.

Weekly voting intention

The following tables show the weekly voting intention since the election was called.

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 5/8/13	3 weeks ago 13/8/13	2 weeks ago 19/8/13	Last week 26/8/13	This week 2/9/13
<i>Sample</i>		973	926	976	938	918
Liberal National	43.6%	43%	44%	43%	43%	44%
Labor	38.0%	37%	41%	39%	36%	35%
Greens	11.8%	10%	7%	9%	11%	10%
Other/Independent	6.6%	11%	9%	8%	10%	11%

2 Party Preferred	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 5/8/13	3 weeks ago 13/8/13	2 weeks ago 19/8/13	Last week 26/8/13	This week 2/9/13
Liberal National	49.9%	51%	50%	50%	51%	53%
Labor	50.1%	49%	50%	50%	49%	47%

Firmness of voting intention

Q. How likely is it that you will change your mind about who you vote for before the Federal election?

	Total Gave voting intention	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Other party/ Independent	Total 5 Aug	Total 19 Aug	Total 26 Aug
I will definitely not change my mind	54%	57%	63%	39%	20%	44%	46%	47%
It is very unlikely I will change my mind	27%	25%	25%	39%	33%	30%	32%	30%
It is quite possible I will change my mind as the campaign develops	15%	14%	9%	17%	39%	21%	17%	18%
Don't know	4%	4%	3%	6%	8%	5%	5%	4%

54% of those who gave their voting intention say they will definitely not change their mind before the election, 27% say it is very unlikely they will change their mind and 15% say it is quite possible they will change. This represents a significant increase in certainty about voting over the last week.

Other party and independent voters (39%) were most likely to say it is possible they will change their mind.

Approval of Kevin Rudd

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

	Julia Gillard 11 Jun 13	Kevin Rudd 15 Jul	Kevin Rudd 13 Aug	Kevin Rudd 26 Aug	Kevin Rudd 2 Sep
Total approve	37%	50%	45%	41%	42%
Total disapprove	54%	35%	43%	45%	47%
Strongly approve	10%	18%	11%	11%	13%
Approve	27%	32%	34%	30%	29%
Disapprove	21%	15%	21%	20%	19%
Strongly disapprove	33%	20%	22%	25%	28%
Don't know	9%	16%	12%	14%	11%

Kevin Rudd's approval ratings have remained much the same over the past week. 42% (up 1%) approve of the job Kevin Rudd is doing as Prime Minister and 47% (up 2%) disapprove – a change in net rating from -4 to -5.

86% of Labor voters approve (up 4%) and 7% disapprove (down 1%).

By gender – men 46% approve/46% disapprove, women 39% approve/48% disapprove. In net terms this represents a shift with men from -4 to 0 and with women from -5 to -9.

Approval of Tony Abbott

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

	18 Jan 2010	5 Jul	20 Dec	14 June 2011	12 Dec	12 Jun 2012	10 Dec	11 Mar 2013	11 Jun	15 Jul	13 Aug	26 Aug	2 Sep
Total approve	37%	37%	39%	38%	32%	32%	33%	37%	40%	39%	37%	37%	40%
Total disapprove	37%	47%	39%	48%	53%	54%	56%	51%	49%	51%	51%	52%	49%
Strongly approve	5%	8%	9%	6%	6%	6%	8%	7%	10%	11%	9%	10%	13%
Approve	32%	29%	30%	32%	26%	26%	25%	30%	30%	28%	28%	27%	27%
Disapprove	20%	23%	21%	25%	25%	24%	25%	22%	17%	21%	21%	23%	19%
Strongly disapprove	17%	24%	18%	23%	28%	30%	31%	29%	32%	30%	30%	29%	30%
Don't know	26%	16%	22%	15%	14%	13%	12%	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%	10%

Tony Abbott's approval ratings have improved over the past week. 40% (up 3%) approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader and 49% (down 3%) disapprove – a change in net rating from -15 to -9 over the past week.

80% (up 7%) of Coalition voters approve and 13% (down 5%) disapprove.

By gender – men 44% approve/49% disapprove, women 37% approve/50% disapprove. In net terms this represents a shift with men from -2 to -5 and a shift with women from -28 to -13.

Better Prime Minister

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

	Gillard/ Abbott 11 Jun 13	Rudd/ Abbott 15 Jul	Rudd/ Abbott 13 Aug	Rudd/ Abbott 26 Aug	Rudd/ Abbott 2 Sep Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Julia Gillard/Kevin Rudd	39%	50%	47%	43%	44%	91%	5%	74%
Tony Abbott	40%	35%	35%	34%	38%	1%	80%	6%
Don't know	21%	15%	18%	23%	18%	8%	16%	20%

44% (up 1%) believe Kevin Rudd would make the better Prime Minister and 38% (up 4%) prefer Tony Abbott.

Men prefer Kevin Rudd 44%/40% and women prefer Kevin Rudd 44%/37%.

Leader Attributes – Kevin Rudd

Q. Which of the following describe your opinion of the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd?

	8 Jul 13	2 Sep 13	Change
Intelligent	77%	74%	-3
Hard-working	70%	70%	-
Arrogant	49%	60%	+11
A capable leader	58%	54%	-4
Superficial	44%	54%	+10
Understands the problems facing Australia	57%	53%	-4
Aggressive	43%	53%	+10
Good in a crisis	53%	52%	-1
Erratic	45%	51%	+6
Out of touch with ordinary people	39%	46%	+7
Intolerant	37%	46%	+9
Visionary	43%	42%	-1
Narrow-minded	34%	38%	+4
Trustworthy	42%	35%	-7
More honest than most politicians	41%	35%	-6

Kevin Rudd's key attributes were intelligent (74%), hard-working (70%), arrogant (60%), a capable leader (54%) and superficial (54%).

Since this question was asked in July, there have been significant changes for arrogant (up 11%), superficial (up 10%), aggressive (up 10%) and intolerant (up 9%).

Leader Attributes – Tony Abbott

Q. Which of the following describe your opinion of the Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott?

	5 Jul 10	27 Jun 11	2 Apr 12	14 Jan 13	2 Apr	23 Jun	8 Jul	2 Sep	Change
Hard-working	76%	75%	68%	70%	70%	68%	65%	71%	+6
Intelligent	70%	61%	56%	64%	63%	62%	60%	63%	+3
Narrow-minded	56%	54%	54%	56%	53%	55%	55%	55%	-
Arrogant	59%	60%	61%	61%	56%	59%	54%	52%	-2
Out of touch with ordinary people	57%	57%	54%	54%	52%	52%	50%	52%	+2
Superficial		49%	49%	48%	49%	49%	47%	48%	+1
Aggressive	-	-	-	55%	49%	51%	50%	47%	-3
Intolerant	-	-	-	49%	48%	48%	46%	47%	+1
Understands the problems facing Australia	50%	48%	49%	47%	49%	44%	45%	46%	+1
A capable leader	47%	45%	41%	43%	47%	44%	42%	46%	+4
Erratic	-	-	-	51%	45%	47%	45%	43%	-2
Good in a crisis	40%	40%	36%	39%	44%	38%	38%	39%	+1
Trustworthy	33%	32%	32%	33%	36%	31%	32%	38%	+6
Visionary	32%	27%	26%	28%	37%	30%	26%	35%	+9
More honest than most politicians	33%	32%	30%	29%	36%	29%	30%	34%	+4

Tony Abbott's key attributes were hard-working (71%), intelligent (63%), narrow-minded (55%), arrogant (52%) and out of touch with ordinary people (52%).

Since July, the largest shifts have been for visionary (+9), hard-working (+6) and trustworthy (+6).

Leader Attributes – Comparisons

	Rudd	Abbott	Difference
Good in a crisis	52%	39%	+13
Intelligent	74%	63%	+9
Arrogant	60%	52%	+8
A capable leader	54%	46%	+8
Erratic	51%	43%	+8
Visionary	42%	35%	+7
Understands the problems facing Australia	53%	46%	+7
Superficial	54%	48%	+6
Aggressive	53%	47%	+6
More honest than most politicians	35%	34%	+1
Hard-working	70%	71%	-1
Intolerant	46%	47%	-1
Trustworthy	35%	38%	-3
Out of touch with ordinary people	46%	52%	-6
Narrow-minded	38%	55%	-17

Compared to Tony Abbott, Kevin Rudd is much likely to be considered good in a crisis (+13), intelligent (+9), arrogant (+8), a capable leader (+8), erratic (+8), visionary (+7) and understands the problems facing Australia (+7).

Tony Abbott is regarded by more respondents to be narrow-minded (-17) and out of touch with ordinary people (-6).

Party Trust to Handle Issues

Q. Which party would you trust most to handle the following issues?

	Labor	Liberal	Greens	Don't know	Difference 2 Sep 13	Difference 23 Jul 13
Management of the economy	32%	47%	4%	18%	-15	-15
Ensuring a quality education for all children	42%	32%	8%	19%	+10	+9
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	37%	34%	8%	21%	+3	+1
Protecting the environment	19%	21%	43%	17%	+22	+18
A fair industrial relations system	41%	31%	7%	21%	+10	+11
Political leadership	31%	40%	6%	23%	-9	-7
Addressing climate change	24%	23%	32%	21%	+9	+7
Controlling interest rates	29%	41%	4%	26%	-12	-14
Australian jobs and protection of local industries	38%	36%	5%	21%	-2	-1
Ensuring a quality water supply	22%	30%	22%	26%	-8	-7
Housing affordability	30%	32%	7%	31%	-2	-2
Ensuring a fair taxation system	32%	37%	6%	26%	-5	-2
Security and the war on terrorism	27%	38%	5%	30%	-11	-15
Treatment of asylum seekers	23%	36%	16%	26%	-13	-11
Managing population growth	24%	33%	9%	34%	-9	-13

Note - Differences are calculated by subtracting Liberal % from Labor % - except for the two issues on which the Greens lead in which case it is Greens minus Liberal.

The Labor Party is trusted more to handle a quality education for all children (+10) and a fair industrial relations system (+10).

The Liberal Party is trusted more to handle management of the economy (-15), treatment of asylum seekers (-13), controlling interest rates (-12) and security and the war on terrorism (-11).

There have been no major changes since this question was last asked in July.

Economic issue of most concern

Q. Which of the following economic issues are you personally most concerned about?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Unemployment	23%	28%	22%	20%
Wealth disparity	19%	29%	7%	43%
Tax levels	15%	8%	21%	12%
Inflation	13%	13%	14%	5%
Budget surplus	11%	3%	20%	3%
Interest rates	9%	10%	10%	8%
None of them	7%	6%	6%	9%
Don't know	3%	4%	1%	-

23% were most concerned about unemployment, 19% about wealth disparity and 15% about tax levels. Only 11% were most concerned about a budget surplus.

Labor voters were most concerned about wealth disparity (29%) and unemployment (28%), while Liberal/National voters were most concerned about unemployment (22%), tax levels (21%) and a budget surplus (20%).

Other issue of most concern

Q. And which of these other issues are you personally most concerned about?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Border security	30%	20%	48%	5%
Climate change	16%	23%	5%	45%
Population growth	12%	10%	13%	4%
Marriage equality	9%	11%	4%	24%
Treatment of the aged	17%	21%	16%	12%
Treatment of the disabled	7%	10%	4%	7%
None of them	5%	3%	7%	4%
Don't know	4%	2%	3%	-

30% were most concerned about border security, 17% treatment of the aged and 16% climate change.

Border security (48%) was the main issue of concern to Liberal/National voters and 45% of Greens voters nominated climate change.

Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

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

Each week, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses issues that are topical and a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated regularly (such as political preference and leadership approval), while others are unique to each week and reflect media and social issues that are present at the time.

Your Source has a self-managed consumer online panel of over 100,000 members. The majority of panel members have been recruited using off line methodologies, effectively ruling out concerns associated with online self-selection.

Your Source has validation methods in place that prevent panellist over use and ensure member authenticity. Your Source randomly selects 18+ males and females (with the aim of targeting 50/50 males/females) from its Australia wide panel. An invitation is sent out to approximately 7000 – 8000 of their panel members.

The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000+ interviews. In theory, with a sample of this size, there is 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population had been polled. However, this assumes random sampling, which, because of non-response and less than 100% population coverage cannot be achieved in practice. Furthermore, there are other possible sources of error in all polls including question wording and question order, interviewer bias (for telephone and face-to-face polls), response errors and weighting. The best guide to a poll's accuracy is to look at the record of the polling company - how have they performed at previous elections or other occasions where their estimates can be compared with known population figures. In the last poll before the 2010 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes were all within 1% of the election results.

The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points. Essential Research uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data. The data is weighted against Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

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