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About the 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 between the 4th and 9th April and is based on 1,032 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on childcare rebates for nannies, the Federal Budget surplus, means testing, party best at and rates for weekend work.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in the appendix on page 11.

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 = 1,902 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 12/3/12	2 weeks ago 26/3/12	Last week 2/4/12	This week 10/4/12
Liberal		46%	45%	46%	47%
National		3%	3%	3%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	43.6%	49%	47%	48%	50%
Labor	38.0%	31%	34%	33%	31%
Greens	11.8%	10%	10%	11%	11%
Other/Independent	6.6%	10%	9%	8%	9%

2PP	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	49.9%	57%	54%	55%	57%
Labor	50.1%	43%	46%	45%	43%

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.



Childcare Rebate for Nannies

Q. Tony Abbott has said that if he became Prime Minister he would ask the Productivity Commission to look into extending the childcare rebate to childcare provided by nannies. Would you support or oppose the Government paying a childcare rebate for nannies?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total support	44%	33%	57%	33%
Total oppose	33%	49%	24%	44%
Strongly support	12%	9%	17%	10%
Support	32%	24%	40%	23%
Oppose	20%	27%	18%	20%
Strongly oppose	13%	22%	6%	24%
No opinion	22%	18%	19%	23%

44% support the Government paying a childcare rebate for nannies and 33% oppose. 49% of Labor voters and 44% of Greens voters are opposed but 57% of Liberal/National voters support the measure.

Support is higher among younger respondents - those aged under 45 split 53% support/24% oppose and those aged 45+ split 36% support/44% oppose.

48% of those on income under \$600pw oppose and 32% support, but all higher income groups are more likely to support.



Reason for Budget Deficit

Q. The Federal Government is currently running a budget deficit, but intends to return to surplus with the budget for 2012-13 to be announced next month. Which of the following do you think has been most responsible for the deficit over the last few years?

	Total 11/4/11	Total 10/4/12	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Poor economic management by the Government	23%	28%	7%	48%	7%
Big companies not paying their fair share of taxes	17%	16%	28%	5%	28%
Lower tax revenues because of the Global Financial Crisis	13%	16%	27%	10%	22%
Spending on big projects like the National Broadband Network	14%	15%	14%	17%	10%
The cost of the Government's GFC stimulus packages	19%	12%	11%	13%	15%
Don't know	15%	14%	13%	8%	18%

Overall, respondents believe the main reasons for the budget deficit are poor economic management by the Government (28%), big companies not paying their fair share of taxes (16%) and lower tax revenues because of the Global Financial Crisis (16%).

Since this question was asked 12 months ago, those blaming the Government for poor economic management has increased from 23% to 28% and those blaming the cost of the Government's GFC stimulus packages has declined from 19% to 12%.

Labor voters were most likely to blame big companies not paying their fair share of taxes (28%) and lower tax revenues because of the GFC (27%) while Liberal/National voters blame poor economic management by the Government (48%). Greens voters tended to blame big companies not paying their fair share of taxes (28%).



Return to Surplus

Q. Do you think it is more important for the Government to return the budget to surplus by 2012/13 as planned - which may mean cutting services and raising taxes - OR should they delay the return to surplus and maintain services and invest in infrastructure?

	Total 4/4/11	Total 28/11/11	Total 10/4/12	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Return to surplus by 2012/13, cut services, raise taxes	14%	13%	12%	13%	13%	7%
Delay return to surplus, maintain services, invest in infrastructure	69%	71%	73%	73%	76%	81%
Don't know	17%	15%	15%	13%	12%	12%

12% support the return to surplus by 2012/13 if it means cutting services and raising taxes and 73% think the Government should delay the return to surplus and maintain services and investment. Support for a return to surplus has not significantly changed since this question was asked in November last year.



Measures to Return to Surplus

Q. In order to meet their commitment to return to surplus in 2012-13, which measures should the Government take?

	Total 11/4/11	Total 10/4/11	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Increase taxes for big corporations	63%	67%	81%	55%	80%
Reduce tax breaks for high income earners	51%	57%	65%	52%	71%
Postpone major infrastructure projects like the NBN	na	41%	29%	58%	19%
Reduce defence spending	32%	38%	42%	30%	64%
Cut "middle class welfare" such as the Baby Bonus, first home buyers grant and Family Tax Benefit payments	36%	36%	37%	38%	36%
Cut spending on unemployment and disability benefits	21%	23%	18%	32%	12%
It does not need to return to surplus so quickly	38%	63%	67%	66%	58%

Overall, the most favoured means of returning the budget to surplus were increasing taxes for big corporations (67%) and reducing tax breaks for high-income earners (57%). Both these measures were strongly favoured by Labor and Greens voters.

Although support was less strong, these two measures were also two of the three the most preferred among Liberal/National voters - 58% think the Government should postpone major infrastructure projects like the NBN.

The main changes since this question was asked 12 months ago are increases in support for reducing tax breaks for high-income earners (up 6%) and reducing defence spending (up 6%).

Note, although 63% thought that the budget does not need to return to surplus so quickly, some of these respondents also agreed with some of the measures listed.



Means Testing Government Subsidies and Benefits

Q. Do you think the Government subsidies and benefits (such as health insurance rebates, childcare rebates, age pensions) should be means tested (that is, reduced or not paid to people on higher incomes) or should people receive the same subsidies and benefits from the Government regardless of their income?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Subsidies and benefits should be means tested	68%	79%	63%	74%
People should receive the same subsidies and benefits regardless of income	24%	16%	30%	18%
Don't know	8%	5%	7%	8%

68% agree that Government subsidies and benefits should be means tested and 24% think people should receive the same subsidies and benefits regardless of income.

Means testing was supported by 77% of respondents aged 45+ and 60% of those aged under 45. 76% of those earning less than \$600pw supported means testing compared to 65% of those earning \$1,600+.



Party Best At

Q. Which party – Labor or Liberal – do you think is best when it comes to:

	Labor	Liberal	No difference	Don't know	Difference
Representing the interests of Australian working families	37%	25%	29%	9%	+12
Representing the interests of you and people like you	29%	35%	26%	10%	-6
Standing up for the middle class in Australia	26%	33%	30%	11%	-7
Representing the interests of the large corporate and financial interests	10%	54%	25%	11%	-44
Being more concerned about the interests of working families in Australia than the rich and large business and financial interests	37%	22%	30%	11%	+15
Handling the economy overall	22%	41%	26%	10%	-19
Handling the economy in a way that tries to take the interests of working families into consideration as much as it takes the interests of the large corporate and financial groups	29%	34%	25%	12%	-5
Handling the economy in a way that best helps small business	22%	40%	25%	13%	-18
Handling the economy in a way that best helps the middle class	23%	38%	27%	12%	-15
Handling the economy in a way that helps you and people like you the most.	26%	36%	27%	11%	-10

Labor was considered best at representing the interests of Australian working families (37%) and being more concerned about the interests of working families in Australia than the rich and large business and financial interests (37%). The Liberals were considered best on all the other measures.

In particular, the Liberal Party was considered much better on representing the interests of the large corporate and financial interests (54%), handling the economy overall (41%) and handling the economy in a way that best helps small business (40%).



Weekend Work

Q. Do you think workers should get a higher hourly rate for working on weekends or should the weekend rate be the same as the weekday rate?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Should get higher hourly rate on weekends	78%	82%	73%	91%
Weekend and weekday rates should be the same	18%	14%	23%	6%
Don't know	4%	4%	3%	3%

78% think that workers should get a higher hourly rate for working on weekends and 18% think weekend and weekday rates should be the same.

86% of part-time workers support higher hourly rate for working on weekends. There were no significant differences across income groups.



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.

