



27 August 2012



15 – 31 Pelham Street
Carlton
Victoria 3053
Phone 03 9929 9903
Mobile 0416 121 969

With data supplied by



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 from the 22nd to 26th August and is based on 1,006 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions the economy, manufacturing and the public sector.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in the appendix on page 13.

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 = 1,803 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 30/7/12	2 weeks ago 13/8/12	Last week 20/8/12	This week 27/8/12
Liberal		45%	46%	46%	46%
National		3%	3%	3%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	43.6%	49%	49%	49%	49%
Labor	38.0%	33%	32%	32%	32%
Greens	11.8%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Other/Independent	6.6%	8%	8%	9%	9%

2PP	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	49.9%	55%	56%	57%	56%
Labor	50.1%	45%	44%	43%	44%

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. These estimates have a confidence interval of approx. plus or minus 2-3%.



The Economy

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

	1 Dec 08	15 Jun 09	5 Oct 09	28 Jun 10	18 Oct 10	4 April 11	4 Jul 11	3 Oct 11	26 Mar 12	7 May 12	Total 27 Aug 12	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total better	21%	43%	66%	33%	40%	27%	22%	16%	25%	23%	22%	34%	18%	23%
Total worse	61%	37%	15%	31%	30%	37%	49%	58%	46%	46%	45%	31%	57%	40%
Get a lot better	2%	5%	8%	5%	6%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	7%	2%	2%
Get a little better	19%	38%	58%	28%	34%	23%	19%	14%	22%	21%	19%	27%	16%	21%
Get a little worse	45%	28%	11%	23%	20%	27%	31%	41%	31%	31%	30%	22%	35%	32%
Get a lot worse	16%	9%	4%	8%	10%	10%	18%	17%	15%	15%	15%	9%	22%	8%
Stay much the same	13%	17%	15%	30%	24%	27%	25%	22%	21%	25%	27%	30%	23%	29%
No opinion	5%	3%	4%	7%	6%	8%	4%	4%	7%	6%	6%	5%	2%	7%

Confidence in the economic outlook has shown little change since May. The percentage of respondents believing conditions to be getting better declined a point to 22% and those believing that economic conditions will get worse over the next 12 months dropped a point to 45%. 27% think things will stay much the same (up 2 points).

Labor voters were the most optimistic overall - 34% better/31% worse. Coalition voters are the most pessimistic, with 57% believing that thing will get worse over the next 12 months and only 18% better.

Men (28% better/42% worse) were a little more optimistic than women (16% better/47% worse).



Personal financial situation

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

	28 Jun 10	18 Oct 10	4 April 11	4 Jul 11	3 Oct 11	26 Mar 12	Total 27 Aug 12	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total better	29%	33%	32%	28%	24%	28%	29%	36%	23%	39%
Total worse	31%	29%	31%	36%	41%	37%	37%	29%	44%	29%
Get a lot better	5%	6%	7%	5%	4%	5%	6%	8%	4%	9%
Get a little better	24%	27%	25%	23%	20%	23%	23%	28%	19%	30%
Get a little worse	21%	21%	22%	23%	27%	27%	26%	19%	33%	17%
Get a lot worse	10%	8%	9%	13%	14%	10%	11%	10%	11%	12%
Stay much the same	37%	32%	32%	32%	32%	29%	30%	32%	31%	27%
No opinion	4%	5%	5%	3%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	5%

29% (up 1% since March) of respondents believe that their personal financial situation will get better in the next 12 months and 37% worse (no change). 30% (up 1%) expect it to stay much the same.

Greens voters (39% better) and Labor voters (36%) are the most likely to believe that their personal financial situation will get better over the next 12 months, whereas Coalition voters are the most likely to believe that theirs will get worse (44%).

People on lower incomes were more pessimistic about their personal financial outlook - those earning under \$600 per week split 23% better/48% worse - compared to those earning more than \$1,600pw who split 38% better/29% worse.



Job security

Q. How concerned are you that you or some member of your immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so: very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not at all concerned?

	8 Jun 09	5 Oct 09	28 Jun 10	18 Oct 10	4 Apr 11	4 Jul 11	3 Oct 11	26 Mar 12	Total 27 Aug 12	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total concerned	52%	49%	43%	40%	43%	45%	47%	49%	47%	44%	52%	43%
Very concerned	13%	14%	9%	11%	11%	13%	14%	13%	13%	10%	14%	14%
Somewhat concerned	39%	35%	34%	29%	32%	32%	33%	36%	34%	34%	38%	29%
Not at all concerned	35%	40%	38%	42%	43%	39%	37%	36%	37%	42%	35%	43%
Don't know	6%	6%	12%	10%	8%	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%	5%	7%
No employees in the immediate family	8%	5%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%

Concern over job security has fallen slightly since the last time the question was polled, declining 2 points up from 49% in March to 47% (total concerned).

Coalition voters are the most likely to be concerned that they or a member of their immediately family will lose their job in the next year or so (52% total concerned), whereas Greens (43%) and Labor voters (44%) are less likely to be concerned.

There were no major differences across income or age groups - except for the under 25's where 43% were concerned and 48% not at all concerned.



Better or Worse off under Liberal Government

Q. Do you think you personally would be better off or worse off financially if Tony Abbott and the Liberals were in Government?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total better off	30%	4%	64%	6%
Total worse off	32%	69%	3%	52%
A lot better off	10%	1%	22%	-
A little better off	20%	3%	42%	6%
Make no difference	24%	18%	27%	21%
A little worse off	10%	19%	2%	11%
A lot worse off	22%	50%	1%	41%
No opinion	14%	9%	6%	21%

30% of respondents think they would be personally better off financially if the Liberals were in Government and 32% think they would be financially worse off. 24% think it would make no difference to them financially.

Respondents aged 45-64 thought they would be more likely to be worse off (32% better/40% worse) while for those aged 65+, 47% thought they would be better off and 24% worse off.



View of Manufacturing Industry

Q. Thinking about the Australian manufacturing industry, which of the following statements is closest to your view?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
With Government support, Australia can have a successful manufacturing industry	63%	67%	63%	68%
There is no future for manufacturing in Australia and Government support would be a waste of money	17%	15%	21%	14%
Don't know	21%	18%	16%	18%

63% agreed that “with Government support, Australia can have a successful manufacturing industry” and 17% agreed that “there is no future for manufacturing in Australia and Government support would be a waste of money”.

There was little difference by voting intention. Older respondents were more supportive of manufacturing than younger respondents - 68% of those aged 55+ agreed that “with Government support, Australia can have a successful manufacturing industry” compared to 55% of those aged 18-34.



Support for Manufacturing Industry

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the following types of Government support and assistance for Australia's manufacturing industry?

	Total approve	Total disapprove	Strongly approve	Approve	Disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't know
Lower tax rates for Australian manufacturers, even though it would reduce tax revenue.	55%	23%	10%	45%	18%	5%	22%
More direct subsidies and grants to manufacturers from taxpayers.	35%	41%	4%	31%	30%	11%	24%
Take action to force down the Australian dollar	25%	46%	6%	19%	32%	14%	28%
Protection from overseas competition	66%	20%	25%	41%	15%	5%	13%
Joint ventures and partnerships between Government and manufacturing companies	67%	17%	13%	54%	12%	5%	17%
Giving preference to Australian companies when purchasing manufactured products - even if they cost a little more	78%	11%	29%	49%	9%	2%	12%
Governments bringing forward major infrastructure projects with greater preference for Australian materials and products	82%	7%	33%	49%	6%	1%	11%
Require major project builders to give preference to Australian companies	77%	11%	32%	45%	9%	2%	13%
Building more of our major defence requirements here in Australia	77%	8%	33%	44%	6%	2%	15%

There was very strong support for bringing forward major infrastructure projects with greater preference for Australian materials and products (82%), giving preference to Australian companies when purchasing manufactured products (78%), building more of our major defence requirements in Australia (77%) and requiring major project builders to give preference to Australian companies (77%).

Respondents were more likely to disapprove of forcing down the Australian dollar (46%) and more direct subsidies and grants to manufacturers from taxpayers (41%).



Impact of Cutting Public Sector

Q. The Liberal and National Parties have said they will cut between \$50 billion and \$70 billion from the Commonwealth public sector if they win the next election and the Treasurer Joe Hockey has said at least 12,000 jobs will be cut.

Do you think cutting at least 12,000 jobs from the Commonwealth public sector will result in better or worse service to the people of Australia?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total better service	14%	7%	25%	3%
Total worse service	53%	77%	31%	74%
Much better service	6%	1%	13%	1%
A little better service	8%	6%	12%	2%
Make no difference	23%	10%	37%	12%
A little worse service	19%	19%	19%	19%
Much worse service	34%	58%	12%	55%
Don't know	10%	6%	8%	12%

53% thought that cutting 12,000 jobs from the Commonwealth public sector would result in worse service and 14% thought it result in better service. 23% thought it would make no difference.

Those mostly likely to think it would result in worse service were aged 18-24 (64%), Labor voters (77%), Greens voters (74%) and those on incomes under \$600pw (62%). Only 31% of Liberal/National voters thought it would result in worse service.



Concern about Cutting Public Sector

Q. How concerned are you that at least 12,000 jobs might be cut from the Commonwealth public sector?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Very concerned	23%	40%	9%	46%
Somewhat concerned	23%	30%	19%	23%
A little concerned	21%	13%	27%	14%
Not really concerned	26%	11%	42%	12%
Don't know	7%	6%	4%	4%

46% were very or somewhat concerned that 12,000 jobs might be cut from the Commonwealth public sector.

Those most concerned were women (51% very/somewhat), aged 18-24 (61%), Labor voters (70%) and Greens voters (69%).



Public Sector Issues

Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Total agree	Total disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The Commonwealth public sector cannot take 12,000 job cuts and still maintain service quality	57%	28%	24%	33%	21%	7%	15%
Regardless of what they say before elections, Liberal Governments always cut public services.	52%	22%	20%	32%	19%	3%	26%
Many of the Commonwealth public sector functions should be outsourced to private companies	30%	48%	5%	25%	29%	19%	22%
Many of the Commonwealth public sector functions should be outsourced to charities and not for profit organisations	32%	42%	5%	27%	29%	13%	25%
Cutting the public service will most hurt regional and rural areas	57%	22%	22%	35%	17%	5%	21%
Cutting support and admin staff will affect the quality of service provided by frontline staff	60%	24%	24%	36%	20%	4%	15%

A majority of respondents agreed that - cutting support and admin staff will affect the quality of service provided by frontline staff (60%), cutting the public service will most hurt regional and rural areas (57%), the Commonwealth public sector cannot take 12,000 job cuts and still maintain service quality (57%) and regardless of what they say before elections, Liberal Governments always cut public services (52%).

They were more likely to oppose outsourcing public sector functions to private companies (48% disagree) or charities and not-for-profits (42%).

Liberal/National voters were evenly split over whether cutting the public service will most hurt regional and rural areas (42% agree/38% disagree) and cutting support and admin staff will affect the quality of service provided by frontline staff (43% agree/43% disagree).



Appendix – 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 Wednesday 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.

