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With data supplied by



Executive Summary

This report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The survey was conducted online between the 7th and 11th December 2011 and is based on 1,045 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on ratings of leaders, whether it has been a good or bad year for organisations, parties and politicians, important Government decisions, trust in media and regulation of newspapers.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in the appendix on page 14.

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 = 1,921 respondents

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Liberal		44%	45%	44%	44%
National		3%	3%	3%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	43.6%	47%	48%	47%	48%
Labor	38.0%	35%	34%	34%	34%
Greens	11.8%	10%	11%	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%	54%	54%	54%	55%
Labor	50.1%	46%	46%	46%	45%

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.



Approval of Julia Gillard

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

	19 Jul 2010	20 Dec 2010	14 Mar	14 June	12 Sept	17 Oct	14 Nov	12 Dec
Total approve	52%	43%	41%	34%	28%	34%	37%	34%
Total disapprove	30%	40%	46%	54%	64%	59%	55%	54%
Strongly approve	11%	10%	7%	6%	5%	7%	8%	6%
Approve	41%	33%	34%	28%	23%	27%	29%	28%
Disapprove	17%	24%	22%	29%	28%	27%	25%	25%
Strongly disapprove	13%	16%	24%	25%	36%	32%	30%	29%
Don't know	18%	17%	13%	13%	8%	7%	9%	11%

Julia Gillard's approval rating has declined a little since last month. 34% (down 3%) approve of the job Julia Gillard is doing as Prime Minister and 54% (down 1%) disapprove – a change in net rating from -18 to -20 over the last 4 weeks.

73% of Labor voters approve (down 8%) and 19% disapprove (up 3%).

By gender – men 38% approve/55% disapprove, women 32% approve/53% disapprove.



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 2010	20 Dec 2010	14 Mar	14 June	12 Sept	17 Oct	14 Nov	12 Dec
Total approve	37%	37%	39%	38%	38%	39%	40%	36%	32%
Total disapprove	37%	47%	39%	47%	48%	50%	51%	52%	53%
Strongly approve	5%	8%	9%	7%	6%	8%	8%	6%	6%
Approve	32%	29%	30%	31%	32%	31%	32%	30%	26%
Disapprove	20%	23%	21%	24%	25%	23%	23%	26%	25%
Strongly disapprove	17%	24%	18%	23%	23%	27%	28%	26%	28%
Don't know	26%	16%	22%	16%	15%	11%	9%	12%	14%

Tony Abbott's approval rating has fallen again over the last month. 32% (down 4%) approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader and 53% (up 1%) disapprove – a change in net rating from -16 to -21 over the last 4 weeks. This is the lowest rating recorded for Tony Abbott since he became opposition leader.

65% (down 8%) of Coalition voters approve and 22% (up 3%) disapprove.

By gender – men 36% approve/52% disapprove, women 29% approve/55% disapprove.



Better Prime Minister

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

	5 Jul 2010	14 Mar	14 June	12 Sept	17 Oct	14 Nov	12 Dec	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Julia Gillard	53%	44%	41%	36%	38%	41%	39%	81%	5%	74%
Tony Abbott	26%	33%	36%	40%	39%	36%	35%	5%	72%	3%
Don't know	21%	23%	24%	24%	23%	24%	26%	14%	23%	23%

39% believe Julia Gillard would make the better Prime Minister and 35% prefer Tony Abbott - no significant change from last month's result.

Men prefer Julia Gillard 40%/38% and women favour Julia Gillard 38%/32%.

The Past Year – The Economy and Industries

Q. Thinking about the last 12 months, has it been a good or bad year for each of the following?

	Total good (Dec 10)	Total bad (Dec 10)	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know
The banks	69%	13%	71%	8%	35%	36%	16%	6%	2%	4%
The mining industry	57%	14%	68%	11%	34%	34%	15%	8%	3%	6%
Large companies and corporations	44%	15%	40%	22%	8%	32%	32%	18%	4%	6%
The Australian economy	41%	20%	33%	31%	4%	29%	32%	24%	7%	3%
The media	30%	14%	25%	27%	6%	19%	37%	19%	8%	10%
Farming and agriculture	14%	50%	23%	40%	2%	21%	30%	28%	12%	7%
The environment	14%	37%	20%	33%	3%	17%	41%	24%	9%	6%
Small business	14%	45%	10%	61%	1%	9%	24%	42%	19%	6%

A majority of respondents think it has been a good year for the banks (71%) and the mining industry (68%). They are also more likely to think it has been a good year for large companies and corporations (40% good/22% bad) and the economy (33%/31%). However, they are more likely to think the year has been bad for small business (61%), farming and agriculture (40%) and the environment (33%).

In terms of the economy, Labor voters (50% good/18% bad) and Greens voters (47%/15%) were more likely to think it has been a good year – while 45% of Liberal/National voters considered it poor and 23% good.

Compared to last years' results, respondents considered 2011 a better year than 2010 for the mining industry (up 11% to 68% good), farming and agriculture (up 9% to 23%) and the environment (up 6% to 20%). Perceptions of the economy dropped from a net +21% to +2%.



The Past Year – Political Parties

Q. Has it been a good or bad year for each of the following political parties?

	Total good (Dec 10)	Total bad (Dec 10)	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know
The Greens	42%	21%	33%	29%	7%	26%	28%	15%	14%	11%
The Liberal Party	33%	27%	27%	30%	4%	23%	34%	22%	8%	9%
The Labor Party	21%	47%	16%	53%	2%	14%	22%	33%	21%	8%

	Total		Vote Labor		Vote Lib/Nat		Vote Greens	
	Total good	Total bad	Total good	Total bad	Total good	Total bad	Total good	Total bad
The Greens	33%	29%	41%	16%	23%	45%	70%	3%
The Liberal Party	27%	30%	13%	45%	45%	16%	17%	45%
The Labor Party	16%	53%	35%	32%	7%	73%	11%	48%

Respondents were more likely to think it has been a good year for the Greens (33%) than the Liberal Party (27%) or the Labor Party (16%).

Among their own voters 70% think it has been a good year for the Greens, 45% the Liberal Party and 35% the Labor Party.

Compared to last year's results, all parties figures have declined - The Greens net +21% to +4%, Liberals from net +6% to -3% and Labor from net -26% to -37%.



The Past Year – Politicians

Q. Has it been a good or bad year for each of the following politicians?

	Total good (Dec 10)	Total bad (Dec 10)	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know
Julia Gillard	49%	25%	21%	57%	3%	18%	16%	35%	22%	6%
Bob Brown	38%	21%	32%	27%	8%	24%	26%	14%	13%	16%
Tony Abbott	30%	33%	21%	38%	2%	19%	32%	25%	13%	8%
Malcolm Turnbull	10%	43%	17%	23%	2%	15%	45%	16%	7%	17%
Kevin Rudd	10%	70%	31%	30%	5%	26%	31%	22%	8%	7%

	Total		Vote Labor		Vote Lib/Nat		Vote Greens	
	Total good	Total bad	Total good	Total bad	Total good	Total bad	Total good	Total bad
Julia Gillard	21%	57%	41%	36%	10%	77%	29%	43%
Bob Brown	32%	27%	37%	19%	25%	40%	66%	4%
Tony Abbott	21%	38%	9%	57%	39%	18%	7%	64%
Malcolm Turnbull	17%	23%	18%	21%	18%	23%	23%	22%
Kevin Rudd	31%	30%	37%	24%	31%	38%	29%	25%

Overall, only Bob Brown (32%/27%) was thought to have had a good year. Respondents were divided on whether Kevin Rudd has had a good year (31%/30%). Only 21% thought Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott had a good year in 2011. 2011 was considered worse than 2010 for each of the party leaders. Malcolm Turnbull and Kevin Rudd were considered to have had a somewhat better year compared to 2010.

Among their own voters thought, 66% (down 2%) thought Bob Brown had a good year, 41% (down 28%) thought Julia Gillard had a good year and 39% (down 5%) thought Tony Abbott has had a good year.



The Past Year – Personal

Q. Has it been a good or bad year for each of the following?

	Total good (Dec 10)	Total bad (Dec 10)	Total good	Total bad	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad	Don't know
Your personal financial situation	28%	28%	30%	32%	5%	25%	37%	22%	10%	1%
Your workplace *	43%	21%	43%	23%	8%	35%	33%	18%	5%	2%
You and your family overall	43%	19%	44%	20%	8%	36%	34%	15%	5%	1%

** based on working people*

Respondents were evenly divided over whether it has been a good or bad year financially. Those most likely to say it was a good year were full-time workers (38% good/28% bad), aged under 35 (37%/28%) and incomes over \$1,600pw (41%/25%).

Respondents were more positive about their workplace (43%/23%) and overall for themselves and their family (44%/20%). Younger respondents were a little more positive about themselves and their family– those aged under 35 split 50% good/15% bad.

On these measures 2011 was considered very similar to 2010.



Important Decisions

Q. Which of the following decisions made by the Federal Labor Government since they were elected do you think is most important for Australia's future? And which is second? And which is third?

	First	Second	Third	Total
The mining tax on large profits	17%	18%	13%	48%
Addressing climate change with the carbon tax	19%	11%	13%	43%
Increase compulsory superannuation to 12%	17%	13%	12%	42%
Provide 18 weeks paid parental leave	7%	6%	7%	20%
Childcare rebate increased from 30% to 50%	4%	7%	6%	17%
Allow Labor politicians to have a conscience vote on same-sex marriage	4%	6%	5%	15%
Allow the export of uranium to India	4%	5%	4%	13%
Gambling reforms which require poker machine players to set a limit on losses.	3%	5%	5%	13%
Plain packaging for cigarettes	3%	4%	5%	12%
None of them	13%	3%	3%	13%
Don't know	8%	1%	2%	8%

The three most important decisions made by the Government were the mining tax, the carbon tax and the increase in compulsory superannuation.

Trust in Media

Q. How much trust do you have in what you read or hear in the following media?

	Total a lot/some 15 Mar 10	Total a lot/some 25 Jul 11	Total a lot/some	A lot of trust	Some trust	Not much trust	No trust at all	Don't know	Don't use
News and opinion in daily newspapers	62%	53%	46%	3%	43%	32%	13%	3%	5%
News and opinion in local newspapers	-	54%	52%	4%	48%	29%	11%	3%	5%
Commercial TV news and current affairs	64%	48%	43%	5%	38%	34%	19%	3%	2%
ABC TV news and current affairs	70%	71%	72%	23%	49%	14%	6%	3%	5%
Commercial radio news and current affairs	54%	46%	45%	4%	41%	30%	15%	3%	6%
ABC radio news and current affairs	62%	67%	67%	19%	48%	14%	6%	3%	10%
Commercial radio talkback programs	38%	33%	33%	5%	28%	32%	22%	3%	10%
ABC radio talkback programs	45%	47%	47%	7%	40%	28%	9%	3%	13%
News and opinion websites	49%	41%	38%	3%	35%	36%	14%	4%	9%
Internet blogs	20%	20%	17%	1%	16%	37%	25%	5%	15%

Since July, trust in media has dropped for daily newspapers (-7%) and commercial TV news and current affairs (-5%).

ABC TV news and current affairs has the highest number of people who have a lot/some trust (72%). This is followed by ABC radio news and current affairs (67%).

The lowest level of trust was recorded for internet blog (17%). This was followed by commercial radio talkback programs (33%).



Regulation of Newspapers

Q. Newspapers and magazines are regulated by the Australian Press Council which was established by the media industry and comprises representatives of media organisations and as well as independent members.

From what you read, do you think that the Press Council is doing a good or poor job of regulating newspapers in Australia?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total good	20%	22%	25%	14%
Total poor	25%	26%	22%	37%
Very good job	1%	3%	1%	-
Good job	19%	19%	24%	14%
Neither good nor poor	38%	38%	40%	31%
Poor job	17%	15%	16%	24%
Very poor job	8%	11%	6%	13%
Don't know	17%	14%	13%	18%

20% believed that the Press Council is doing a good job of regulating newspapers and 25% thought it is doing a poor job. 38% say they are doing neither a good nor poor job and 17% don't know.

Those most likely to think they are doing a good job were aged under 35 (25%) and Liberal/National voters (25%). Those most likely to think they are doing a poor job were aged 55+ (35%) and Greens voters (37%).



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.

