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Executive Summary

This report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The omnibus was conducted online from the 23rd to the 28th of February and attracted 1009 responses.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week we ask the public to rate the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition against a series of attributes. We also ask people questions related to Australia's population and support for the Federal Government plan to introduce means testing on the private health insurance rebate.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 9).

Please note not all tables total 100% due to rounding.



Federal politics – voting intention

Q. If there was a Federal election held today, to which party would you probably give your first preference?

Q. If you 'don't know' on the above question, which party are you currently leaning to?

*1816 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	37%		
National	3%		
Total Lib/Nat	40%	47%	+1%
Labor	42%	53%	-1%
Greens	9%		
Family First	2%		
Other/Independent	7%		

NB. The data in the above table is derived from our weekly first preference voting question. Respondents who select 'don't know' as their first preference are not included in the results.

* Sample is the culmination of two week's polling data.



Attributes to describe Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd

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

	29 June 09	7 Dec 09	1 March 10	Difference from Jun 09	Difference from Dec 09
Intelligent	84%	82%	82%	-2%	-
Hard-working	83%	77%	77%	-6%	-
A capable leader	72%	69%	65%	-7%	-4%
Demanding	67%	60%	55%	-12%	-5%
Arrogant	46%	49%	45%	-1%	-4%
Out of touch with ordinary people	41%	45%	45%	+4%	-
Understands the problems facing Australia	67%	59%	62%	-5%	+3%
Visionary	49%	48%	44%	-5%	-4%
Superficial	40%	41%	46%	+6%	+5%
Good in a crisis	60%	58%	56%	-4%	-2%
Narrow-minded	32%	36%	36%	+4%	-
Down to earth	56%	55%	57%	+1%	+2%
Too inflexible	32%	38%	38%	+6%	-
Complacent	28%	38%	40%	+12%	+2%
More honest than most politicians	47%	49%	47%	-	-2%
Trustworthy	n/a	51%	51%	-	-

Comparing our June 2009 results with those obtained this week, Rudd has gained points in terms of appearing complacent (+12%), superficial (+6%) and too inflexible (+6%). He has lost the most ground in terms of appearing as demanding (-12%), a capable leader (-7%) and hard-working (-6%).

Comparing this week's results with those obtained in December 2009, Rudd has gained the most ground in terms of appearing superficial (+5%) and lost the most ground in terms of appearing demanding (-5%), arrogant (-4%), visionary (-4%) and as a capable leader (-4%).



Attributes to describe the Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott

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

	7 Dec 09	1 March 10	Difference
Intelligent	71%	71%	-
Hard-working	69%	69%	-
A capable leader	46%	49%	+3%
Demanding	53%	55%	+2%
Arrogant	53%	53%	-
Out of touch with ordinary people	53%	50%	-3%
Understands the problems facing Australia	46%	49%	+3%
Visionary	34%	33%	-1%
Superficial	42%	43%	+1%
Good in a crisis	39%	38%	-1%
Narrow-minded	52%	57%	+5%
Down to earth	46%	46%	-
Too inflexible	45%	49%	+4%
Complacent	31%	33%	+2%
More honest than most politicians	31%	34%	+3%
Trustworthy	36%	38%	+2%

Since we asked this question in December 2007, Abbott has gained the most points when it comes to appearing narrow minded (+5%) and appearing too inflexible (+4%).

When it comes to positive traits, Abbott has gained some ground in terms of appearing as a capable leader (+3%) who understands the problems facing Australia (+3%) and more honest than most politicians (+3%).



Rudd/Abbott Personality Traits

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

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

	Rudd 1 March 10	Abbott 1 March 10	Difference (Rudd lead)
Intelligent	82%	71%	+11%
Hard-working	77%	69%	+8%
A capable leader	65%	49%	+16%
Demanding	55%	55%	-
Arrogant	45%	53%	-8%
Out of touch with ordinary people	45%	50%	+5%
Understands the problems facing Australia	62%	49%	+13%
Visionary	44%	33%	+11%
Superficial	46%	43%	+3
Good in a crisis	56%	38%	+18%
Narrow-minded	36%	57%	-21%
Down to earth	57%	46%	+11%
Too inflexible	38%	49%	-11%
Complacent	40%	33%	+7%
More honest than most politicians	47%	34%	+13%
Trustworthy	51%	38%	+13%

Rudd has his strongest lead over Abbott when it comes to appearing good in a crisis (+18%) and as a capable leader (+16%). People think Rudd is better than Abbott when it comes to understanding the problems facing Australia (+13%), more honest than most politicians (+13%) and trustworthy (+13%).

Rudd trails Abbott most significantly in terms of appearing narrow-minded (-21%), too inflexible (-11%) and arrogant (-8%).



Population growth in Australia – statements of agreement

Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Australia’s population growth?

	Total agree	Total disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don’t know
We just don’t have the infrastructure and services to manage more population growth	75%	19%	36%	39%	14%	5%	6%
Immigration should be slowed as it causes too much change to our society	64%	29%	32%	32%	20%	9%	7%
Australia has a fragile environment that cannot cope with a much larger population	61%	30%	24%	37%	24%	6%	8%
Having a larger population will help our economy	38%	52%	7%	31%	34%	18%	10%
Australia has the space and resources to cope with a much larger population	35%	58%	8%	27%	31%	27%	7%

When it comes to statements about population growth, most people agree that we just don’t have the infrastructure and services to manage more population growth (75%). 64% agree that immigration should be slowed as it causes too much change to our society and 61% think Australia has a fragile environment that cannot cope with a much larger population. More than half (58%) disagree that Australia has the space and resources to cope with a much larger population.

Labor voters were more likely to agree that having a larger population will help our economy (42%) and disagree that we just don’t have the infrastructure and services to manage more population growth (23%).

Coalition voters were more likely to agree that we just don’t have the infrastructure and services to manage more population growth (82%) and agree that immigration should be slowed as it causes too much change to our society (74%).

Greens voters were more likely to agree that Australia has a fragile environment that cannot cope with a much larger population (66%).



Means testing the private health insurance rebate

Q. The Government proposes to phase out the 30 per cent rebate on private health insurance for singles on incomes over \$75,000 and couples on \$150,000-plus. Do you support or oppose means testing the health insurance rebate for people on higher incomes?

	Total %	Voter ID			Weekly income			
		Labor	Coalition	Green	< \$600 per week	\$600 - \$1000 per week	\$1000 - \$1600 per week	\$1600 + per week
Total support	51%	66%	39%	57%	63%	60%	53%	41%
Total oppose	34%	20%	50%	32%	24%	25%	28%	50%
Strongly support	23%	33%	14%	28%	36%	25%	24%	14%
Support	28%	33%	25%	29%	27%	35%	29%	27%
Oppose	17%	11%	23%	20%	16%	13%	15%	19%
Strongly oppose	17%	9%	27%	12%	8%	12%	13%	31%
Don't know	15%	13%	11%	11%	14%	15%	19%	10%

When it comes to the Government's proposed plan to phase out the 30 per cent rebate on private health insurance for singles on incomes over \$75 000 and couples on \$150,000 plus, just over half (51%) support means testing the health insurance rebate for people on higher incomes. 34% oppose means testing for people on higher incomes and 15% don't know.

Labor voters were more likely to support means testing the health insurance rebate for people on higher incomes (66%), while Coalition voters were more likely to oppose it (50%).

Support for a means test decreased as weekly income increased – people earning less than \$600 per week were more likely to support means testing the health insurance rebate for people on higher incomes (63%), while those earning \$1600 per were more likely to oppose (50%).

People not working were more likely to support the means test (57%), while those in full-time work were more likely to oppose (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 the 19th of 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 109 500. 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 (referred to as 'Zoints').

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.

