



## Essential Report

**Embargo: 16.30, 7 September 2009**



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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 omnibus was conducted online from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of September and attracted 1116 respondents.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting intention, this week we ask people if they think that the two major political parties are getting closer in terms of policy, and whether this is a good or a bad thing. This week we ask people if it was found out that Malcolm Turnbull was seriously considering joining the Labor Party, whether this would make people think more positively or negatively of him. We ask the public whether they believe the Rudd Government's claim that an economic recession and crisis has been prevented due to the economic stimulus package and we ask people to rate characteristics to describe the two major parties. We also ask a question related to religious belief in order to gauge whether there is a link between religion and political preference.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 12).

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?

\*9129 sample size

<b>2 week average</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2PP</b>	<b>2PP shift from last week</b>
Liberal	31%		
National	3%		
<b>Total Lib/Nat</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>+1%</b>
Greens	8%		
Family First	2%		
Other/Independent	6%		

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 data.



## The Australian Labor Party and the Liberal Party

*Q. In recent years, do you think the Liberal Party and the Australian Labor Party have become much closer in their policies, somewhat closer, somewhat further apart, or much further apart than they have been in past years?*

	%
<b>Total closer</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>Total apart</b>	<b>20%</b>
Much closer	8%
Somewhat closer	41%
Somewhat further apart	14%
Much further apart	6%
No change	19%
Don't know	12%

Just under half (49%) of people surveyed think that in recent years, the Liberal Party and the Australian Labor Party have become much closer/somewhat closer in their policies, 20% think that the two major parties have become somewhat further/much further apart.

Labor voters were slightly more likely than Coalition voters to think that the two major parties have become much/somewhat closer in their policies over recent years (55% v 51%).

Respondents aged 55 years and over were more likely than 18 – 24 year olds to think that the two major parties have become much/somewhat closer in their policies (54% v 42%).



Q. Do you think that is good or bad thing?

	<b>Parties closer</b>	<b>Parties further apart</b>
A good thing	30%	37%
A bad thing	28%	24%
Makes no difference	37%	33%
Don't know	4%	6%

Of those that think the Labor and Liberal parties are becoming closer in terms of policy, 30% think this is a good thing, 28% think this is a bad thing and 37% think it makes no difference.

37% of those that think the two major parties are becoming further apart think this is a good thing, 24% think it is a bad thing and 33% think it makes no difference.



## **Turnbull and the Australian Labor Party**

*Q. If it was found that the Liberal Leader Malcolm Turnbull had actually seriously considered becoming a member of the Australian Labor Party, would that make you think more of him, less of him, or would it make it little difference to you?*

	%
Think more of him	6%
Think less of him	20%
Make little difference	63%
Don't know	11%

63% of people surveyed think that if it was found out that the Liberal Leader Malcolm Turnbull had actually seriously considered becoming a member of the Australian Labor Party it would make little difference to what they think of him, 20% would think less of Turnbull and 6% would think more of him.

Coalition voters were slightly more likely than Labor voters think less of Turnbull if it was found out that he was considering joining the Australian Labor Party (25% v 21%).

Respondents aged 18 – 24 were more likely to think more of Turnbull if it was found out he was considering joining the Labor Party (18%), while respondents aged 55 years and over were more likely to think that it would make little difference (72%).



## Rudd Government and the stimulus package

*Q. The Rudd Government says that it prevented a more serious economic recession and crisis because of its stimulus package. Do you believe this is clearly true, probably true, probably not true, or clearly not true at all?*

	%
<b>Total true</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Total not true</b>	<b>30%</b>
Clearly true	16%
Probably true	41%
Probably not true	21%
Clearly not true	9%
Don't know	12%

Over half (57%) of people surveyed believe the Rudd Government's comments that it has prevented a serious economic recession and crisis because of its stimulus package, 30% do not think this statement is true.

Labor voters were more likely to believe the Rudd Government (85%), while Coalition voters were more likely to not believe the statements (64%). However, 30% of Coalition voters believe the Rudd Government's statements regarding the stimulus package and the prevention of an economic crisis.

Respondents aged 35 – 64 were more likely to believe the statements of the Rudd Government (64%), while respondents aged 65 years and over were more likely to think the statements were not true (44%).



## Perception of the Labor Party

Q. Here is a list of things both favourable and unfavourable that have been said about various political parties. Which statements do you feel fit the Labor Party?

	<b>6 July</b>	<b>This week</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Moderate	65%	72%	+7%
Divided	30%	36%	+6%
Professional in its approach	59%	63%	+4%
Will promise to do anything to win votes	57%	59%	+2%
Too dominated by its leader	39%	40%	+1%
Understands the problems facing Australia	62%	63%	+1%
Keeps its promises	44%	45%	+1%
Has a good team of leaders	60%	60%	-
Out of touch with ordinary people	44%	44%	-
Looks after the interests of working families	61%	59%	-2%
Extreme	25%	23%	-2%

Since we last asked this question in July, the biggest shifts for Labor have been in the area of moderate (+7%), divided (+6%) and professional in its approach (+4%).





## Perception of the Liberal Party

Q. And which statements do you feel fit the Liberal Party?

	<b>6 July</b>	<b>This week</b>	<b><i>Difference</i></b>
Moderate	50%	57%	+7%
Professional in its approach	41%	46%	+5%
Keeps its promises	28%	31%	+3%
Out of touch with ordinary people	62%	64%	+2%
Has a good team of leaders	29%	30%	+1%
Understands the problems facing Australia	44%	45%	+1%
Looks after the interests of working families	31%	31%	-
Too dominated by its leader	34%	32%	-2%
Will promise to do anything to win votes	67%	64%	-3%
Divided	74%	69%	-5%
Extreme	36%	30%	-6%

Since we last asked this question in July, the most significant shifts for the Liberal Party have been in the area of moderate (+7%), professional in its approach (+5%), extreme (-6%) and divided (-5%).



## Perception of Labor/Liberal – Difference

	<b>Labor</b>	<b>Liberal</b>	<b><i>Difference</i></b>
Has a good team of leaders	60%	30%	+30%
Looks after the interests of working families	59%	31%	+28%
Understands the problems facing Australia	63%	45%	+18%
Professional in its approach	63%	46%	+17%
Moderate	72%	57%	+15%
Keeps its promises	45%	31%	+14%
Too dominated by its leader	40%	32%	+8%
Will promise to do anything to win votes	59%	64%	-5%
Extreme	23%	30%	-7%
Out of touch with ordinary people	44%	64%	-20%
Divided	36%	69%	-33%

The most significant lead Labor has over the Liberal Party is in the area of having a good team of leaders (+30%), looks after the interests of working families (+28%), and understands the problems facing Australia (+18%). Liberal has the strongest lead over Labor in the area of divided (33%) and out of touch with ordinary people (20%).



## Religion

Q. Which of the following best describes your religion?

	%
Catholic	20%
Anglican	16%
Other protestant denomination e.g. Uniting, Baptist	15%
Evangelical Christian	3%
Other Christian denomination e.g Orthodox	4%
Non-Christian religion	6%
No religion	36%

20% of people surveyed identify as Catholic, 16% by Anglican and 15% by other protestant domination e.g. Uniting, Baptist. 36% identify with no religion. Below is a breakdown of religion by party identification:

	Total	Catholic	Anglican	Other Protestant	Other Christian	Non-Christian	No religion
<i>Base</i>	1116	221	179	169	72	70	404
Party Closest to							
Labor	37%	50%	27%	35%	32%	47%	35%
Liberal/National	32%	29%	50%	41%	26%	24%	24%
Greens	9%	6%	4%	4%	7%	17%	14%
Other party or independent	6%	6%	4%	12%	10%	1%	4%
None	8%	7%	10%	4%	8%	6%	11%
Don't know	8%	2%	5%	4%	17%	4%	12%

The Labor Party's strongest supporters were Catholics (50%) and non-Christian religions (47%) while the Liberal/National Parties are favoured by Anglicans (50%) and other Protestants (41%).



## **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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

