

COALITION AHEAD 56% TO 44%**Key findings**

- *Two-party vote: Coalition 56% (up 4) lead ALP 44% (down 4) [based on 2010 election preferences]*
- *First preferences: Labor 30% (down 5), Coalition 47% (up 4), Greens 11% (up 1)*
- *Ms Gillard's approval at 40% (down 6); disapproval at 56% (up 6); net approval at -16 (down 12)*
- *Mr Abbott's approval at 42% (up 8); disapproval at 55% (down 8); net approval at -13 (up 16)*
- *Preferred PM: Abbott 49% (up 9), Gillard 45% (down 5)*

The Coalition would win an election held now with a swing of around 6%, according to the latest Nielsen Poll.

The national poll of 1,400 respondents, taken from Thursday to Saturday (14-16 February 2013), shows the Coalition with 56% of the two-party preferred vote (up four points since 13-15 December 2012) ahead of the ALP on 44% (down 4).

On primaries Labor is on 30% (down 5) and the Coalition is up four points to 47%. The Greens lead the minor parties with 11% (up 1). Family First is on 2% (steady), and independents are on 6% (steady). Other parties are on 4% (steady).

The Liberal and National parties would win an election held now with a two-party preferred swing of around 6%.

When the two-party vote is calculated by *how respondents said they would allocate preferences*, the result is Coalition 55% (up 4) ahead of the ALP on 45% (down 4).

[Compared to the Nielsen Poll taken 13-15 December 2012, the movements in two-party and primary vote for the ALP and Coalition are statistically significant at the 5% level.]

The leaders

Ms Gillard's approval rating is 40% (down 6). Disapproval of Ms Gillard is 56% (up 6), giving her a net approval of minus 16% (down 12). These are Ms Gillard's worst figures since August 2012 when her approval was 39% and disapproval 57%, for a net approval of -18%.

Mr Abbott's approval is 42% (up 8). Disapproval of Mr Abbott is down 8 to 55%. Mr Abbott's net approval is up sixteen to -13%. This is Mr Abbott's best net approval since May 2012, when he was on minus 8%.

[All of the changes in approval and disapproval for Ms Gillard and Mr Abbott are statistically significant at the 5% level.]

Mr Abbott has a four point (but not statistically significant) lead over Ms Gillard as preferred Prime Minister. Ms Gillard is on 45% (down 5) and Mr Abbott is on 49% (up 9). This is Mr Abbott's first preferred PM lead since July 2012.

[Mr Abbott's lead over Ms Gillard as preferred PM is not statistically significant. Changes in levels of support for the leaders are statistically significant at the 5% level.]

Questions

- Q.1a If a Federal Election for the House of Representatives were held today, which party would receive your first preference vote - ALP, Liberal, National, Greens, Independent, Family First, Other?
- Q.1b [IF UNDECIDED] Which party do you have a leaning towards at present?
- Q.1c [IF MINOR PARTY SUPPORT] At a Federal Election you will be required to vote for all candidates in your electorate in order of preference. Given this, will you give a higher preference to the Labor Party candidate or the Liberal/National Party candidate?
- Q.2a How strongly do you approve or disapprove of the performance of Ms Gillard as Prime Minister? Do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of her performance?
- Q.2b How strongly do you approve or disapprove of the performance of Mr Abbott as Leader of the Opposition? Do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of his performance?
- Q.3 Who is your preferred Prime Minister?

Poll Profile

Fieldwork Dates	: 14-16 February 2013
Sample Size	: 1,400 respondents
Sample Spread	: Nationwide, 18+
Method	: Telephone

The maximum margin of sampling error that might apply given this sample size is approximately 2.6%. Telephone numbers were selected at random. The data has been weighted to reflect the population distribution.

The Nielsen Poll is conducted exclusively for The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and The Australian Financial Review.

RUDD AND TURNBULL ARE PREFERRED LEADERS

Key findings

- 61% of voters (up 6) prefer Kevin Rudd as Labor leader; 35% (down 2) prefer Julia Gillard
- 58% of voters (down 5) prefer Malcolm Turnbull as Liberal leader; 35% (up 5) prefer Tony Abbott
- 52% (up 4) say ALP should change leaders, 45% (down 3) want Labor to stay with Gillard
- 51% say Liberals should change leaders, 46% want the Liberal Party to stay with Abbott

Kevin Rudd is the nation's preferred Labor leader according to the latest Nielsen Poll.

The national poll of 1,400 respondents, taken from Thursday to Saturday (14-16 February 2013), found that 61% of voters (up 6 points since 13-15 September 2012) prefer Mr Rudd as ALP leader, while 35% (down 2) prefer Julia Gillard. [The change in support for Mr Rudd was statistically significant at the 5% level.]

ALP LEADER	14-16 Apr 2011	14-16 Jun 2011	13-15 Oct 2011	2-4 Feb 2012	22-23 Feb 2012	9-10 May 2012	31 May -2 Jun 2012	13-15 Sep 2012	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	L/NP voters	GRN voters
Kevin Rudd	55	60	61	57	58	62	62	55	61	45 (-2)	68 (+8)	54 (+3)
Julia Gillard	38	31	30	35	34	30	32	37	35	53 (+1)	25 (-3)	42 (-3)

All voters were asked '...do you think the Labor Party should change leaders or stay with Julia Gillard?' A majority (52%, up 4 points) say Labor should change leaders and 45% (down 3) say the party should stay with Gillard. A majority of ALP and Green voters want the ALP to stay with Gillard while a majority of Coalition voters want the ALP to make a change.

ALP SHOULD...	9-10 May 2012	31 May - 2 Jun 2012	13-15 Sep 2012	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	L/NP voters	GRN voters
Change leaders	50	52	48	52	36 (+5)	59 (-2)	45 (+16)
Stay with Gillard	45	45	48	45	63 (-3)	37 (+1)	52 (-13)

When voters were asked their preferred Liberal leader, 58% (down 5) chose Malcolm Turnbull and 35% (up 5) chose Tony Abbott. [The changes in support for Mr Turnbull and Mr Abbott are statistically significant at the 5% level.]

LIBERAL LEADER	31 May - 2 Jun 2012	13-15 Sep 2012	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	L/NP voters	GRN voters
Malcolm Turnbull	61	63	58	74 (+1)	45 (-8)	72 (-5)
Tony Abbott	34	30	35	18 (-1)	52 (+7)	22 (+5)

When asked whether the Liberal Party should change leaders or stay with Mr Abbott, 51% said the party should make a change.

LIBERAL PARTY SHOULD...	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	L/NP voters	GRN voters
Change leaders	51	67	33	69
Stay with Abbott	46	29	65	27

Questions

- Q.4 And now thinking about the Labor leadership, who is your preferred leader of the Labor Party out of...?
READ OUT & ROTATE 1-2; SINGLE RESPONSE
Kevin Rudd
Julia Gillard
DO NOT READ OUT
Don't know
- Q.5 And do you think the Labor Party should change leaders or stay with Julia Gillard?
READ OUT; SINGLE RESPONSE
Change leaders
Stay with Julia Gillard
DO NOT READ OUT
Don't know
- Q.6 And who is your preferred leader of the Liberal Party out of...?
READ OUT & ROTATE 1-2; SINGLE RESPONSE
Malcolm Turnbull
Tony Abbott
DO NOT READ OUT
Don't know
- Q.7 And do you think the Liberal Party should change leaders or stay with Tony Abbott?
READ OUT; SINGLE RESPONSE
Change leaders
Stay with Tony Abbott
DO NOT READ OUT
Don't know

Poll Profile

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MAJORITY SAY SURPLUS IS HIGH PRIORITY

Key findings

- 54% (up 5) say returning the federal budget to surplus should be a high priority
- 65% support fixed parliamentary terms; 50% support four year terms
- 39% support both fixed and four year terms for the federal parliament

A majority of Australians say achieving a budget surplus is a high priority, according to the latest Nielsen Poll.

The national poll of 1,400 respondents, taken from Thursday to Saturday (14-16 February) found that 54% of voters (up 5) believe a return to surplus in the federal budget should be a high priority, while 41% (down 4) say it should be a low priority. *[These changes were statistically significant at the 5% level].*

FEDERAL BUDGET SURPLUS SHOULD BE A... (%)	15-17 Nov 2012	13-15 Dec 2012	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	L/NP voters	GRN voters
High Priority	53	49	54	42 (-1)	65 (+7)	38 (-5)
Low Priority	41	45	41	53 (-)	32 (-7)	56 (+3)

The difference between the proportions saying the surplus was a high priority (54%) and the proportion saying it was a low priority (41%) was statistically significant. The previous four point gap (49% to 45%) was not statistically significant.

Respondents were asked two questions about federal electoral reform: support for fixed terms and support for increasing the term of the federal parliament from three to four years. Almost two-thirds (65%) support fixed terms while 50% support four year terms.

Just under four in ten respondents (39%) support both fixed and four year terms for the federal parliament. Of the 50% of voters supporting four year terms, 78% support fixed terms as well. Of the 65% supporting fixed terms, 61% also support four year terms.

SUPPORT FOR ELECTORAL REFORM (%)	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	L/NP voters	GRN voters
Fixed terms	65	71	64	68
Four year terms	50	60	46	62
Both (fixed four year terms)	39	49	35	48

Questions

ROTATE Q8a AND Q8b

Q.8a Do you support or oppose the introduction of fixed terms for the Federal Parliament?

DO NOT READ OUT SINGLE RESPONSE

- 1 Support
- 2 Oppose
- 9 Don't know

Q.8b Do you support or oppose increasing the term of the Federal Parliament from three to four years?

DO NOT READ OUT SINGLE RESPONSE

- 1 Support
- 2 Oppose
- 9 Don't know

Q.9 Do you think returning the federal budget to surplus should be...

READ OUT AND ROTATE 1-2 SINGLE RESPONSE

- 1 A high priority
 - 2 A low priority
- DO NOT READ OUT**
- 9 Don't know

Poll Profile

Fieldwork Dates : 14-16 February 2013

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Sample Spread : Nationwide, 18+

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23% WANT TO RETAIN MINING TAX 'AS IS'

Key findings

- 23% prefer retaining the mining tax as is
- 36% prefer abolishing the mining tax
- 37% prefer amending the mining tax so that it raises more revenue

Fewer than one in four Australians want to retain the mining tax as is, according to the latest Nielsen Poll.

The national poll of 1,400 respondents, taken from 14-16 February 2013, found that 23% prefer retaining the mining tax as is, 36% prefer abolishing the mining tax and 37% want the mining tax amended so that it raises more revenue.

A majority of Coalition voters (52%) support abolishing the mining tax.

<i>The federal government's mining tax has so far raised less revenue than originally forecast. Which of the following options do you prefer? (%)</i>	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	L/NP voters	GRN voters
Retain the mining tax as is	23	29	18	30
Abolish the mining tax	36	18	52	16
Amend the mining tax so that it raises more revenue	37	49	26	51

November 2011 and May 2010

In November 2011 respondents were asked "Do you support or oppose the introduction of a thirty per cent profits based tax on large iron ore and coal mining companies?" A majority of voters (53%) supported the tax and 38% were opposed. Attitudes to the tax closely followed party lines. Support was highest among ALP and Green voters (70% and 76% respectively) and lowest among Coalition voters (35% in favour).

Mining tax (%) 2011	Nov 2011	ALP voters	LNP voters	GRN voters
Support	53	70	35	76
Oppose	38	22	57	18
Don't know	9	9	8	6

In a May 2010 Nielsen Poll respondents were told "The government has announced it will introduce a resource super profits tax." and then asked "Do you support or oppose a tax on the 'super profits' of mining companies?" Voters were split - 44% supported the tax and 47% were opposed.

Questions

Q.10 The federal government's mining tax has so far raised less revenue than originally forecast. Which of the following options do you prefer?

READ OUT AND RANDOMISE 1-3 SINGLE RESPONSE

Retain the mining tax as is

Abolish the mining tax

Amend the mining tax so that it raises more revenue

DO NOT READ OUT

Don't know

Poll Profile

Fieldwork Dates : 14-16 February 2013

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Sample Spread : Nationwide, 18+

Method : Telephone

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MAJORITY SUPPORT CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

Key findings

- 77% support amending the Australian Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first inhabitants of Australia

A majority of Australians support constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people, according to the latest Nielsen Poll.

The national poll of 1,400 respondents, taken from Thursday to Saturday (14-16 February 2013) found that 77% support constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first inhabitants of Australia while 20% were opposed.

A majority of people by gender, age and state were in favour.

Constitutional recognition (%)	14-16 Feb 2013	ALP voters	LNP voters	GRN voters
Support	77	85	69	91
Oppose	20	11	28	7
Don't know	3	4	3	2

PREVIOUS POLLS (1999 AND 2012)

Nielsen polls in 1999 and 2012 asked about rewriting the preamble to the Constitution. The question in January and August 1999 was asked in the context of the republic referendum. Respondents were asked "Should the preamble to the Constitution be rewritten to acknowledge Aborigines as the first inhabitants of Australia?"

The February 2012 question had a transitional statement added and the words 'or not' were added at the end. The wording was "Thinking now about the Australian Constitution, do you think the preamble to the Constitution should be rewritten to acknowledge Aborigines as the first inhabitants of Australia or not?"

Acknowledge Aborigines in Preamble ¹ (%)	Jan 1999	Aug 1999	Feb 2012	ALP voters	LNP voters	GRN voters
Yes	63	61	62	71	50	89
No	26	28	33	23	45	9
Don't know	11	11	5	6	5	3

¹ Note slightly different questions in 1999 and 2012.

Questions

Q.11 Do you support or oppose amending the Australian Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first inhabitants of Australia?

DO NOT READ OUT SINGLE RESPONSE

- 1 Support
- 2 Oppose
- 9 Don't know

2012 Version

Q.7 Thinking now about the Australian Constitution, do you think the preamble to the Constitution should be rewritten to acknowledge Aborigines as the first inhabitants of Australia or not?

DO NOT READ OUT

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Don't know

1999 Version

Q.4 Should the preamble to the Constitution be rewritten to acknowledge Aborigines as the first inhabitants of Australia?

DO NOT READ OUT

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Don't know

Poll Profile

Fieldwork Dates : 14-16 February 2013

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Sample Spread : Nationwide, 18+

Method : Telephone

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