

THE LOWY INSTITUTE POLL 2011



Australia and the World PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY

Fergus Hanson

LOWY INSTITUTE
FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Executive Summary

The 2011 Lowy Institute Poll reports the results of a nationally representative opinion survey of 1,002 Australian adults conducted in Australia between 30 March and 14 April 2011. It is the seventh annual Lowy Poll.

Climate change

A large majority (75%) of Australians say the Federal government has done a poor job addressing climate change, with 39% saying it has done a very poor job.

Support for taking tough action to address climate change continues to erode. The foreign policy goal of tackling climate change is considered very important by only 46% of Australians, down seven percentage points from last year and down 29 points from 2007.

Support for the most aggressive form of action to address global warming slipped five points from last year, with 41% saying global warming is a serious and pressing problem and that we should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs.

Nuclear power

In the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident, 62% of Australians are against Australia building nuclear power plants to cut greenhouse gas emissions, with 46% strongly against. However, over a third (35%) are in favour.

Asylum seekers

A majority (72%) of Australians are concerned about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat, but this is down six points since 2010. The 72% who are concerned expressed a range of views on unauthorised asylum seekers. Almost all (92%) agree asylum seekers might be badly injured or killed during the boat trip while large majorities of those concerned also say asylum seekers arriving by boat are jumping the queue (88%), they pose a potential security risk to Australia (86%) and that too much money is spent processing them in detention centres (85%).

Afghanistan

Support for the war in Afghanistan continues to erode, with 59% of Australians now opposed to Australia's continued military involvement (up five points since 2010). Of four options, the most widely supported reason for remaining militarily involved in Afghanistan is that if Australia and its allies withdrew, Afghan women might have their rights seriously violated by an extremist government. Among

opponents of the war, a majority (64%) also agree with this reason for staying.

Threat of terrorism

Tightened airport security, worldwide terrorist arrests and long-running wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have done nothing to alleviate Australian threat perceptions about terrorist attacks. Most Australians (60%) say the ability of terrorists to launch another major attack against Australians is now the same as at the time of the 2002 Bali bombings, with another 19% saying it is now greater. Just a fifth (20%) say it is now less.

US alliance

Eighty-two per cent of Australians say the alliance relationship with the United States is very or fairly important for Australia's security. Three quarters of Australians agree that without the US alliance Australia would have to spend much more money on its defence. A similar majority (73%) also recognise the risks entailed in the alliance, agreeing that it makes it more likely Australia will be drawn into a war in Asia that would not be in Australia's interests.

Some 77% of Australians disagree Australia is able to defend itself without the assistance of the United States.

US forces in Australia

Popular sentiment is behind basing US troops in Australia, with 55% of Australians in favour of allowing the United States to base military forces in Australia.

WikiLeaks

While Australian politicians have criticised WikiLeaks, most Australians (62%) say the job it does is more of a good thing than a bad thing.

Aid

Australians dramatically overestimate how much money the Federal government spends on foreign aid, on average guessing that 16% of the budget is spent on aid, when the actual amount is 1.3%. Australians, on average, say 12% of the Federal budget should be spent on foreign aid.

Indonesia

Attitudes towards Australia's most important neighbour, Indonesia, remain mired in distrust and suspicion. Results were virtually unchanged since these questions were last asked in 2006.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Foreign Policy | 3 |
| FOREIGN POLICY GOALS | 3 |
| TRUST IN INTERNATIONAL POWERS | 5 |
| WORLD'S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER AND WESTERN INFLUENCE | 5 |
| FOREIGN AID | 5 |
| WIKILEAKS | 6 |
| FEELINGS TOWARDS OTHER COUNTRIES | 6 |
| Climate Change | 7 |
| GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE | 7 |
| DEALING WITH GLOBAL WARMING | 7 |
| WILLINGNESS TO PAY | 8 |
| NUCLEAR POWER | 8 |
| United States | 9 |
| THE US ALLIANCE | 9 |
| US MILITARY FORCES IN AUSTRALIA | 10 |
| China | 10 |
| CHINA'S RISE | 10 |
| CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIA | 11 |
| CHINA AS A MILITARY THREAT | 11 |
| International Security | 12 |
| THREAT OF TERRORISM | 12 |
| LIBYA INTERVENTION | 12 |
| AFGHANISTAN | 12 |
| WAR ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA | 13 |
| Asylum Seekers | 13 |
| Indonesia | 15 |
| Tables of results | 17 |
| Notes | 30 |
| About the Lowy Institute Poll | 31 |
| Methodology and Acknowledgements | 31 |

Figures

| | | |
|----------|--|----|
| Fig. 1: | Foreign policy goals | 3 |
| Fig. 2: | Trust in international powers | 4 |
| Fig. 3: | Western influence | 5 |
| Fig. 4: | WikiLeaks | 6 |
| Fig. 5: | Feelings towards other countries | 6 |
| Fig. 6: | Dealing with global warming | 7 |
| Fig. 7: | Federal government's efforts to address climate change | 8 |
| Fig. 8: | Willingness to pay to help solve climate change | 8 |
| Fig. 9: | Nuclear power | 8 |
| Fig. 10: | Importance of ANZUS | 9 |
| Fig. 11: | About ANZUS | 9 |
| Fig. 12: | Basing US forces in Australia | 10 |
| Fig. 13: | Attitudes towards China | 10 |
| Fig. 14: | China as a military threat | 11 |
| Fig. 15: | Why China is a military threat | 11 |
| Fig. 16: | Threat of terrorism | 12 |
| Fig. 17: | Military involvement in Afghanistan | 13 |
| Fig. 18: | Reasons for remaining in Afghanistan | 13 |
| Fig. 19: | Concern about asylum seekers | 14 |
| Fig. 20: | About asylum seekers | 14 |
| Fig. 21: | Relations with Indonesia | 15 |
| Fig. 22: | About Indonesia | 15 |
| Fig. 23: | About Indonesia and Australia | 16 |

Australia and the World

Foreign Policy

There have been some dramatic international developments since the 2010 Lowy Poll on Australian attitudes towards foreign affairs. North Korean brinkmanship heightened tensions to Australia's north. An uprising in tiny Tunisia transformed the political landscape across the Middle East and North Africa. Meanwhile, natural disasters in Japan and New Zealand resulted in thousands of deaths and

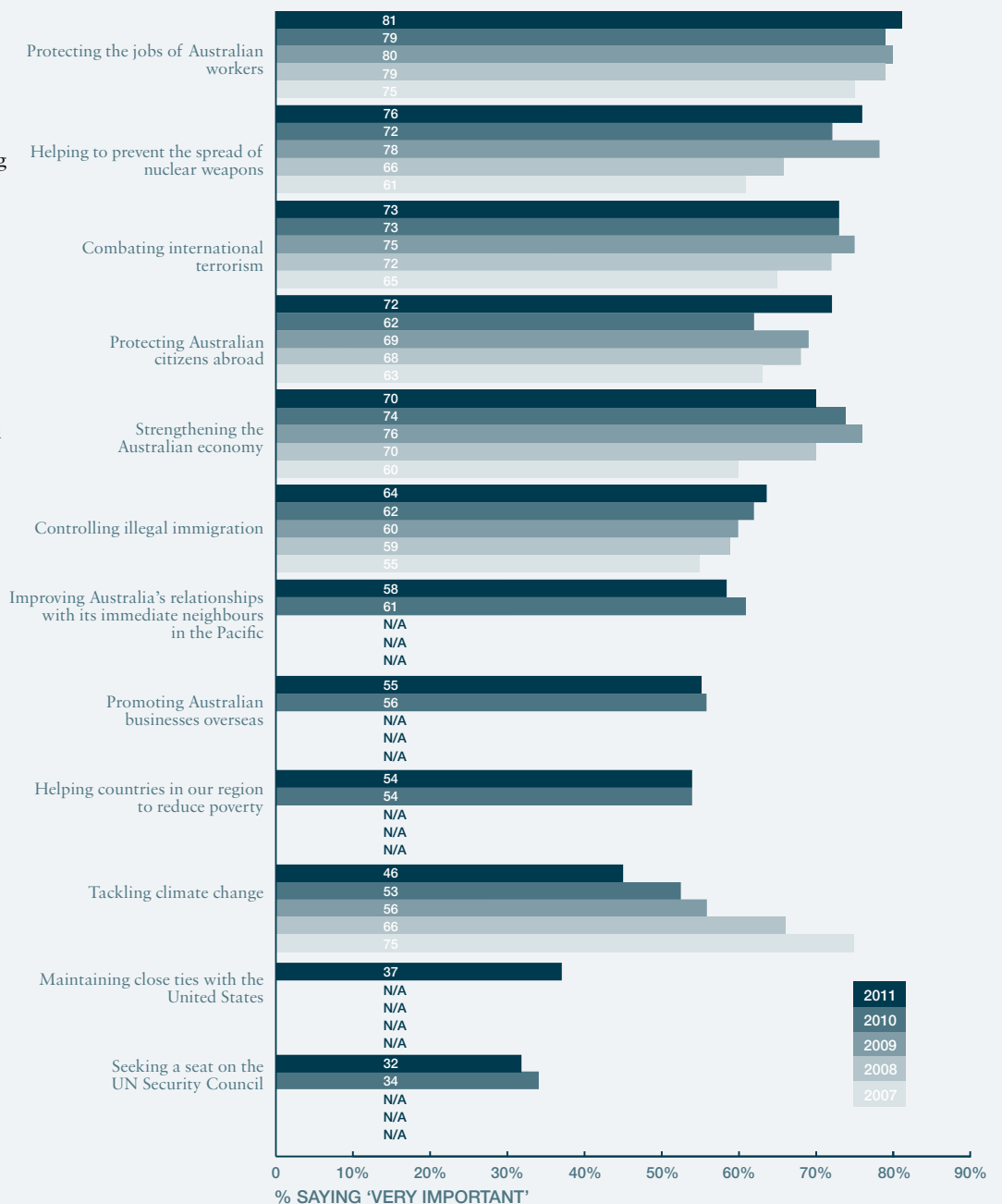
immense destruction, including the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl. After the fieldwork for the Lowy Poll was completed, the United States reported it had killed Osama bin Laden.

FOREIGN POLICY GOALS

Since 2007, the Lowy Institute has been asking Australians to rate a list of foreign policy goals. Of 12 possible goals included in this year's survey, the top-ranked were: 'protecting the jobs of

Fig. 1: Foreign policy goals

Thinking about what Australian foreign policy should be trying to achieve, I am going to read a list of goals, and ask you to tell me how important each one is for Australia. Please say whether you think each issue is very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important.



Australian workers' (with 81% saying this is 'very important'), 'helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons' (76% and up four percentage points from 2010) and 'combating international terrorism' (73%).

The biggest upward movement this year was for the goal of 'protecting Australian citizens abroad' with 72% of Australians saying this is a 'very important' goal, up 10 points since last year. While the goal of 'controlling illegal immigration' was little changed from last year, with 64% saying it is 'very important', this was up four points on 2009 and nine points on 2007.

The biggest downward movement recorded this year was for the goal of 'tackling climate change' which for the first time did not

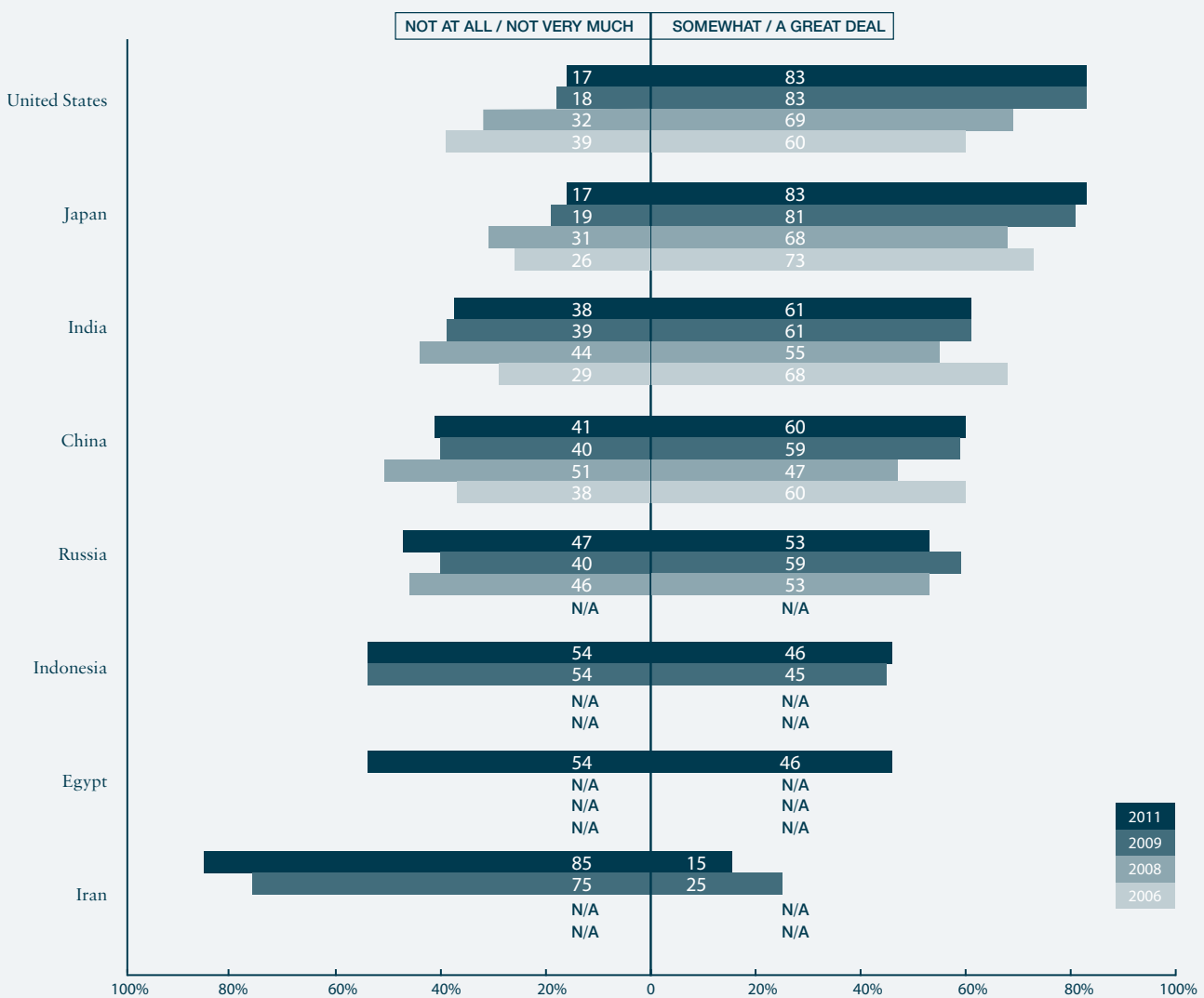
have a majority saying it is a 'very important' goal (46%, down seven points since last year and down 29 points since 2007).

A new goal to the list this year, 'maintaining close ties with the United States', had only 37% of Australians saying it is a 'very important' goal. Given very favourable views towards the alliance recorded elsewhere, this may reflect a confidence among Australians that relations with the United States are already well managed and do not need to be prioritised.

The lowest-ranked of the 12 goals was 'seeking a seat on the UN Security Council' which only a third of Australians (32% this year, 34% last year) say is a 'very important' goal.

Fig. 2: Trust in international powers

How much do you trust the following countries to act responsibly in the world?



TRUST IN INTERNATIONAL POWERS

When it comes to how much Australians trust eight international powers to act responsibly in the world, the poll showed that trust in the United States and Japan is highest. Eighty-three per cent of Australians trust both the United States and Japan ‘to act responsibly in the world’ either ‘somewhat’ or ‘a great deal’. These results were consistent with those recorded last time we asked this question in 2009.

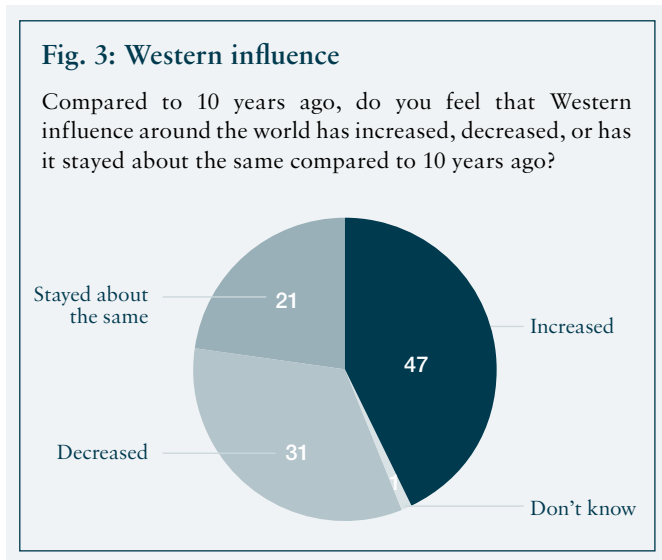
A majority of Australians trusted China, India and Russia either ‘somewhat’ or ‘a great deal’, and for China there was a five-point increase in those trusting it ‘a great deal’, but only up to 12%.

A minority of Australians trusted Indonesia, Egypt and Iran either ‘somewhat’ or ‘a great deal’. Iran is by far the least trusted country of the eight with just 15% of Australians trusting it either ‘a great deal’ or ‘somewhat’, down 10 points since 2009.

WORLD’S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER AND WESTERN INFLUENCE

Even though China continues to lag the European Union and the United States as the largest contributor to global GDP, most Australians (55%) continue to regard China as ‘the world’s leading economic power’ when asked to choose between China, Japan, the countries of the European Union and the United States. Less than a third (30%) chose the United States and only 10% the countries of the European Union.

Interestingly though, views of China’s economic importance have not led Australians to believe Western influence is on the wane. Asked whether ‘Western influence around the world has increased, decreased, or has it stayed about the same compared to 10 years ago’ 47% of Australians say it has increased and 21% that it has stayed about the same. Just a third (31%) say it has decreased.



WORLD’S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER

When it comes to perceptions of which country is the world’s leading economic power, Australians have until recently been exceptional in their identification of China.

Pew has been asking this question as part of a multi-nation survey since 2008.¹ In both 2008 and 2009 there was no country included in Pew’s survey in which a majority said China was ‘the world’s leading economic power’.

However, there are some signs of a convergence. In Pew’s 2010 survey, a slim majority (51%) of Germans chose China and 50% of Japanese and Jordanians. Majorities in eight of the 22 countries included in the survey chose the United States, although more Americans (41%) chose China than chose their own country (38%).

FOREIGN AID

On 16 November 2010, Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd announced ‘the first independent review of Australia’s aid and development program since 1996’. The review was ‘designed to maximise the effectiveness of the aid program, as Australia increases its Official Development Assistance to 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income by 2015-16’² or the equivalent of \$8-9 billion.³

To find out what Australians think about this proposed increase in the aid budget, we asked them to give their ‘hunch about what percentage of the Australian Federal budget you think is actually spent on foreign aid.’ Just 6% of Australians say less than 1% of the Federal budget is spent on foreign aid. On average, Australians say aid accounts for 16% of the Federal budget, although almost a third (31%) say 20% or more of the budget goes to foreign aid.

To find out how much Australians would like to be spent on foreign aid, they were then asked ‘what percentage of the Australian Federal budget, if any, do you personally think should be spent on foreign aid’. On average, Australians wanted 12% spent on foreign aid, less than their estimate of what is spent but an enormous increase on current spending of 1.3% of the Federal budget or 0.35% of Gross National Income forecast for 2011-12.⁴ Just 4% say nothing should be spent and a further 3% that less than 1% should be spent.

AMERICANS VS AUSTRALIANS ON AID

WorldPublicOpinion.org asked a similar question on foreign aid of the American public in November 2010.⁵ Americans overestimate how much of their Federal budget is spent on aid by an even greater margin than Australians (on average they estimated 27% was spent compared with 16% estimated by Australians).

When asked to say what ‘would be an appropriate percentage of the federal budget to go to foreign aid, if any’ on average they said 13%, almost the exact same percentage as Australians, who say it should be 12%.

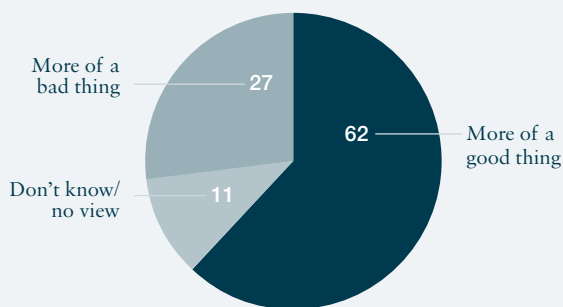
WIKILEAKS

Since the last Lowy Poll, WikiLeaks founder and Australian citizen, Julian Assange, has stirred widespread public debate over his decision to begin publishing online some quarter of a million leaked US diplomatic cables.

To find out what the Australian public thinks about WikiLeaks we asked whether they ‘personally think the job WikiLeaks does is more of a good thing or more of a bad thing’. A majority of Australian adults (62%) say it is ‘more of a good thing’, more than double those saying it is ‘more of a bad thing’ (27%).

Fig. 4: WikiLeaks

Thinking now about the WikiLeaks website that publishes classified documents. Do you personally think the job WikiLeaks does is more of a good thing or more of a bad thing?



FEELINGS TOWARDS OTHER COUNTRIES

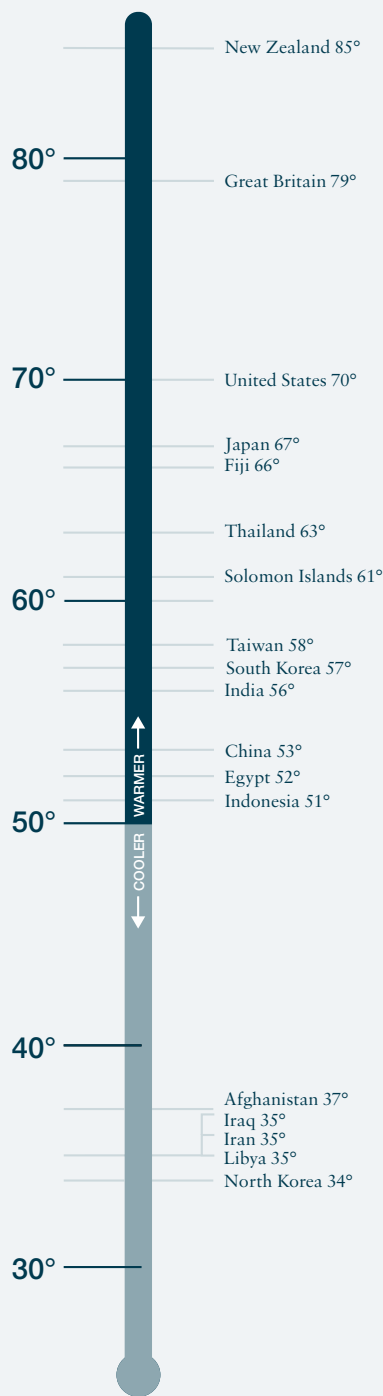
To put Australia’s foreign policy in context, this year’s poll repeated a question the Lowy Institute has asked since 2006 on feelings towards other countries. Of the 18 countries included this year towards which Australians were asked to rate their feelings on a 0 to 100 scale, New Zealand continued to be the most warmly regarded country, achieving the highest rating ever recorded on this scale (85°). Great Britain came in second place with a very high 79°. The third-highest rated country was the United States at 70°, followed by Japan (67°).

This year there was a modest improvement in feelings towards South Korea (57°), up 4° since it was last included in this scale in 2009 and towards Thailand (63°), also up 4° over the same period. Taiwan (58°) is more warmly regarded than China (53°), while a new country to the list, Solomon Islands, did better than both with a rating of 61°.

Australians are coolest in their feelings towards Iraq (35°, and down 5° since last year), Iran (35°), Libya (35°) and North Korea (34°).

Fig. 5: Feelings towards other countries

Please rate your feelings towards some countries, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred: the higher the number the more favourable your feelings are toward that country. If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country, please say so.



Climate Change

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change has continued to feature prominently in Australian political debate. Overall, the Australian public is not happy with the Gillard Government’s efforts to address climate change. Three-quarters of Australian adults (75%) say the current Federal government has done a poor job addressing climate change, with 39% saying it was ‘very poor’ and just 3% saying it was ‘very good’.

DEALING WITH GLOBAL WARMING

A tracking question that presented Australians with three options for dealing with global warming showed a downwards trend in support for substantial action to address the problem.

Support for the most aggressive form of action slipped five points from last year, with 41% saying ‘global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs.’ This option now shares the same level of support as the intermediate proposition that ‘the problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost’ (40%). Support for this option is steady with last year, but is almost double from 2006 when just 24% held this view and 68% supported taking the most aggressive form of action.

Support for the most sceptical position that ‘until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs’ is up six points to 19% and has nearly tripled since 2006 when just 7% of

Australians held this view. Support for this option increases with age with just 11% of 18 to 29 year olds holding this view compared with 28% of Australians 60 years of age and older.

Interestingly, a majority (63%) of those who took the view that ‘until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs’ also say the current Federal government has done a ‘very poor’ job addressing climate change. A majority of the other two groups, those advocating the most aggressive action and the middle group, also say the Federal government has done a poor job but have fewer in the ‘very poor’ category and more in the ‘somewhat poor’ category.

AMERICANS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs asked Americans a similar question about their preferred response to climate change in its 2010 survey.⁶ Americans were less likely than Australians to support the most aggressive form of action. Just 29% of Americans said ‘climate change is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs’.

Support is strongest (42%) for the intermediate proposition that ‘the problem of climate change should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost’. And 26% said ‘until we are sure that climate change is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs.’

Fig. 6: Dealing with global warming

There is a controversy over what the countries of the world, including Australia, should do about the problem of global warming. I’m going to read you three statements. Please tell me which statement comes closest to your own point of view.

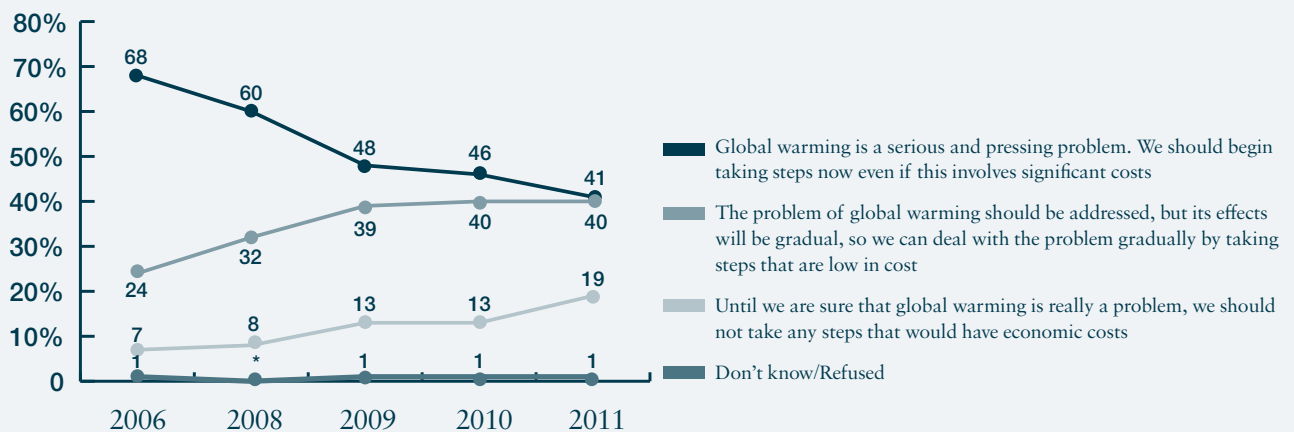
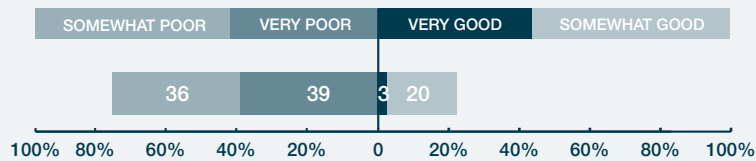


Fig. 7: Federal government's efforts to address climate change

And now about the current Federal government's efforts to address climate change. Do you think the current Federal government has done a good job, or a poor job, in addressing climate change?



WILLINGNESS TO PAY

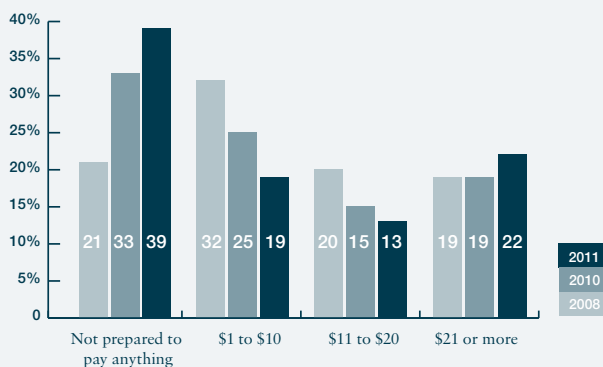
As political debate about the costs of taking action to address climate change continues, Australians' willingness to pay is declining. Asked 'if it helped solve climate change how much extra would you be willing to pay each month on your electricity bill', rounded to the nearest \$10, the most popular response is nothing at all (39%). Support for this option is up six points from last year and has nearly doubled (from 21%) since the question was first asked in 2008.

Since 2008, support has slipped from two price points: the proportion of Australians willing to pay \$1 to \$10 (falling from 32% to 19%) and those who are willing to pay \$11 to \$20 (falling from 20% to 13%). The proportion willing to pay \$21 or more extra per month has remained steady over the period and is at 22% (from 19% in 2010 and 2008).

A greater proportion of younger Australians are prepared to pay higher amounts with only 12% of those aged 60 or older willing to pay \$21 or more extra per month, while among those aged 18 to 44 years 27% are willing to pay this much.

Fig. 8: Willingness to pay to help solve climate change

One suggested way of tackling climate change is to increase the price of electricity. If it helped solve climate change how much extra would you be willing to pay each month on your electricity bill? Please say an amount, rounded off to the nearest ten dollars.

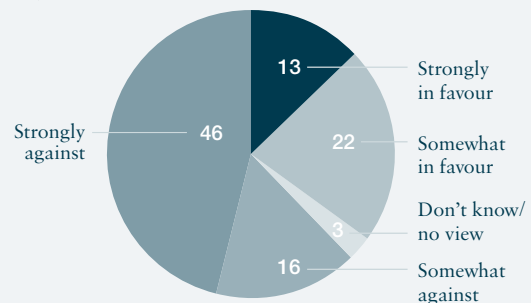


NUCLEAR POWER

Nuclear power is often raised as one option for reducing carbon emissions. This year's poll included a question to start tracking Australian attitudes towards the use of this form of power. Fieldwork occurred in the immediate aftermath of the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant with results likely to reflect this.

Fig. 9: Nuclear power

Now about nuclear power in Australia and cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Are you personally in favour or against Australia building nuclear power plants as part of its plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions? Is that strongly or somewhat?



Overall, 62% of Australians are against 'Australia building nuclear power plants as part of its plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions', with 46% 'strongly against'. However, over a third (35%) of Australians are in favour.

Opposition to 'Australia building nuclear power plants as part of its plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions' increases with age. Among Australians aged 18 to 29 years 37% are 'strongly against' compared with 53% of those aged 60 years or older. Women are also more likely than men to hold this view (57% compared with 35%). Over one-fifth of men (22%) are 'strongly in favour' compared with just 5% of women.

Those Australians who want the most aggressive action to stop global warming ('we should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs') are the least likely of the three groups to be in favour of nuclear power, with just 28% supporting it. Those taking the most sceptical position about global warming,

‘we should not take any steps that would have economic costs’, are most supportive, with 46% in favour of Australia building nuclear power plants.

United States

THE US ALLIANCE

Last year the Lowy Poll recorded the highest level of support for the US alliance since our polling began in 2005. This year support slipped slightly, but remained very strong, with 82% of Australians saying the alliance relationship with the United States is very or fairly important for Australia’s security. A majority (59%) say it is ‘very important’.

To try to better understand the views of Australians towards the

alliance, this year we presented Australians with seven different arguments about it and asked them if they agreed or disagreed with each.

The results highlight that Australians see the alliance as a natural extension of our shared values and ideals with Americans, that they believe Australia would have to spend much more to properly defend itself without US support and that they recognise this support comes with the risk of being drawn into a war that is not in Australia’s interests.

Over 70 per cent of Australians agreed with three of the seven arguments:

- ‘Australians and Americans share many common values and ideals. A strong alliance is a natural extension of this’ (78%);
- ‘Without the alliance Australia would have to spend much more money on its defence’ (75%) and;
- ‘Australia’s alliance with the United States makes it more likely Australia will be drawn into a war in Asia that would not be in Australia’s interests’ (73%).

The highest level of disagreement was in response to the argument: ‘Australia is able to defend itself without the assistance of the United States’, with 77% of Australians disagreeing.

Interestingly in light of the findings above (p. 5) about the world’s leading economic power, a majority (54%) of Australians disagree that ‘the United States is in decline relative to China and so the alliance is of decreasing importance’. They are more divided over whether ‘US foreign policy is increasingly at odds with Australian interests’, with 49% agreeing and 41% disagreeing. Most (57%) say the alliance ‘makes Australia safer

Fig. 10: Importance of ANZUS

Thinking now about Australia’s alliance relationship with the United States. How important is our alliance relationship with the United States for Australia’s security?

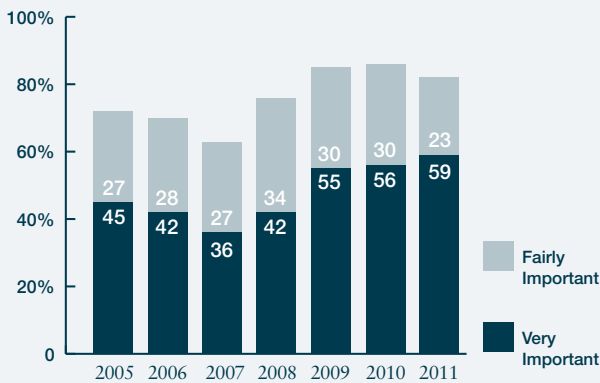
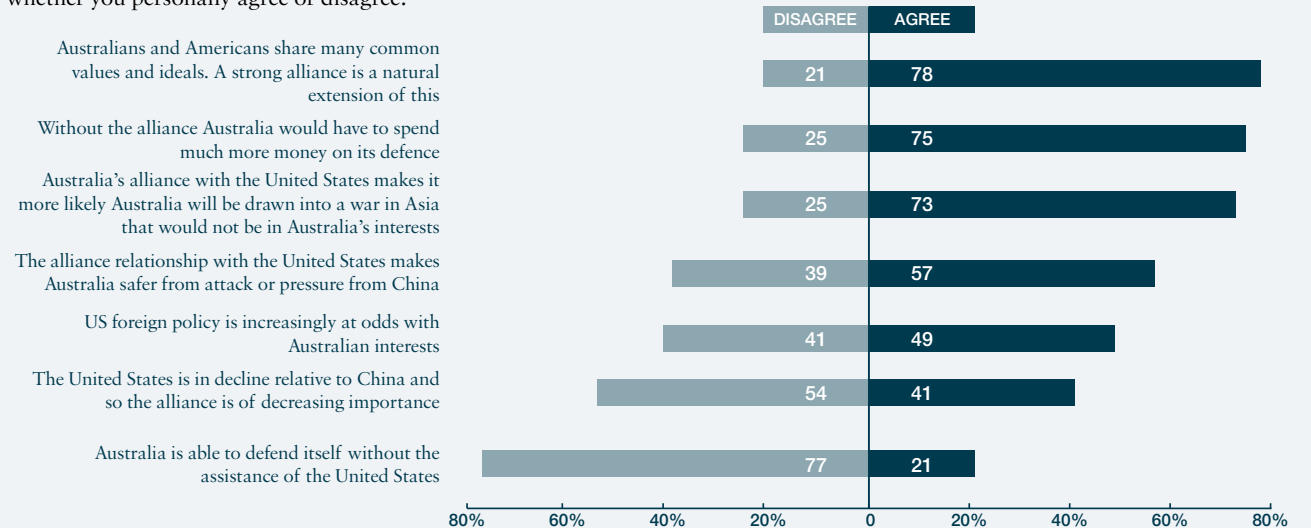


Fig. 11: About ANZUS

I am now going to read you some different arguments about the alliance relationship with the United States. For each one please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree.



from attack or pressure from China’, but 39% disagree.

Across the seven statements, Australians who say the US alliance is only ‘somewhat important’ or ‘not at all important’ for Australia’s security tended to have the opposite view from those who say it is ‘very important’ or ‘fairly important’. However, in a few cases they hold similar views. Majorities of both groups disagree that ‘Australia is able to defend itself without the assistance of the United States’ and majorities from both groups agree the alliance ‘makes it more likely Australia will be drawn into a war in Asia’.

US MILITARY FORCES IN AUSTRALIA

In November 2010, the 25th Australia-United States Ministerial (AUSMIN) agreed to establish a Force Posture Working Group to look at ‘options for enhanced joint defence cooperation on Australian soil’.⁷ These options reportedly included: ‘more US

force training on Australian soil, more port visits, disaster relief co-operation and a greater US regional naval presence.’⁸

New bases were reportedly unlikely, with Secretary of Defense Robert Gates saying the US had no wish to create ‘political difficulties’ in Australia.⁹ However, politicians and officials may be overestimating those difficulties, with a majority (55%) of Australians saying they are in favour of ‘Australia allowing the United States to base US military forces here in Australia’. Forty-three per cent say they are against this, but only one-fifth (22%) say they are ‘strongly against’ US military forces being based here.

China

CHINA’S RISE

Australian attitudes towards China remained somewhat split,

Fig. 12: Basing US forces in Australia

Are you personally in favour or against Australia allowing the United States to base US military forces here in Australia? Is that strongly or somewhat?

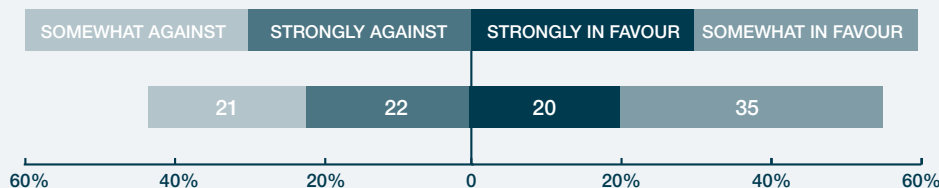
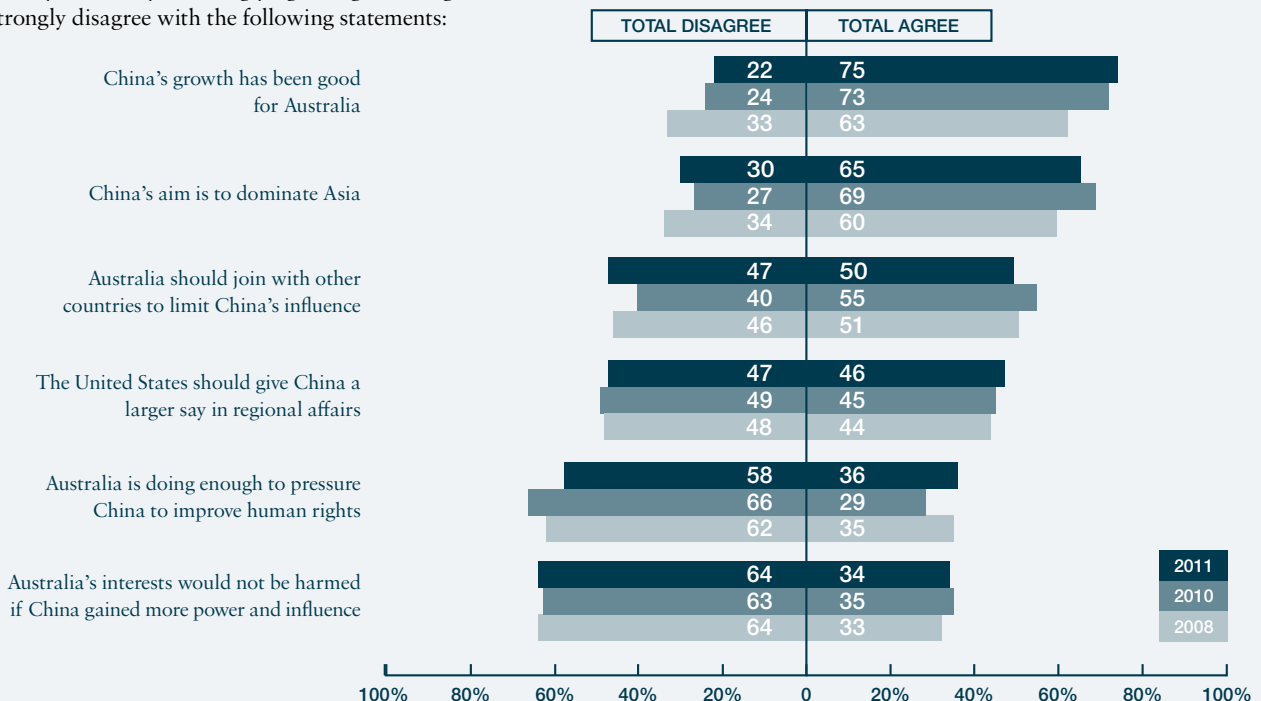


Fig. 13: Attitudes towards China

Please say whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:



with an overwhelming recognition that China’s growth has been good for Australia mixed with concerns about Chinese investment and its potential as a military threat.

To explore the complexity of the Australia-China relationship, we asked Australians a series of questions first asked in the 2008 Lowy Poll.

Three-quarters of Australians (75%) agree ‘China’s growth has been good for Australia’, stable with the 2010 finding of 73%, but up 12 points since 2008. At the same time 65% agree ‘China’s aim is to dominate Asia’ (down slightly from 69% recorded last year).

There was a slight drop in agreement that ‘Australia should join with other countries to limit China’s influence’, with 50% of Australians agreeing (down from 55% last year) and 47% disagreeing (up seven points). They remained similarly split as to whether ‘the United States should give China a larger say in regional affairs’, with 46% agreeing (steady with the 45% recorded last year) and 47% disagreeing.

There was a modest increase in the proportion of Australians agreeing (36%) ‘Australia is doing enough to pressure China to improve human rights’, up from 29% last year. However, a

majority (58%) still disagree.

Across all these statements men are slightly more positive in their views towards China than women. For example, 86% of men agree ‘China’s growth has been good for Australia’ compared with 65% of women, and 55% of men say ‘the United States should give China a larger say in regional affairs’ compared with only 37% of women.

CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIA

Views on Chinese investment in Australia remained unchanged from last year, despite the two years that have elapsed since the collapse of Chinalco’s high-profile bid for a larger stake in Rio Tinto.

A majority (57%) of Australians say ‘the Australian government is allowing too much investment from China’, an identical finding to the 2010 poll. Older Australians and women were most likely to say this. Sixty-eight per cent of those 60 years old or older say this compared with 43% of 18 to 29 year olds and 65% of women compared with 49% of men.

CHINA AS A MILITARY THREAT

The Lowy Poll has been tracking perceptions of China as a

Fig. 14: China as a military threat

Do you think it is likely or unlikely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years?

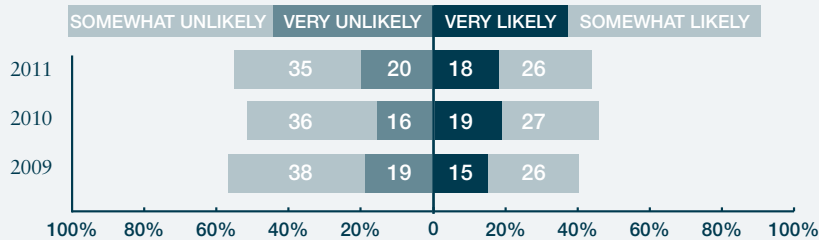
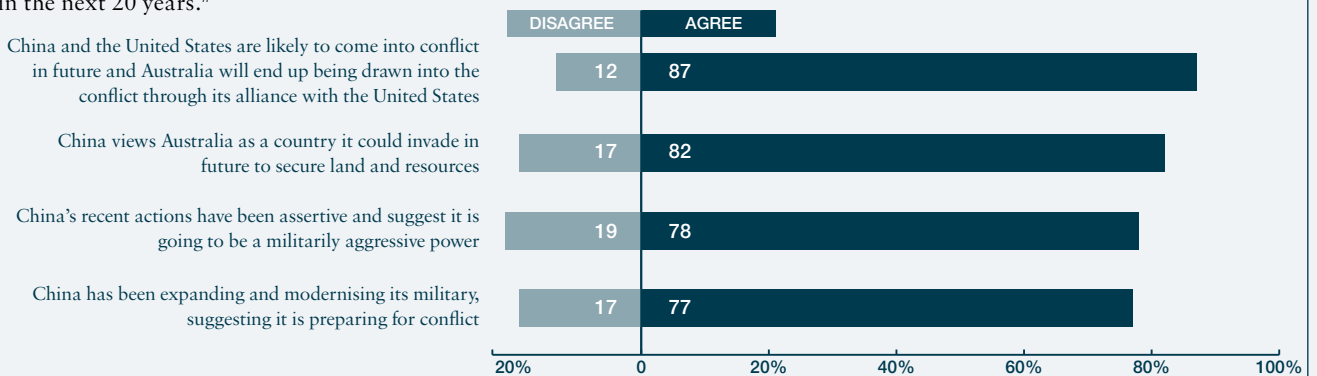


Fig. 15: Why China is a military threat

Here are some reasons other people have given as to why China might become a military threat to Australia. For each one please tell me whether you agree or disagree it is a reason why you personally think China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years. #



#Asked only of those saying it is ‘very likely’ or ‘somewhat likely’ ‘that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years’.

military threat for three years. This year Australians remained divided over whether China posed a threat to Australia or not. A majority (55%) say it is unlikely ‘China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years’, but 44% say it is likely. These findings were consistent with those of the last two years. A considerable proportion of Australians had views at the opposing extremes, with one-fifth of Australians saying it is ‘very likely’ (18%) and one-fifth that it is ‘very unlikely’ (20%). Concern about China becoming a military threat is greater among women than men (with 21% saying it is ‘very likely’ compared with 16%) and increases with age with 12% of those aged 18 to 29 years saying it is ‘very likely’ compared with 24% of Australians 60 years old or older.

To better understand the thinking of the 44% of Australians who say it is likely China will become a military threat, we presented them with four ‘reasons other people have given as to why China might become a military threat to Australia’ and asked them to say whether they agreed or disagreed each is a reason why they ‘personally think China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years’.

Majorities of the sub-sample agreed with all four reasons, with the strongest level of agreement for the following: ‘China and the United States are likely to come into conflict in future and Australia will end up being drawn into the conflict through its alliance with the United States’ (87%) and ‘China views Australia as a country it could invade in future to secure land and resources’ (82%).

International Security

THREAT OF TERRORISM

As the world approaches the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the Lowy Poll included a question to see whether Australians believe the threat of terrorism has

changed over the intervening period. The question used the Bali bombings of 2002 as a reference point, given the closeness of this attack to Australia and its impact on Australians.

The results suggest that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, worldwide arrests of terrorists and increased security measures at airports and elsewhere have done little to alleviate threat perceptions among Australians. The majority of Australians (60%) say ‘the ability of terrorists to launch another major attack against Australians’ is now ‘the same’ as at the time of the 2002 Bali bombings, with another 19% saying it is now ‘greater’. Just one-fifth (20%) say it is now ‘less’.

The view that the ability of terrorists to launch an attack is now ‘greater’ is correlated to age with Australians 60 years old and older more likely than those aged 18 to 29 years to hold this view (24% compared with 14%). Women are also more likely than men to hold this view (24% compared with 13%).

AUSTRALIANS VS AMERICANS ON THE THREAT OF TERRORISM

In 2010, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs asked a similar question about the ability of terrorists to launch another major attack on the United States.¹⁰ It asked if the ability was greater, the same, or less than at the time of the September 11 attacks.

Most Americans (50%), like Australians, thought their ability was about the same, while 26% said it was greater. Just 23% said it was less.

LIBYA INTERVENTION

Following the UN Security Council decision to authorise member states to intervene militarily in Libya, Australians showed themselves to be very supportive of this type of action. Asked if ‘in situations like Libya, are you personally in favour or against the UN Security Council authorising military intervention to try to stop the government from attacking its own citizens’, 82% of Australians say they are in favour.

AFGHANISTAN

As the war in Afghanistan approaches its 10th anniversary, opposition among Australians to the war has been gradually increasing. This year a majority (59%) of Australians say Australia should not ‘continue to be involved militarily in Afghanistan’, up five points from last year and 13 since the question was first asked in 2007. Women are more likely than men to oppose the war (66% compared with 51%) and Australians 60 years of age or older are more likely than those that are younger (64% compared with 57%).

Several attempts have been made by Australian politicians over the years to make the case for the war in Afghanistan, but to find out which reasons resonated most strongly with Australians we asked whether they agreed or disagreed with

Fig. 16: Threat of terrorism

Following the 2002 Bali bombings, in which 88 Australians died, do you think the ability of terrorists to launch another major attack against Australians is now greater, the same, or less than at the time of the 2002 Bali bombings?

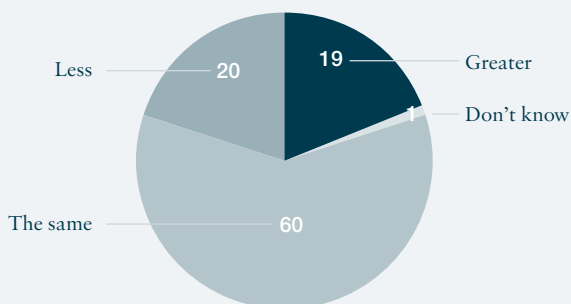
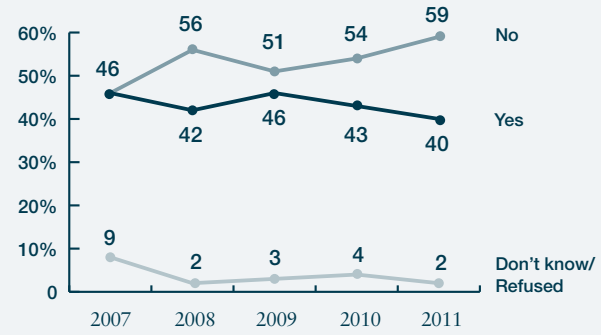


Fig. 17: Military involvement in Afghanistan

Should Australia continue to be involved militarily in Afghanistan?



four ‘different arguments that have been made as to why Australia should remain militarily involved in Afghanistan’. A majority of Australians agree with only two of them. The highest level of support (72%) is for an argument highlighting human rights concerns: ‘if Australia and its allies withdrew from Afghanistan Afghan women might have their rights seriously violated by an extremist government.’ The other receiving majority support (57%) is that ‘Australia participated in the invasion of Afghanistan, so we have an obligation to stay on until the job is done.’

Most Australians (61%) disagree we need to stay on in Afghanistan ‘so the US will continue to regard us as a reliable ally’ or to reduce the ‘risk that terrorists will be able to mount an attack against Australian civilians in Australia or elsewhere around the world’ (62% disagree).

Among the 59% of Australians who oppose Australia’s continued military involvement in Afghanistan, a majority

(64%) agree with only one of the four arguments for staying on: ‘if Australia and its allies withdrew from Afghanistan, Afghan women might have their rights seriously violated by an extremist government.’

WAR ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Since the last Lowy Poll, North Korea heightened its brinkmanship on the Korean Peninsula, sinking the South Korean warship *Cheonan* and shelling the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong.

In this context Australians were asked ‘if North Korea provoked a full-scale war with South Korea would you personally be in favour or against Australia joining other allies like the United States in sending military forces to defend South Korea against North Korea’. The majority (52%) of Australians are in favour of sending military forces with men more likely to be in favour than women (61% compared with 44%).

In the event that ‘China intervened to support North Korea against South Korea’, then the proportion of Australians in favour of sending military forces increased slightly from 52% to 56%.

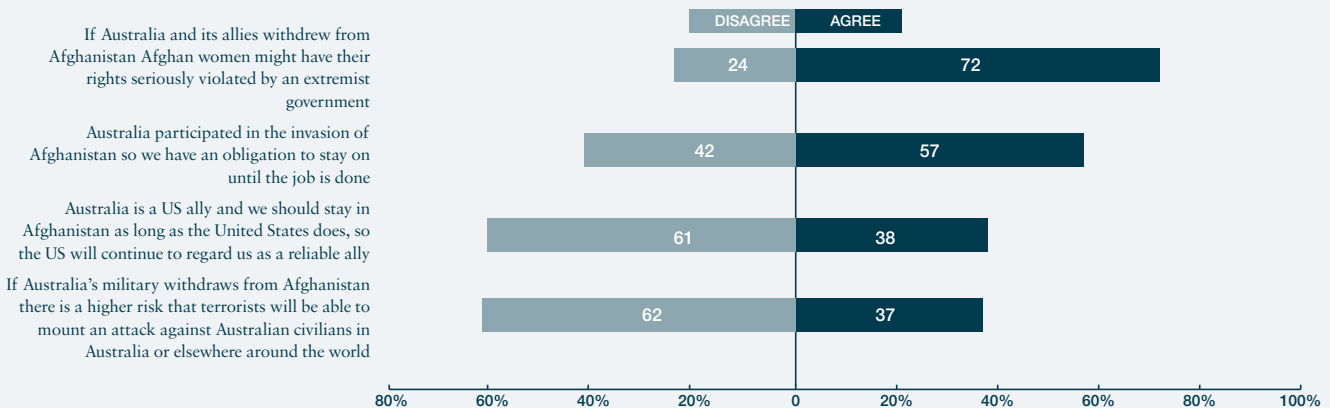
Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers arriving by boat remains a contentious political issue in Australia. (Prime Minister Gillard’s so-called ‘Malaysia solution’ was announced after fieldwork for the Lowy Poll was completed.)

Despite the heated debate, there has been a slight drop in the proportion of Australians concerned ‘about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat’ to 72%, down six points since last year. However, the majority (51%) remain ‘very concerned’, with concern increasing with age. Among

Fig. 18: Reasons for remaining in Afghanistan

I am now going to read you a few different arguments that have been made as to why Australia should remain militarily involved in Afghanistan. For each one please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree it is a reason why Australia should remain militarily involved in Afghanistan?



those aged 18 to 29 years 41% are ‘very concerned’ compared with 67% of Australians 60 years old or older.

To try to better understand the reasons Australians are concerned about asylum seekers arriving here by boat, we presented the 72% who said they are concerned with seven ‘different arguments that have been made about unauthorised asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat’ and asked them if they agreed or disagreed with each.

The argument that received greatest agreement suggests those concerned about asylum seekers arriving by boat are most worried they ‘might be badly injured or killed during the boat trip’ (92% agreeing). Large majorities say asylum seekers

arriving by boat are ‘jumping the queue’ (88%), ‘pose a potential security risk to Australia’ (86%) and that ‘too much money is spent processing unauthorised asylum seekers that arrive by boat in detention centres’ (85%).

The 72% of Australians who say they are concerned are more divided over whether ‘the attention that the issue of unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat receives is not justified by the relatively small numbers that arrive here by boat’, with 51% disagreeing and 44% agreeing. They are similarly divided over whether ‘unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat are often fleeing war and conflict and Australia should give them a chance to set up a

Fig. 19: Concern about asylum seekers

Now a question about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. Are you concerned or not concerned about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat or do you have no view on this?

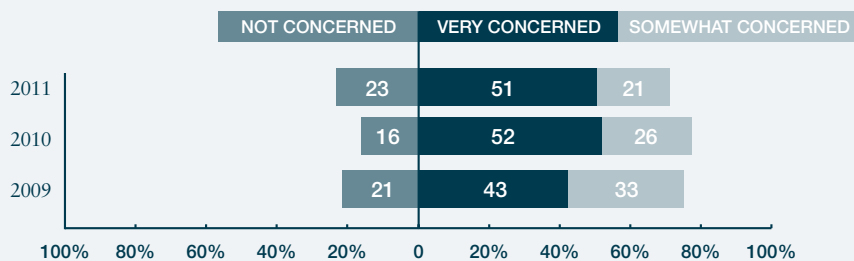
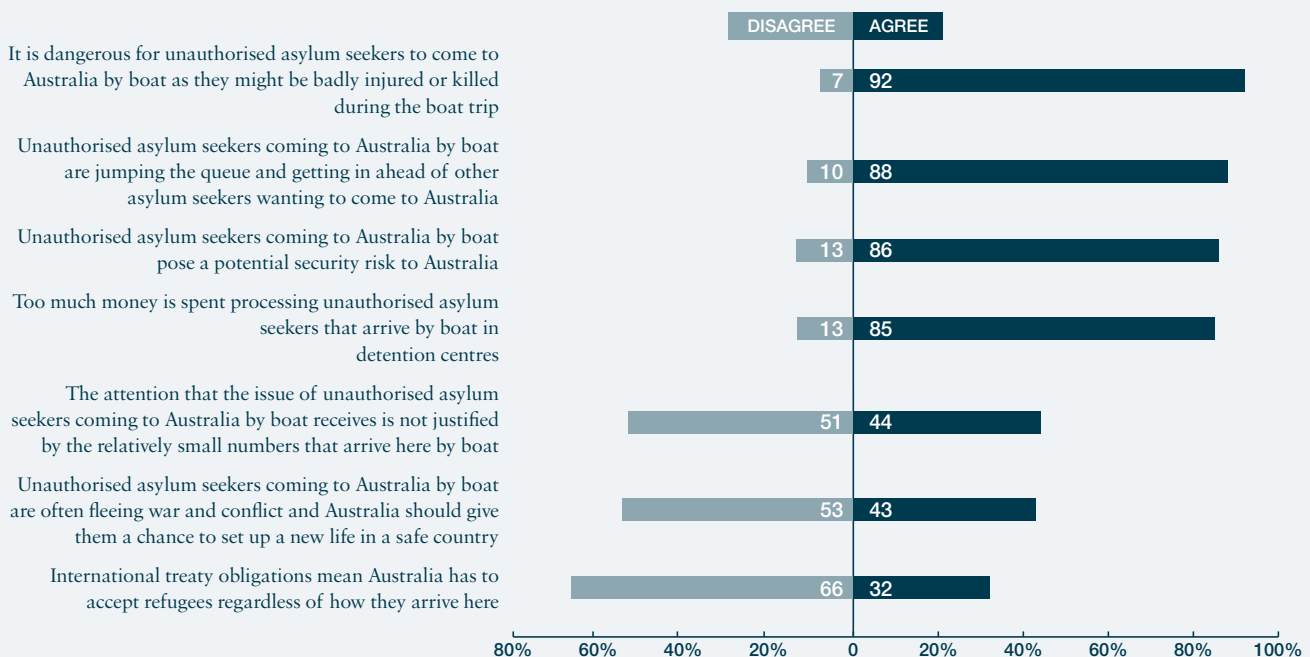


Fig. 20: About asylum seekers

I am now going to read you a few different arguments that have been made about unauthorised asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat. For each one please say whether you personally agree or disagree.#



#This question was asked only of those who said they were ‘very concerned’ or ‘somewhat concerned’ ‘about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat’.

new life in a safe country’, with 53% disagreeing and 43% agreeing. Two-thirds (66%) disagree that ‘international treaty obligations mean Australia has to accept refugees regardless of how they arrive here’.

Indonesia

Lowy polls have, in the past, detected concern among Australians towards our most important near-neighbour, Indonesia. A Lowy Poll conducted in Indonesia in 2006, and due to be repeated later this year, identified similar sentiment among Indonesians towards Australia.

In advance of our Indonesia survey, this year’s Lowy Poll repeated several questions last asked in 2006 when parallel studies were undertaken in both countries.¹¹

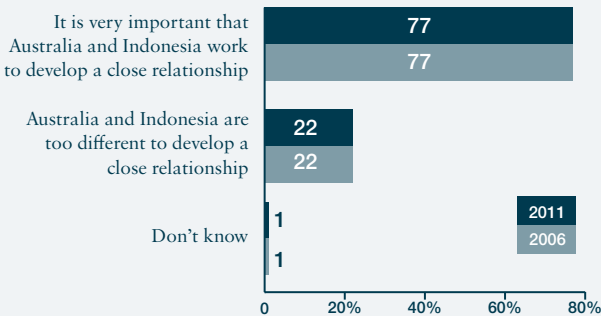
As noted, on the thermometer measure (p. 6), Australians are lukewarm in their feelings towards Indonesia, giving it a mean rating of 51°. This is consistent with ratings since this question was first asked in 2006, with the exception of a modest peak of 54° in 2010 in the wake of the successful visit by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to Australia. Trust in Indonesia to act responsibly in the world is also low, with just 5% of Australians trusting it ‘a great deal’.

Results to other questions not asked since 2006 suggest little to no progress has been made convincing Australians to look more positively at Indonesia, despite claims by Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that ‘the relationship between Australia and Indonesia has never been stronger’.¹²

Asked to choose between two statements about Australia’s relations with Indonesia, a large majority of Australians (77%) say ‘it is very important that Australia and Indonesia work to develop a close relationship’ rather than ‘Australia and Indonesia are too different to develop a close relationship’ (22% agreeing with the latter proposition). These findings were

Fig. 21: Relations with Indonesia

I am going to read out two statements about Australia’s relations with Indonesia. Please tell me which one you agree with more.



identical to when the question was last asked in 2006.

Despite this aspirational desire for better relations, Australians in general remain suspicious of Indonesian governance and fearful that Indonesia presents a potential security threat.

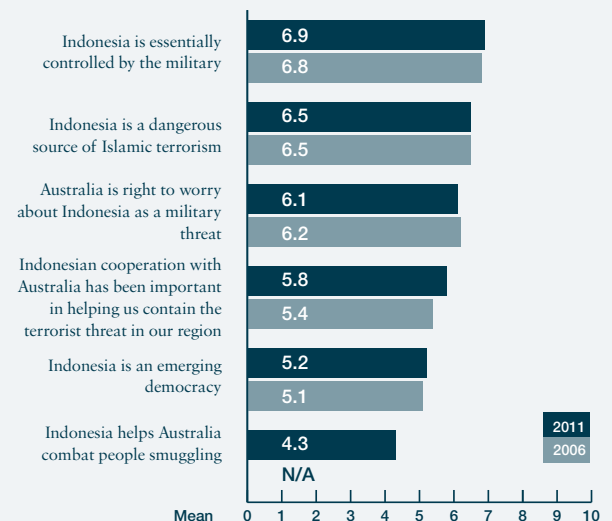
Presented with six statements about Indonesia and asked to say ‘how much you agree or disagree with each one, using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you strongly disagree and 10 means you strongly agree’, the mean response to the statement ‘Indonesia is a dangerous source of Islamic terrorism’ remained stable at 6.5 (the same recording as 2006). Some 39% of Australians agree rather strongly, choosing a number from 8 to 10. Attitudes to this statement are correlated to age with Australians aged 18 to 29 years least likely to agree, with the mean rating for this age group 5.3 compared to 7.1 among those aged 60 years or older.

Australians also agree that ‘Australia is right to worry about Indonesia as a military threat’ (with a mean of 6.1 also little changed from 2006 when it rated 6.2). One-third (33%) of Australians agree quite strongly, choosing a number from 8 to 10. Once again attitudes are harder amongst older Australians with those 60 years old or older more likely to hold this view than those 18 to 29 years of age (with a mean of 6.7 compared with 5.3).

Despite the deepening of democracy in Indonesia, many Australians continue to believe that ‘Indonesia is essentially controlled by the military’ (with the mean rating 6.9 steady with the 6.8 recoded in 2006), with 40% of Australians agreeing strongly, choosing a number from 8 to 10. Australians remain

Fig. 22: About Indonesia

I am going to read out a number of statements about Indonesia. Please say how much you agree or disagree with each one, using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you strongly disagree and 10 means you strongly agree.



ambivalent as to whether ‘Indonesia is an emerging democracy’ (with a mean rating of 5.2, similar to the 5.1 recorded in 2006).

Australians are in moderate agreement that ‘Indonesian cooperation with Australia has been important in helping us contain the terrorist threat in our region’ (with a mean of 5.8 compared with 5.4 in 2006).

In a statement new to the list, Australians generally disagree that ‘Indonesia helps Australia combat people smuggling’, giving this a mean rating of 4.3.

When it comes to Australia’s intentions and behaviour towards Indonesia, views are generally positive among Australians, as they were in 2006. Presented with five statements and asked to rate them using the same 0 to 10 scale, the mean response to the statement ‘Indonesia benefits from having Australia as a stable and prosperous neighbour’ remained steady at 7.5 compared with 7.4 in 2006, with 55% of Australians rather strongly

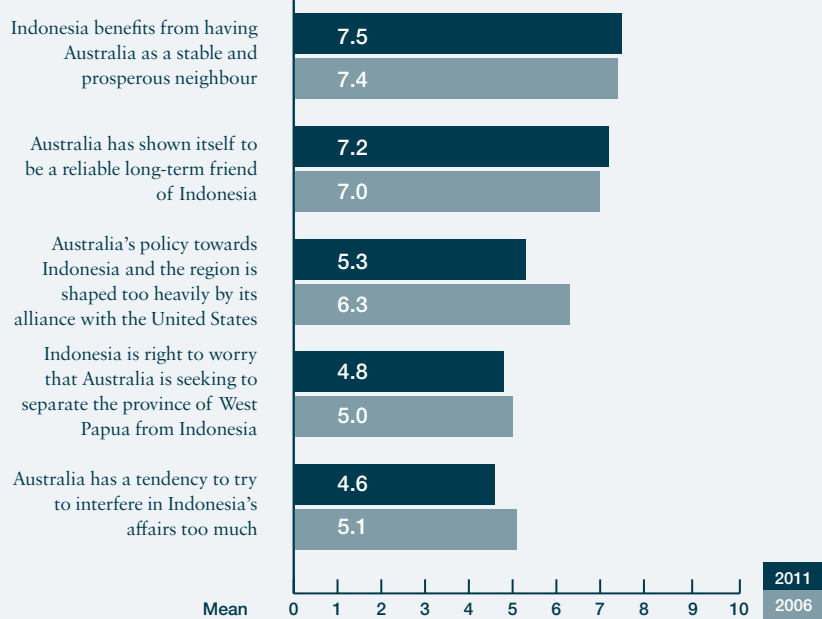
agreeing (choosing a number from 8 to 10).

Australians also continue to agree that ‘Australia has shown itself to be a reliable long-term friend of Indonesia’ with the mean rating of 7.2, level with the 7.0 recorded five years ago. Forty-four per cent of Australians agree with this strongly, choosing a number from 8 to 10.

For the statement ‘Australia’s policy towards Indonesia and the region is shaped too heavily by its alliance with the United States’, the weight of opinion moved from agreement towards neutrality (from a mean of 6.3 in 2006 to 5.3). Australians remained neutral as to whether ‘Indonesia is right to worry that Australia is seeking to separate the province of West Papua from Indonesia’ with a mean rating of 4.8 compared with 5.0 in 2006. And they moved slightly towards disagreeing ‘Australia has a tendency to try to interfere in Indonesia’s affairs too much’, with a mean of 4.6 compared with 5.1 in 2006.

Fig. 23: About Indonesia and Australia

I am now going to read out a number of statements about Indonesia and Australia. Using the same scale of 0 to 10, please say how much you agree or disagree with each one, where 0 means you strongly disagree and 10 means you strongly agree.



Tables of results

Please note that totals may not add to 100% due to rounding. Each response option has been rounded individually and grouped responses (e.g. those who ‘somewhat agree’ plus ‘strongly agree’) have not been rounded at the group level.

Throughout the tables an ‘*’ represents a response given by less than 0.5% of people.

FOREIGN POLICY GOALS

Table 1a: Thinking about what Australian foreign policy should be trying to achieve, I am going to read a list of goals, and ask you to tell me how important each one is for Australia. Please say whether you think each issue is very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important.

| | 2011 | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| | Very important | Fairly important | Total important | Not very important | Not at all important | Total not important | Don't know |
| Protecting the jobs of Australian workers | 81% | 17% | 98% | 2% | 1% | 3% | * |
| Helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons | 76% | 17% | 93% | 6% | 1% | 7% | * |
| Combating international terrorism | 73% | 21% | 94% | 4% | 2% | 6% | * |
| Protecting Australian citizens abroad | 72% | 25% | 97% | 2% | 1% | 3% | * |
| Strengthening the Australian economy | 70% | 27% | 97% | 2% | * | 2% | - |
| Controlling illegal immigration | 64% | 26% | 90% | 8% | 2% | 10% | * |
| Improving Australia's relationships with its immediate neighbours in the Pacific | 58% | 36% | 94% | 5% | * | 5% | * |
| Promoting Australian businesses overseas | 55% | 38% | 93% | 7% | 1% | 8% | * |
| Helping countries in our region to reduce poverty | 54% | 35% | 89% | 9% | 2% | 11% | * |
| Tackling climate change | 46% | 33% | 79% | 13% | 8% | 21% | * |
| Maintaining close ties with the United States | 37% | 48% | 85% | 13% | 2% | 15% | * |
| Seeking a seat on the UN Security Council | 32% | 38% | 70% | 20% | 7% | 27% | 4% |

Table 1b:

| | Percentage saying 'very important' | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 |
| Protecting the jobs of Australian workers | 81% | 79% | 80% | 79% | 75% |
| Helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons [#] | 76% | 72% | 78% | 66% | 61% |
| Combating international terrorism | 73% | 73% | 75% | 72% | 65% |
| Protecting Australian citizens abroad | 72% | 62% | 69% | 68% | 63% |
| Strengthening the Australian economy | 70% | 74% | 76% | 70% | 60% |
| Controlling illegal immigration | 64% | 62% | 60% | 59% | 55% |
| Improving Australia's relationships with its immediate neighbours in the Pacific | 58% | 61% | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Promoting Australian businesses overseas | 55% | 56% | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Helping countries in our region to reduce poverty | 54% | 54% | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Tackling climate change | 46% | 53% | 56% | 66% | 75% |
| Maintaining close ties with the United States | 37% | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Seeking a seat on the UN Security Council | 32% | 34% | N/A | N/A | N/A |

[#] In 2008 and 2007 this goal was 'helping to prevent nuclear proliferation'.

TRUST

Table 2a: How much do you trust the following countries to act responsibly in the world?

| | 2011 | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------|---|---------------|------------|--|------------|
| | A great deal | Somewhat | Total: a great deal and somewhat | Not very much | Not at all | Total: not very much and not at all | Don't know |
| United States | 40% | 43% | 83% | 12% | 5% | 17% | * |
| Japan | 30% | 53% | 83% | 12% | 5% | 17% | * |
| China | 12% | 48% | 60% | 28% | 13% | 41% | * |
| India | 7% | 54% | 61% | 27% | 11% | 38% | * |
| Russia | 7% | 46% | 53% | 35% | 12% | 47% | 1% |
| Indonesia | 5% | 41% | 46% | 38% | 15% | 53% | * |
| Egypt | 3% | 43% | 46% | 37% | 17% | 54% | 1% |
| Iran | 2% | 13% | 15% | 41% | 44% | 85% | 1% |

Table 2b:

| | A great deal | | | | Total: somewhat and a great deal | | | |
|---------------|--------------|------|------|------|----------------------------------|------|------|------|
| | 2011 | 2009 | 2008 | 2006 | 2011 | 2009 | 2008 | 2006 |
| United States | 40% | 39% | 24% | 19% | 83% | 83% | 69% | 60% |
| Japan | 30% | 33% | 15% | 19% | 83% | 81% | 68% | 73% |
| China | 12% | 7% | 7% | 7% | 60% | 59% | 47% | 60% |
| India | 7% | 10% | 8% | 9% | 61% | 61% | 55% | 68% |
| Russia | 7% | 7% | 7% | N/A | 53% | 59% | 53% | N/A |
| Indonesia | 5% | 6% | N/A | N/A | 46% | 45% | N/A | N/A |
| Egypt | 3% | N/A | N/A | N/A | 46% | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Iran | 2% | 2% | N/A | N/A | 15% | 25% | N/A | N/A |

WORLD'S LEADING ECONOMIC POWER

Table 3: Now about the world's leading economic power. Today, which one of the following do you think is the world's leading economic power?

| | 2011 | 2010 |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|
| China | 55% | 55% |
| The United States | 30% | 32% |
| The countries of the European Union | 10% | 8% |
| Japan | 4% | 3% |
| Another country | * | * |
| None | * | * |
| Don't know | 1% | 1% |

WESTERN INFLUENCE

Table 4: And now about Western influence around the world. Compared to 10 years ago, do you feel that Western influence around the world has increased, decreased, or has it stayed about the same compared to 10 years ago?

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Increased | 47% |
| Stayed about the same | 21% |
| Decreased | 31% |
| Don't know | 1% |

AUSTRALIA'S AID PROGRAM

Table 5:

i) Now about how much of the Australian Federal budget you think is spent on foreign aid. Just based on what you know, please tell me your hunch about what percentage of the Australian Federal budget you think is actually spent on foreign aid.

ii) And in your view, what percentage of the Australian Federal budget, if any, do you personally think should be spent on foreign aid?

| | How much is spent | How much should be spent |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 0% | * | 4% |
| Less than 1% | 6% | 3% |
| From 1% to less than 2% | 8% | 8% |
| From 2% to less than 3% | 9% | 8% |
| From 3% to less than 4% | 5% | 4% |
| From 4% to less than 5% | 2% | 2% |
| From 5% to less than 6% | 13% | 16% |
| From 6% to less than 10% | 3% | 5% |
| From 10% to less than 20% | 15% | 18% |
| From 20% to less than 30% | 12% | 11% |
| From 30% to less than 40% | 5% | 6% |
| 40% and more | 14% | 8% |
| Don't know/Refused | 9% | 5% |
| Average | 16% | 12% |

WIKILEAKS

Table 6: Thinking now about the WikiLeaks website that publishes classified documents. Do you personally think the job WikiLeaks does is more of a good thing or more of a bad thing?

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| More of a good thing | 62% |
| More of a bad thing | 27% |
| Don't know/No view | 11% |

FEELINGS TOWARDS OTHER COUNTRIES

Table 7: Please rate your feelings towards some countries, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred: the higher the number the more favourable your feelings are toward that country. If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country, please say so.[#]

| Country | 2011 Mean ^o | 2010 Mean ^o | 2009 Mean ^o | 2008 Mean ^o | 2007 Mean ^o | 2006 Mean ^o |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| New Zealand | 85 | 84 | 83 | N/A | 81 | N/A |
| Great Britain | 79 | N/A | N/A | 77 | 75 | 74 |
| United States | 70 | 68 | 67 | 64 | 60 | 62 |
| Japan | 67 | 64 | 66 | 64 | 63 | 64 |
| Fiji | 66 | N/A | 63 | 67 | N/A | N/A |
| Thailand | 63 | N/A | 59 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Solomon Islands | 61 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Taiwan | 58 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| South Korea | 57 | N/A | 53 | 50 | N/A | 56 |
| India | 56 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 55 | 62 |
| China | 53 | 54 | 53 | 56 | 56 | 61 |
| Egypt | 52 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Indonesia | 51 | 54 | 49 | 50 | 47 | 50 |
| Afghanistan | 37 | 40 | 37 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Iraq | 35 | 40 | N/A | 37 | 36 | 44 |
| Iran | 35 | 38 | 38 | 38 | 34 | 43 |
| Libya | 35 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| North Korea | 34 | 37 | 30 | N/A | N/A | 43 |

[#] In 2006, this question asked respondents about their feelings towards ‘countries *and* peoples’.

GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Table 8: Now about global warming. There is a controversy over what the countries of the world, including Australia, should do about the problem of global warming. I’m going to read you three statements. Please tell me which statement comes closest to your own point of view.

| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2006 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| Global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs | 41% | 46% | 48% | 60% | 68% |
| The problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost | 40% | 40% | 39% | 32% | 24% |
| Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs | 19% | 13% | 13% | 8% | 7% |
| Don’t know/Refused | 1% | 1% | 1% | * | 1% |

EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE WITH CROSS-ANALYSIS BY ATTITUDES TO GLOBAL WARMING

Table 9: And now about the current Federal government’s efforts to address climate change. Do you think the current Federal government has done a good job, or a poor job, in addressing climate change?

IF GOOD - Is that very good or somewhat good?

IF POOR - Is that very poor or somewhat poor?

| | Total | Global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs | The problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost | Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs |
|--------------------|------------|--|--|--|
| Very good | 3% | 5% | 1% | 2% |
| Somewhat good | 20% | 25% | 17% | 14% |
| Total good | 23% | 30% | 18% | 16% |
| Somewhat poor | 36% | 40% | 44% | 13% |
| Very poor | 39% | 30% | 37% | 63% |
| Total poor | 75% | 70% | 81% | 76% |
| Don't know/No view | 3% | 1% | 2% | 9% |

WILLINGNESS TO PAY TO HELP SOLVE CLIMATE CHANGE

Table 10: And on climate change, one suggested way of tackling climate change is to increase the price of electricity. If it helped solve climate change how much extra would you be willing to pay each month on your electricity bill? Please say an amount, rounded off to the nearest ten dollars.

| | Total | | | 18 to 29 years | | | 30 to 44 years | | | 45 to 59 years | | | 60 years or older | | |
|------------------------------|-------|------|------|----------------|------|------|----------------|------|------|----------------|------|------|-------------------|------|------|
| | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 |
| Not prepared to pay anything | 39% | 33% | 21% | 22% | 23% | 19% | 37% | 31% | 21% | 49% | 35% | 21% | 45% | 43% | 23% |
| \$1 to \$10 | 19% | 25% | 32% | 17% | 25% | 27% | 22% | 21% | 26% | 13% | 25% | 34% | 24% | 29% | 43% |
| \$11 to \$20 | 13% | 15% | 20% | 15% | 19% | 16% | 11% | 18% | 27% | 13% | 15% | 17% | 14% | 10% | 17% |
| \$21 or more | 22% | 19% | 19% | 27% | 23% | 27% | 27% | 26% | 22% | 20% | 19% | 22% | 12% | 9% | 7% |
| Don't know/Refused | 8% | 7% | 8% | 19% | 10% | 12% | 3% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 6% | 7% | 5% | 8% | 10% |

NUCLEAR POWER WITH CROSS-ANALYSIS BY ATTITUDES TOWARDS GLOBAL WARMING

Table 11: Now about nuclear power in Australia and cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Are you personally in favour or against Australia building nuclear power plants as part of its plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions? Is that strongly or somewhat?

| | Total | Global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs | The problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost | Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs |
|------------------------|------------|--|--|--|
| Strongly in favour | 13% | 8% | 15% | 18% |
| Somewhat in favour | 22% | 20% | 21% | 28% |
| Total in favour | 35% | 28% | 36% | 46% |
| Somewhat against | 16% | 19% | 15% | 15% |
| Strongly against | 46% | 51% | 45% | 38% |
| Total against | 62% | 70% | 60% | 53% |
| Don't know/No view | 3% | 2% | 4% | 1% |

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES

Table 12: Thinking now about Australia's alliance relationship with the United States. How important is our alliance relationship with the United States for Australia's security?

| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Very important | 59% | 56% | 55% | 42% | 36% | 42% | 45% |
| Fairly important | 23% | 30% | 30% | 34% | 27% | 28% | 27% |
| Total: very and fairly important | 82% | 86% | 85% | 76% | 63% | 70% | 72% |
| Somewhat important | 15% | 12% | 12% | 20% | 27% | 22% | 20% |
| Not at all important | 3% | 2% | 2% | 4% | 9% | 8% | 7% |
| Don't know | * | * | * | - | 1% | 1% | 1% |

Table 13: I am now going to read you some different arguments about the alliance relationship with the United States. For each one please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree.

| | Australians and Americans share many common values and ideals. A strong alliance is a natural extension of this | Without the alliance Australia would have to spend much more money on its defence | Australia's alliance with the United States makes it more likely Australia will be drawn into a war in Asia that would not be in Australia's interests | The alliance relationship with the United States makes Australia safer from attack or pressure from China | US foreign policy is increasingly at odds with Australian interests | The United States is in decline relative to China and so the alliance is of decreasing importance | Australia is able to defend itself without the assistance of the United States |
|------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Agree | 78% | 75% | 73% | 57% | 49% | 41% | 21% |
| Disagree | 21% | 25% | 25% | 39% | 41% | 54% | 77% |
| Don't know/ No view | 1% | 1% | 2% | 4% | 10% | 5% | 2% |

Table 14: Still on the alliance relationship with the United States. Are you personally in favour or against Australia allowing the United States to base US military forces here in Australia? Is that strongly or somewhat?

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Strongly in favour | 20% |
| Somewhat in favour | 35% |
| Total in favour | 55% |
| Somewhat against | 21% |
| Strongly against | 22% |
| Total against | 43% |
| Don't know/No view | 2% |

CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIA

Table 15: And now about Chinese investment in Australia. Overall, do you think the Australian government is:

| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Allowing too much investment from China | 57% | 57% | 50% |
| Allowing about the right amount of investment from China | 35% | 34% | 42% |
| Not allowing enough investment from China | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Don't know | 5% | 6% | 5% |

ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHINA

Table 16: Now a few more questions about China. Please say whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:

| | China's growth has been good for Australia | | | China's aim is to dominate Asia | | | Australia should join with other countries to limit China's influence | | | The United States should give China a larger say in regional affairs | | | Australia is doing enough to pressure China to improve human rights | | | Australia's interests would not be harmed if China gained more power and influence | | |
|-----------------------|--|------------|------------|---------------------------------|------------|------------|---|------------|------------|--|------------|------------|---|------------|------------|--|------------|------------|
| | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 |
| Strongly agree | 24% | 22% | 13% | 23% | 27% | 20% | 14% | 15% | 13% | 8% | 6% | 5% | 6% | 4% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 4% |
| Agree | 51% | 51% | 50% | 42% | 42% | 40% | 36% | 40% | 38% | 38% | 39% | 39% | 30% | 25% | 30% | 29% | 29% | 29% |
| Total agree | 75% | 73% | 63% | 65% | 69% | 60% | 50% | 55% | 51% | 46% | 45% | 44% | 36% | 29% | 35% | 34% | 35% | 33% |
| Disagree | 17% | 19% | 27% | 24% | 22% | 28% | 41% | 34% | 39% | 38% | 39% | 37% | 39% | 46% | 44% | 43% | 43% | 46% |
| Strongly disagree | 5% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 6% | 7% | 9% | 10% | 11% | 19% | 20% | 18% | 21% | 20% | 18% |
| Total disagree | 22% | 24% | 33% | 30% | 27% | 34% | 47% | 40% | 46% | 47% | 49% | 48% | 58% | 66% | 62% | 64% | 63% | 64% |
| Don't know | 3% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 4% | 6% | 3% | 4% | 3% | 7% | 6% | 7% | 6% | 5% | 3% | 4% | 2% | 3% |

CHINA AS A MILITARY THREAT

Table 17: Do you think it is likely or unlikely that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years?

IF LIKELY - Is that very likely or somewhat likely?

IF UNLIKELY - Is that very unlikely or somewhat unlikely?

| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Very likely | 18% | 19% | 15% |
| Somewhat likely | 26% | 27% | 26% |
| Total likely | 44% | 46% | 41% |
| Somewhat unlikely | 35% | 36% | 38% |
| Very unlikely | 20% | 16% | 19% |
| Total unlikely | 55% | 52% | 57% |
| Don't know | 1% | 2% | 3% |

Table 18: Here are some reasons other people have given as to why China might become a military threat to Australia. For each one please tell me whether you agree or disagree it is a reason why you personally think China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years.

Asked only of those agreeing it is ‘very likely’ or ‘somewhat likely’ ‘that China will become a military threat to Australia in the next 20 years’ (398 respondents).

| | China and the United States are likely to come into conflict in future and Australia will end up being drawn into the conflict through its alliance with the United States | China views Australia as a country it could invade in future to secure land and resources | China's recent actions have been assertive and suggest it is going to be a militarily aggressive power | China has been expanding and modernising its military, suggesting it is preparing for conflict |
|------------|--|---|--|--|
| Agree | 87% | 82% | 78% | 77% |
| Disagree | 12% | 17% | 19% | 17% |
| Don't know | 1% | 1% | 4% | 6% |

TERRORISM

Table 19: Following the 2002 Bali bombings, in which 88 Australians died, do you think the ability of terrorists to launch another major attack against Australians is now greater, the same, or less than at the time of the 2002 Bali bombings?

| | |
|------------|-----|
| Greater | 19% |
| The same | 60% |
| Less | 20% |
| Don't know | 1% |

LIBYA

Table 20: Now about situations like Libya where a government attacks its own citizens. In situations like Libya, are you personally in favour or against the UN Security Council authorising military intervention to try to stop the government from attacking its own citizens?

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| In favour | 82% |
| Against | 16% |
| Don't know/No view | 2% |

AFGHANISTAN

Table 21: Now about Afghanistan. Should Australia continue to be involved militarily in Afghanistan?

| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 40% | 43% | 46% | 42% | 46% |
| No | 59% | 54% | 51% | 56% | 46% |
| Don't know | 2% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 8% |
| Refused | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1% |

Table 22: I am now going to read you a few different arguments that have been made as to why Australia should remain militarily involved in Afghanistan. For each one please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree it is a reason why Australia should remain militarily involved in Afghanistan.

| | If Australia and its allies withdrew from Afghanistan Afghan women might have their rights seriously violated by an extremist government | Australia participated in the invasion of Afghanistan, so we have an obligation to stay on until the job is done | Australia is a US ally and we should stay in Afghanistan as long as the United States does, so the US will continue to regard us as a reliable ally | If Australia's military withdraws from Afghanistan there is a higher risk that terrorists will be able to mount an attack against Australian civilians in Australia or elsewhere around the world |
|------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Agree | 72% | 57% | 38% | 37% |
| Disagree | 24% | 42% | 61% | 62% |
| Don't know/ No view | 4% | 1% | 1% | 2% |

WAR ON THE KOREAN PENINSULAR

Table 23: Now about North Korea. If North Korea provoked a full-scale war with South Korea would you personally be in favour or against Australia joining other allies like the United States in sending military forces to defend South Korea against North Korea?

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| In favour | 52% |
| Against | 45% |
| Don't know/No view | 3% |

Table 24: What if China intervened to support North Korea against South Korea? Would you then personally be in favour or against Australia joining other allies like the United States in sending military forces to defend South Korea against North Korea and China?

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| In favour | 56% |
| Against | 40% |
| Don't know/No view | 5% |

ASYLUM SEEKERS

Table 25: Now a question about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat. Are you concerned or not concerned about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat or do you have no view on this?

IF CONCERNED - Is that very concerned or somewhat concerned?

| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Very concerned | 51% | 52% | 43% |
| Somewhat concerned | 21% | 26% | 33% |
| Total concerned | 72% | 78% | 76% |
| Not concerned | 23% | 16% | 21% |
| No view/Don't know | 5% | 7% | 4% |

Table 26: I am now going to read you a few different arguments that have been made about unauthorised asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat. For each one please say whether you personally agree or disagree.

Asked only of those 'very concerned' or 'somewhat concerned' 'about unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat' (664 respondents).

| | It is dangerous for unauthorised asylum seekers to come to Australia by boat as they might be badly injured or killed during the boat trip | Unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat are jumping the queue and getting in ahead of other asylum seekers wanting to come to Australia | Unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat pose a potential security risk to Australia | Too much money is spent processing unauthorised asylum seekers that arrive by boat in detention centres | The attention that the issue of unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat receives is not justified by the relatively small numbers that arrive here by boat | Unauthorised asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat are often fleeing war and conflict and Australia should give them a chance to set up a new life in a safe country | International treaty obligations mean Australia has to accept refugees regardless of how they arrive here |
|------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Agree | 92% | 88% | 86% | 85% | 44% | 43% | 32% |
| Disagree | 7% | 10% | 13% | 13% | 51% | 53% | 66% |
| Don't know/ No view | 1% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 5% | 5% | 3% |

INDONESIA

Table 27: I am going to read out two statements about Australia's relations with Indonesia. Please tell me which one you agree with more.

| | 2011 | 2006 |
|--|------|------|
| It is very important that Australia and Indonesia work to develop a close relationship | 77% | 77% |
| Australia and Indonesia are too different to develop a close relationship | 22% | 22% |
| Don't know | 1% | 1% |

Table 28: I am going to read out a number of statements about Indonesia. Please say how much you agree or disagree with each one, using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you strongly disagree and 10 means you strongly agree.

| | Indonesia is essentially controlled by the military | | Indonesia is a dangerous source of Islamic terrorism | | Australia is right to worry about Indonesia as a military threat | | Indonesian cooperation with Australia has been important in helping us contain the terrorist threat in our region | | Indonesia is an emerging democracy | | Indonesia helps Australia combat people smuggling | |
|------------|---|------|--|------|--|------|---|------|------------------------------------|------|---|------|
| | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 |
| 0 to 2 | 3% | 3% | 7% | 7% | 11% | 12% | 9% | 14% | 12% | 14% | 24% | N/A |
| 3 to 7 | 52% | 52% | 53% | 52% | 55% | 50% | 62% | 61% | 70% | 67% | 64% | N/A |
| 8 to 10 | 40% | 39% | 39% | 38% | 33% | 38% | 26% | 23% | 14% | 15% | 9% | N/A |
| Don't know | 4% | 6% | 2% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 2% | 5% | 5% | 2% | N/A |
| Mean | 6.9 | 6.8 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 5.8 | 5.4 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 4.3 | N/A |

Table 29: I am now going to read out a number of statements about Indonesia and Australia.# Using the same scale of 0 to 10, please say how much you agree or disagree with each one, where 0 means you strongly disagree and 10 means you strongly agree.

| | Indonesia benefits from having Australia as a stable and prosperous neighbour | | Australia has shown itself to be a reliable long-term friend of Indonesia | | Australia's policy towards Indonesia and the region is shaped too heavily by its alliance with the United States | | Indonesia is right to worry that Australia is seeking to separate the province of West Papua from Indonesia | | Australia has a tendency to try to interfere in Indonesia's affairs too much | |
|------------|---|------|---|------|--|------|---|------|--|------|
| | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 | 2011 | 2006 |
| 0 to 2 | 2% | 2% | 1% | 4% | 8% | 9% | 15% | 17% | 17% | 19% |
| 3 to 7 | 41% | 43% | 54% | 50% | 72% | 53% | 63% | 58% | 69% | 59% |
| 8 to 10 | 55% | 54% | 44% | 44% | 15% | 35% | 11% | 15% | 11% | 21% |
| Don't know | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 5% | 3% | 11% | 10% | 2% | 2% |
| Mean | 7.5 | 7.4 | 7.2 | 7.0 | 5.3 | 6.3 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 4.6 | 5.1 |

In 2006 the introductory sentence was 'I am going to read out a number of statements about Australia.'

Notes

- ¹ Pew Global Attitudes Project, World's leading economic power, <http://pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=17&survey=12&response=China&mode=chart>.
- ² Media release, Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness, 10 November 2010, http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2010/kr_mr_101116.html.
- ³ AusAID, About Australia's aid program, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/makediff/default.cfm>.
- ⁴ Statement by the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, Australia's international development assistance program 2011-12, 10 May 2011, http://cache.treasury.gov.au/budget/2011-12/content/download/ms_ausaid.pdf and Budget, Statement 6: Expenses and net capital investment, http://budget.australia.gov.au/2011-12/content/download/bp1_bst6.pdf.
- ⁵ WorldPublicOpinion.org, American opinion on foreign aid, 30 November 2010, http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/nov10/ForeignAid_Nov10_quaire.pdf.
- ⁶ Chicago Council on Global Affairs, *Constrained internationalism: adapting to new realities*, p 38, http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/POS_Topline%20Reports/POS%202010/Global%20Views%202010.pdf.
- ⁷ Robert Gates, Australia-United States Ministerial (AUSMIN) joint press conference, 8 November 2010, http://foreignminister.gov.au/transcripts/2010/kr_tr_101108_press_conf.html.
- ⁸ Paul Kelly, Deeper US alliance in response to strident China, *The Australian*, 10 November 2010, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/deeper-us-alliance-in-response-to-strident-china/story-e6frg6zo-1225950377275>.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Chicago Council on Global Affairs, *Constrained internationalism: adapting to new realities*, p 13, http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/POS_Topline%20Reports/POS%202010/Global%20Views%202010.pdf.
- ¹¹ Ivan Cook, *The Lowy Institute Poll 2006: Australia, Indonesia and the world*, The Lowy Institute, October 2006, <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/Publication.asp?pid=470>.
- ¹² DFAT, Indonesia country brief, http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/indonesia/indonesia_brief.html.

About the Lowy Institute Poll

The Lowy Institute Poll was conducted in Australia between 30 March and 14 April 2011. A number of the questions in the poll were first asked in previous Lowy Institute polls, or have been adapted from questions asked in those years. Repeating questions in successive years allows us to compare public opinion on a single issue over time, building trend data on important international policy issues.

Some of our questions this year are identical to questions asked previously by other survey organisations, which has allowed for the comparison of public opinion internationally.

Methodology

For this opinion poll, Field Works Market Research conducted 1,002 interviews between 30 March and 14 April 2011. Survey interviews were conducted by telephone. The sample was designed to be nationally representative of all Australians 18 years and older. Quotas were set for each state and territory, with broad age-group and gender quotas. Interviewers continued making calls until each quota was filled.

Within each geographic area, telephone numbers were randomly selected from a regularly updated active residential phone number database. The results were then weighted to reflect the demographic profile of the Australian population aged 18 years and over, using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

These weights were used in the production of all the tables for this report. On a truly random sample of 1,002 the margin of error is 3.1%, which means there is a 95% chance that responses from the sample fall within a range of 3.1% either side of the notional collective response of the whole population. Since this sample was stratified (by state/territory, age-group and sex), the error figure is a guide only. Where the results for a sub-sample are reported, the margin of error is greater.

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CONTACT US

31 BLIGH STREET SYDNEY NSW 2000
TEL: +61 2 8238 9000 FAX: +61 2 8238 9005
PO BOX H-159 AUSTRALIA SQUARE NSW 1215
ABN 40 102 792 174
TWITTER: @LOWYINSTITUTE
WWW.LOWYINSTITUTE.ORG

LOWY INSTITUTE
FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY