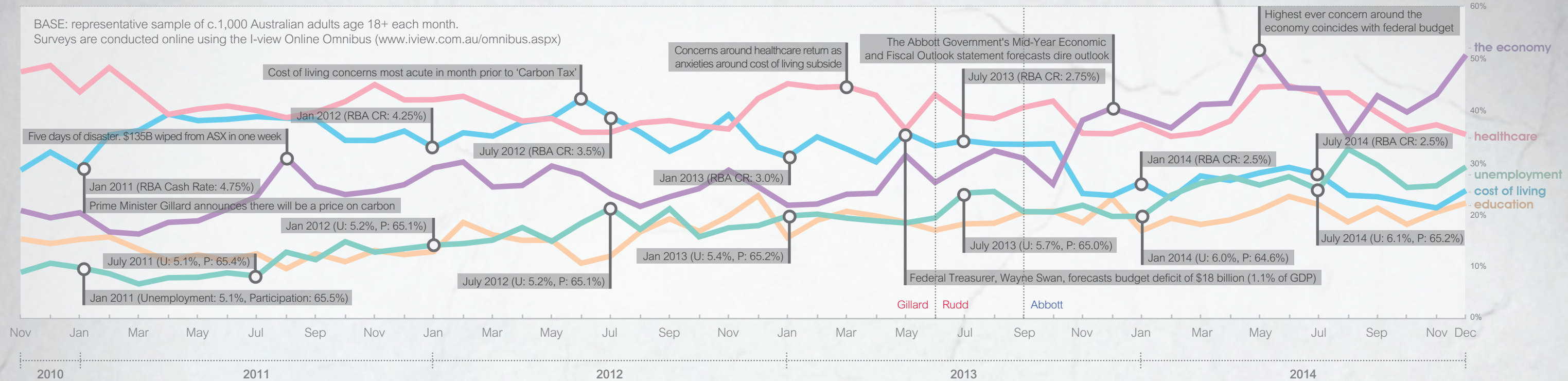
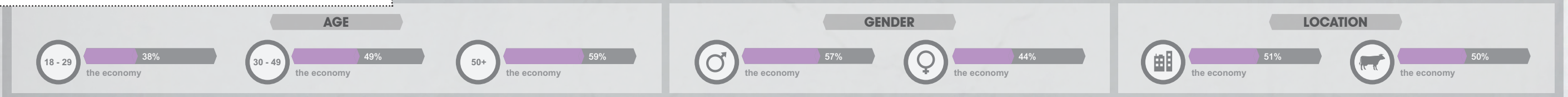


THE TOP ISSUES FACING AUSTRALIA DECEMBER 2014

What would you say are the three most important issues facing Australia?



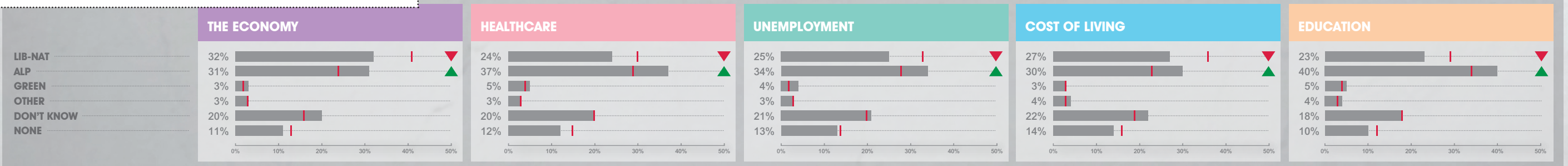
MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR...



MOST CAPABLE OF MANAGING...

Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues

▲ = Sep 2013
▲ ▼ denotes significant difference (Sep 2013 vs Dec 2014)



IN SUMMARY



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The turn of a year represents a sensible opportunity to pause and reflect on the previous twelve months. To analyse the knowns, theorise what it all means and place bets about what the next year will bring. When reflecting on the top issues facing Australia, 2014 ended as it started. 'The Economy' was – and is – the top issue facing the nation. 'Healthcare' was – and is – in second place. Bookends. However, there is more to the story.

While it is true that the issues that occupied Australians have been constant in 2014, relative anxiety around 'The Economy' has heightened over the year. In December, 51% selected 'The Economy' as a top issue

facing the nation. Only once before – in post-budget May 2014 – has an issue reached majority concern. On that occasion the issue was also 'The Economy'. Historically, the distance between the two top issues facing the nation has been negligible – around five percent. Currently, there is a 15% gap. It has been more than four years since we observed such a distance between first and second place. To cap it off, 'The Economy' was the top issue facing the nation in ten of 2014's twelve months.

For a few years, Australia was the darling of the post-GFC economic world. And, while it is true that we experienced post-GFC growth superior to most

OECD countries, Australians are observing evidence that the tide is receding. Worries about the sustainability of our economy as we've known it – and the lifestyle it affords – speak directly to our national identity. Sensibly, Australians are greatly concerned.

As Australians concerns around 'The Economy' heightened through 2014, our confidence in the Coalition's ability to manage that issue deteriorated. An inverse relationship, if you will. In December, 32% of Australians selected the Coalition as most capable to manage 'The Economy', relative to 41% when elected. While the Coalition is still regarded as most capable

to manage that issue, the distance between the Government and the ALP is a paper-thin one percent. In September 2013, that gap was 17% percent. The ALP is now considered the party most capable to manage the balance of the top issues facing Australia.

While the turn of a year may represent an opportunity to reflect, analyse and theorise, the only thing worth placing a bet on is that 'The Economy' shows no sign of disappearing off Australians' list of top concerns any time soon.

ALL ISSUES FACING AUSTRALIA DECEMBER 2014

What would you say are the three most important issues facing Australia?

	2010	2011				2012				2013						2014											
	Nov - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
The Economy	20%	18%	19%	27%	25%	28%	27%	23%	26%	23%	27%	31%	26%	38%	40%	39%	37%	41%	41%	52%	44%	44%	35%	43%	40%	43%	51%
Healthcare	48%	45%	40%	39%	43%	42%	37%	37%	39%	45%	41%	39%	42%	36%	35%	37%	35%	36%	38%	44%	45%	43%	43%	39%	36%	37%	35%
Unemployment	10%	8%	8%	11%	14%	14%	17%	20%	17%	20%	19%	23%	20%	22%	20%	20%	24%	26%	27%	26%	27%	25%	33%	29%	25%	29%	
Cost of Living	30%	33%	38%	38%	35%	34%	39%	36%	36%	33%	33%	34%	34%	24%	24%	26%	23%	27%	26%	28%	29%	28%	24%	23%	22%	21%	25%
Education	15%	15%	11%	11%	12%	16%	13%	16%	20%	18%	18%	19%	21%	18%	23%	17%	19%	18%	19%	21%	23%	22%	19%	21%	18%	20%	22%
Crime	26%	29%	28%	27%	27%	26%	27%	30%	29%	30%	29%	27%	31%	38%	27%	35%	32%	29%	29%	21%	17%	21%	25%	21%	20%	21%	17%
Housing	24%	23%	22%	19%	21%	19%	20%	19%	18%	18%	17%	17%	19%	17%	19%	16%	17%	15%	16%	14%	14%	15%	13%	14%	15%	15%	17%
Immigration	19%	22%	22%	24%	24%	20%	19%	27%	23%	21%	25%	23%	18%	26%	24%	24%	23%	23%	22%	18%	16%	20%	19%	19%	22%	20%	16%
Poverty	10%	9%	9%	9%	11%	9%	9%	11%	10%	10%	11%	10%	10%	10%	11%	8%	12%	9%	11%	13%	16%	15%	17%	12%	14%	13%	14%
Environment	20%	20%	18%	18%	16%	15%	13%	12%	12%	13%	12%	12%	15%	10%	10%	9%	13%	11%	11%	8%	10%	9%	8%	7%	10%	10%	12%
Defence	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%	5%	3%	3%	2%	4%	10%	15%	23%	17%	10%
Drug Abuse	13%	13%	12%	11%	11%	11%	11%	12%	12%	13%	12%	11%	11%	16%	15%	21%	18%	18%	14%	10%	9%	11%	12%	13%	9%	11%	10%
Taxation	6%	6%	7%	9%	7%	8%	9%	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	14%	11%	9%	7%	9%	9%	10%	8%
Transport	10%	12%	11%	10%	9%	10%	10%	9%	10%	10%	11%	9%	8%	7%	8%	7%	9%	7%	6%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	7%
Racism	6%	7%	5%	7%	4%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	6%	7%	7%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	10%	7%	13%	9%	7%
Population	10%	9%	9%	8%	8%	8%	7%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%	8%	7%	9%	7%	7%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%
Personal Debt	15%	12%	14%	13%	12%	12%	14%	10%	11%	10%	10%	9%	9%	6%	8%	6%	8%	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%
Petrol Prices	9%	13%	18%	13%	15%	15%	18%	12%	12%	12%	9%	13%	13%	8%	8%	11%	8%	11%	9%	8%	8%	8%	5%	7%	4%	6%	5%
Indigenous Issues	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%

To subscribe to this free infographic and/or the Victorian, New South Wales or Western Australian versions (Top Issues Facing the State), please email julia.knapp@ipsos.com.

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