

Obama's biggest challenges

An Australian Perspective

November 2008

Methodology

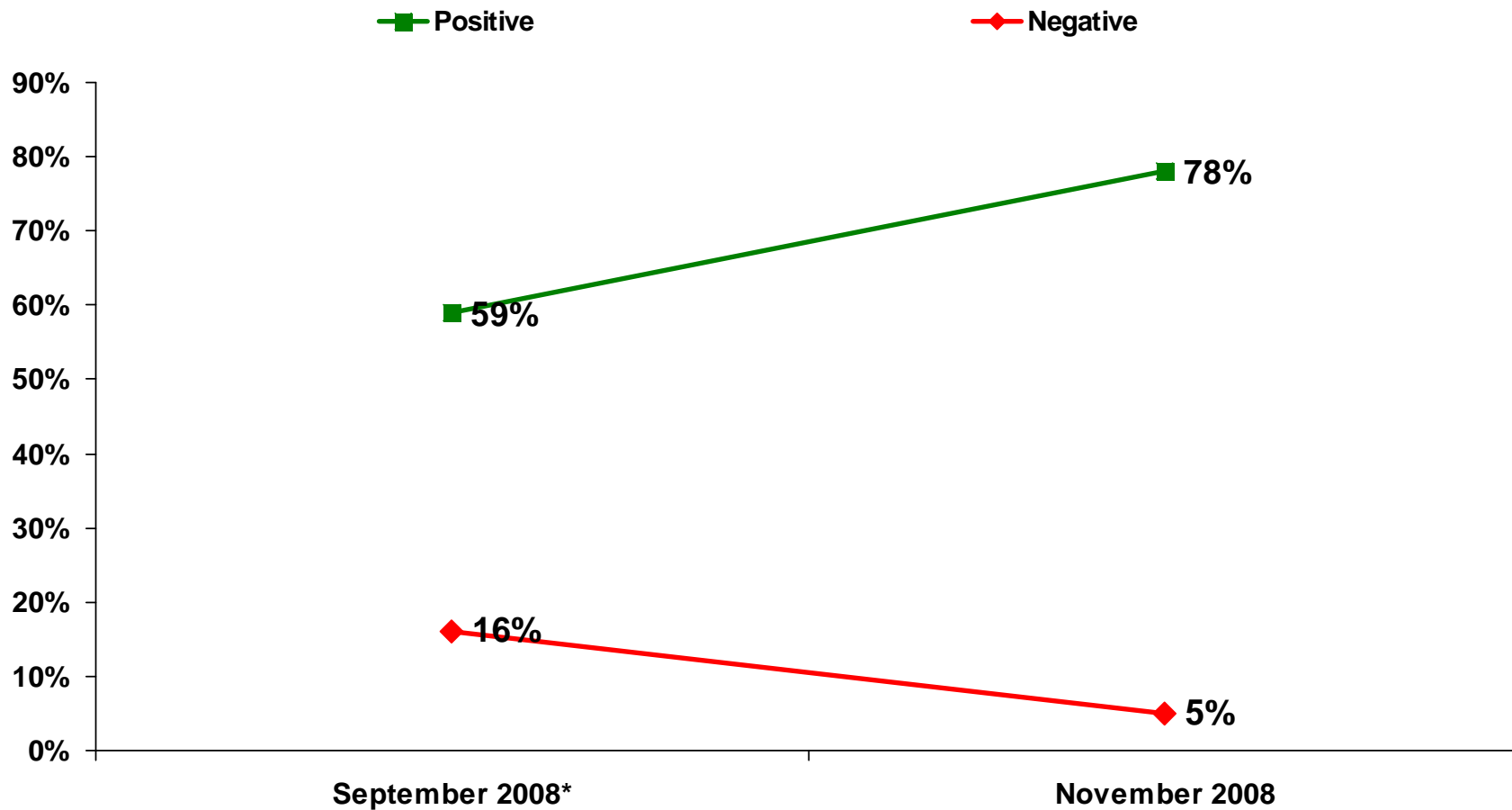
- 1000 online interviews
- Age: 18+
- Fieldwork: 14-20 November 2008
- Where applicable, comparisons with September findings (19-24 September 2008) are included
- Data is weighted and matched with ABS census data to ensure a nationally representative sample
- Online panel members are primarily recruited offline and by invitation only ruling out self-selection issues associated with online methodologies
- Maximum margin of error at 95% confidence level: $\pm 3.1\%$

Key Findings

- Australians have a very high opinion of Barack Obama with 78% feeling positive about him (19% up since September) and only 5% feeling negative about him (11% down since September)
- Presumably, these positive feelings towards the president-elect can at least partly be attributed to the relief about the Bush years being over: 63% of Australians agree that “After 8 years of George W. Bush it can’t get any worse”
- About 1 in 2 Australians believe that “Barack Obama will be able to keep his promises”
- However he is facing a range of challenges, that can be grouped into 5 major themes:
 - Fixing the global financial crisis and the economy
 - Being the first black president and the threat of racist attacks
 - Domestic issues and particularly healthcare
 - Cleaning up the ‘mess’ from the previous government in general
 - Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Looking at foreign policy, most Australians would like Obama to stop military force and start talking, even with Iran and the Taliban
- An overwhelming majority of Australians is against sending more Australian troops to Afghanistan

Aussies feel positive about Obama

On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is strongly negative and 10 is strongly positive, please indicate how you feel about each of the following people. – US President-elect Barack Obama



63% agree that after Bush it can't get any worse...

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements about Barack Obama and the US.

After 8 years of George W. Bush, it can't get any worse

■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Mildly disagree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Unsure
 ■ Mildly agree
 ■ Strongly agree

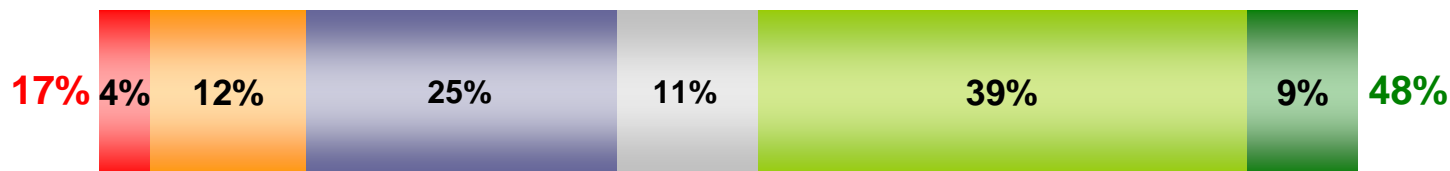


...and 48% even think Obama will be able to keep his promises

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements about Barack Obama and the US.

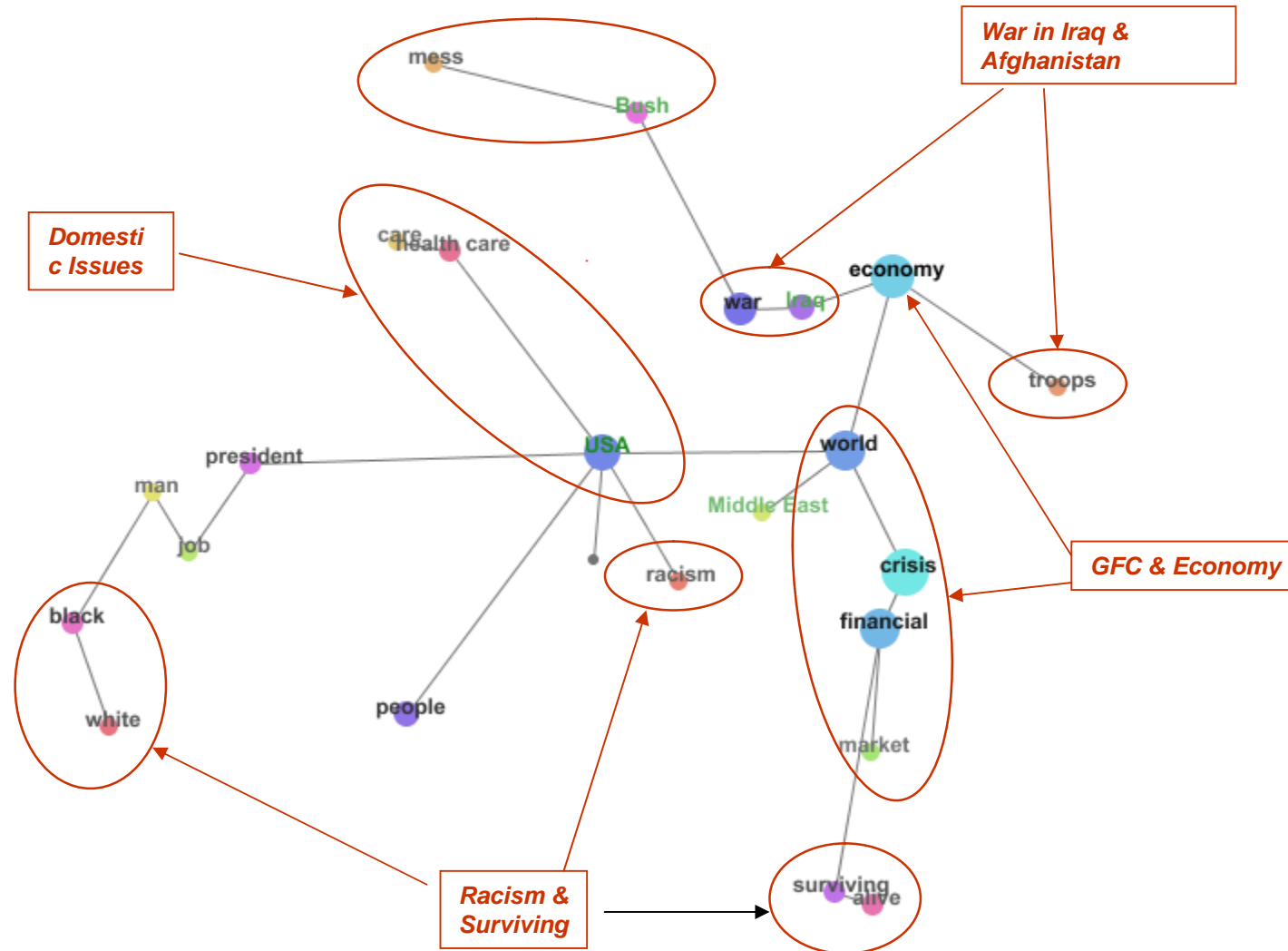
Barack Obama will be able to keep his promises

■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Mildly disagree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Unsure
 ■ Mildly agree
 ■ Strongly agree



But there are big challenges for Obama!

In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge Barack Obama is facing as US President?



Obama's biggest challenge(s)

In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge Barack Obama is facing as US President?

Fixing the global financial crisis and the economy

- Taking over after George Bush and fixing global crisis.
- The USA's economy often reflect the economy of the rest of the world. One of Barack Obama's main tasks when he assumes the Presidency is to try to sort out the current financial crisis.
- He has been elected president at a time of huge financial and economic crisis due to the greed of the financial institutions. He has an enormous job in trying to stabilise the county's economy and the well being of its citizens.
- Fixing the global economy in a way that increases the standard of living for ordinary Americans and reduces the divide between the rich and poor - including creating medical care & unemployment insurance for all people.
- To fix his country's economy and its impact on world economic activity as well as halt American military involvement in the middle east and let the UN peace keeping forces do their jobs.

Obama's biggest challenge(s)

In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge Barack Obama is facing as US President?

Racism – Surviving – Black and White

- Staying alive - seriously, there are some fanatical and extremist far right white supremacy groups in the States that would see it as a challenge to take him out.
- Being fully accepted as a black president but some of the extremist groups who are racially motivated and terrorist groups
- Being a Black man for start, will be challenging given racism is systemic.
- His biggest challenge is, to live. White rednecks will kill him
- He is the ground breaker, the first ever black U. S President. He will face intolerance and injustice, racism and hatred, slander and ridicule.
- Being the first black American president trying to get the 'white' Americans on board who are still racist.

Obama's biggest challenge(s)

In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge Barack Obama is facing as US President?

Domestic Issues – Particularly healthcare

- Focusing on education in the US and making government decisions on data and facts, not "faith" or feelings. Currently experts' advice has been ignored or distorted for political purposes, e.g. climate change denial, abstinence-only sex education, stem cell research restrictions, Aids funding to organisations that don't encourage condom use, etc.
- I think he has a big job ahead of him in reversing a lot of the Bush policy's. Unemployment and the general economy.
- Not being assassinated . . . and getting that country up and running again in regards to jobs and mortgages and being the number 1 power country.
- He has to manage the collapse of the economy, tackle universal health care and hopefully try to bridge the racial divide that prevails still in the USA.
- Health care in America and the difference between rich and poor
- To stand apart from past presidents with a passion for finding working solutions to global disrupt, domestic violence, child abuse, homelessness/poverty/ the war on drugs, the war in Iraq. his challenge will be to influence others in helping to create a peaceful and just world!

Obama's biggest challenge(s)

In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge Barack Obama is facing as US President?

Cleaning up the mess

- Cleaning up the mess that the previous government made.
- Undoing everything Bush did, especially the war in Iraq.
- The economy is an absolute mess in the US, that would be his main immediate challenge, however healthcare in the US and international relations are significant challenges as well.
- Undoing the mess of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars - they can not safely get everybody out. Fixing the appalling health care crisis and education problems.
- Trying to clean up the mess left by the previous president. George W has certainly made a mess and I cannot believe that he managed to retain his position they should have had a civil war and thrown him out.

Obama's biggest challenge(s)

In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge Barack Obama is facing as US President?

War in Iraq and Afghanistan

- The ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, world financial turmoil caused by the Americans, anti-American sentiment that is growing around the world.
- The fact that many people think he can walk on water. His main challenges after that are global warming, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Palestinian problem and stopping American aggression on a world stage.
- To halt American military involvement in the middle east and let the UN peace keeping forces do their jobs.
- The wars and trying to gain back the reputation of America and the president

Aussies don't want more war but more diplomacy...

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements about Barack Obama and the US.

Barack Obama should stop the US using military power and start talking, even with Iran and the Taliban in Afghanistan

■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Mildly disagree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Unsure
 ■ Mildly agree
 ■ Strongly agree

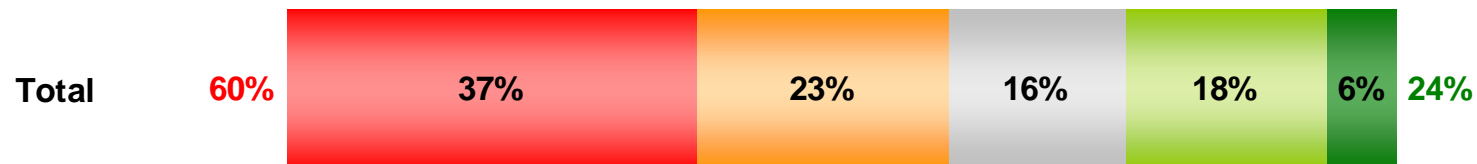


...and they are against sending more Aussie troops to Afghanistan

There are expectations that US President-elect Barack Obama is going to ask Australia to send more troops to Afghanistan.

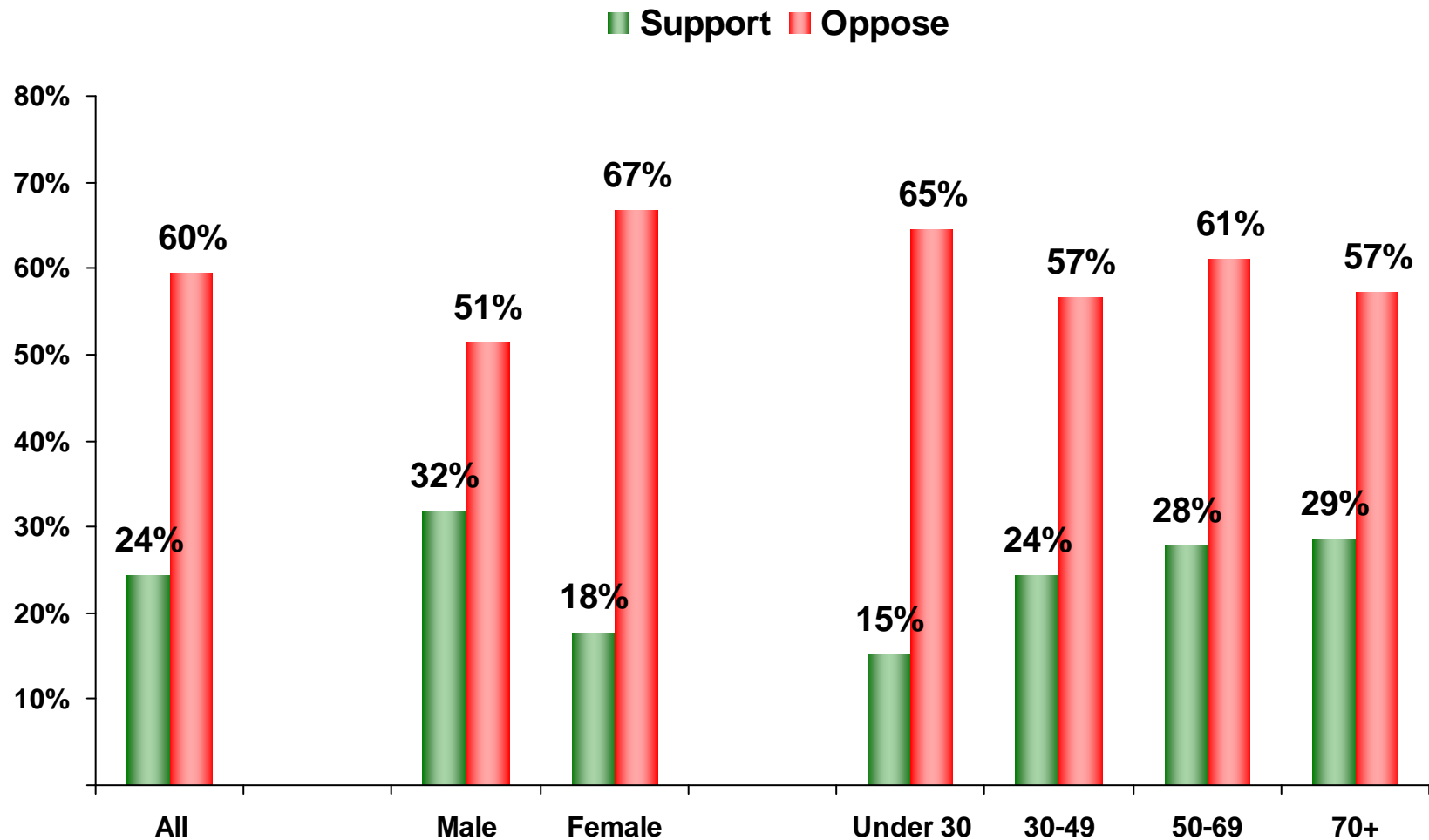
Would you support or oppose more Australian troops to be sent to Afghanistan?

■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Mildly oppose
 ■ Neither support nor oppose/unsure
 ■ Mildly support
 ■ Strongly support



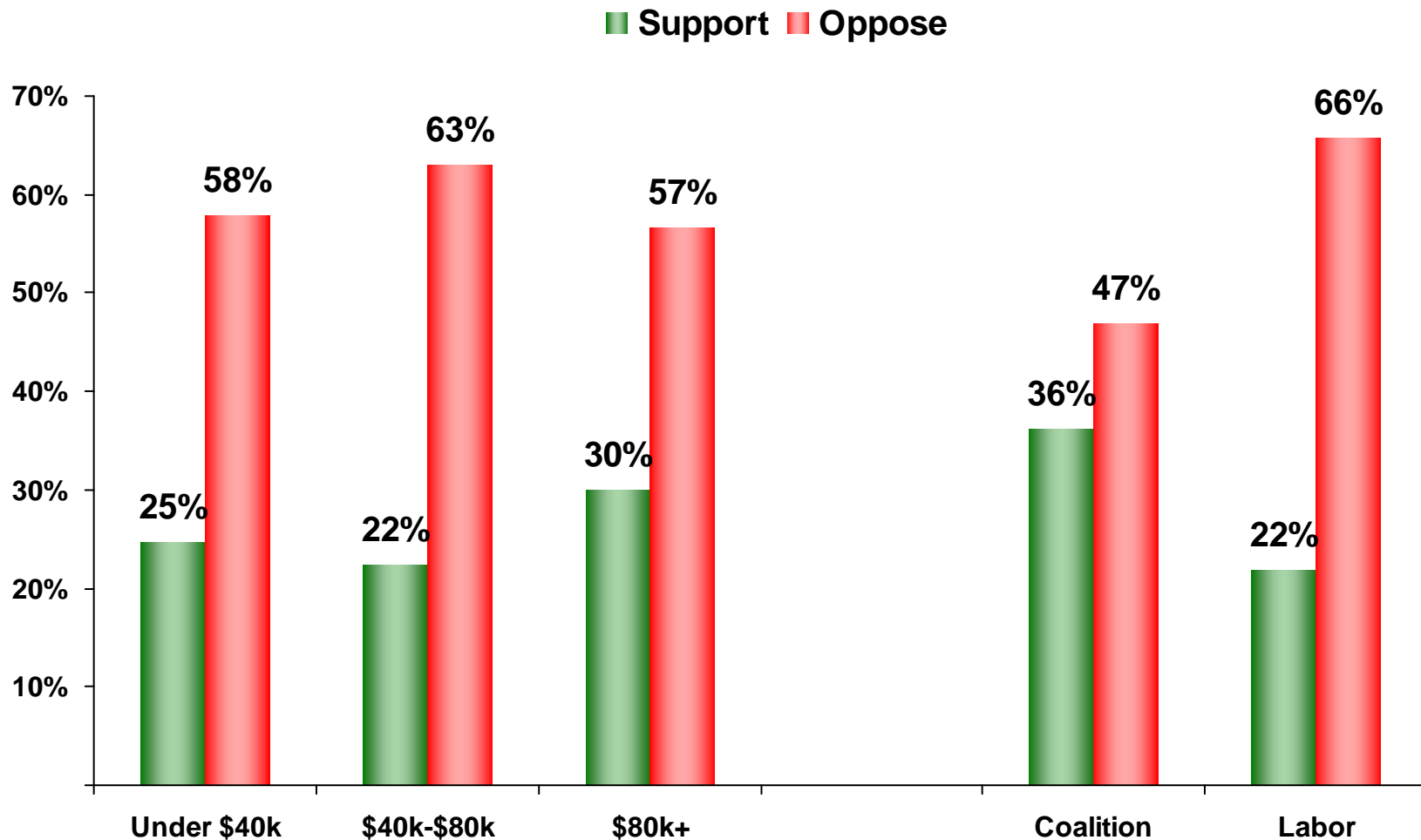
Stronger Opposition amongst women and younger Australians

Would you support or oppose more Australian troops to be sent to Afghanistan?



Bipartisan consensus against more troops

Would you support or oppose more Australian troops to be sent to Afghanistan?



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