



Level 2/55 Holt Street  
Surry Hills NSW 2010  
Ph: 02 9211 5300  
[www.welfarerights.org.au](http://www.welfarerights.org.au)

**Media Release**

**16 December 2010**

## **New poll urges action on tax loopholes for the wealthy**

More than four out of five Australians are looking for the Federal Government to discuss tax loopholes for the wealthy (84%) at the Tax Summit promised by July 2011. The poll was commissioned by Welfare Rights and conducted by the Australia Institute in November 2010. There were 1,294 survey responses.

Maree O'Halloran, Welfare Rights Network President, said the support for cracking down on loopholes used by the wealthy was ranked highest by all voters, regardless of their political preferences. Support was higher among Green voters (92%), but was also high among Coalition voters, at 82%, with 85% of Labor voters supporting a crackdown.

People aged over 55, who own much of the nation's wealth and who represent an increasingly powerful block of voters, were more strongly in support of looking at closing loopholes (90%) and stopping tax fraud (89%) than younger people aged 18-34 (74% and 64% respectively). Those on incomes less than incomes of \$40,000 per annum were much more likely than those on incomes over \$80,000 to support an examination of tax loopholes (90% compared to 76%).

Seventy per cent want to see welfare payments considered at the Tax Summit. Welfare organisations have urged the Treasurer to ensure that workforce disincentives and adequacy of payments are key issues at the Tax Summit.

These findings follow the recent unprecedented report by the OECD which questioned the adequacy of income support for unemployed people in Australia. Given the annual expenditure on Social Security, almost \$86 billion, it is critical that the Summit explore these issues.

Three out of four want income tax discussed. However, the poll appears to support the decision by the Treasurer to rule out discussing the GST at the Tax Summit, with 46% wanting the GST discussed and 42% opposed.

As reported in the media on 15 December 2010, 81% per cent want a bank super-profits tax to be discussed at the Summit.

The clear message from the poll is that Australians want their Government to discuss the preferential treatment given to the nation's wealthiest citizens, through negative gearing, unfair superannuation tax concessions and the treatment of trusts. The results show that the Government is too cautious in its ambitions about reforming the tax system.

These poll findings come as the distribution of household income in Australia is becoming more unequal. The latest ABS figures show that the bottom fifth has just 7 per cent of income, whereas the top 20 per cent has more than 40 per cent.

For comment: Maree O'Halloran, NWRN President: 0417 672 104 or Gerard Thomas: Policy and Media Officer: 0425 296 882.

Copies of the survey results are available.

The NWRN is a network of services throughout Australia that provide free and independent information, advice and representation to individuals about Social Security law and its administration through Centrelink. For member details, services and information visit:  
[www.welfarerights.org.au](http://www.welfarerights.org.au)

## Survey results

Note: N = 1,294. Results are post weighted by age and gender based the profile of the adult Australian population. Small variations in sample size can occur as a result of the weighting process. Survey conducted in November 2010 by the Australia Institute for Welfare Rights.

### The Government has agreed to hold a tax summit next year. In which of the following areas would you like to see changes discussed?

	The GST	Mining super-profits tax	Bank super-profits tax	Welfare payments	Super-annuation tax	Income tax	Company tax	Tax fraud/tax cheating	Tax loopholes for the wealthy	Carbon tax
Yes	46%	67%	81%	70%	58%	75%	63%	76%	84%	49%
No	42%	18%	10%	19%	26%	15%	18%	12%	9%	30%
Not sure	13%	16%	9%	11%	16%	10%	19%	12%	8%	21%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

#### Age

	18-34	35-54	55+	All
The GST	48%	44%	44%	45%
Mining super-profits tax	60%	69%	71%	67%
Bank super-profits tax	73%	85%	84%	81%
Welfare payments	61%	73%	75%	70%
Superannuation tax	54%	63%	54%	57%
Income tax	66%	79%	79%	75%
Company tax	55%	66%	69%	64%
Tax fraud/tax cheating	64%	76%	89%	76%
Tax loopholes for the wealthy	74%	86%	90%	84%
Carbon tax	53%	50%	44%	49%
None of these	10%	3%	1%	4%

#### State

	NSW	QLD	VIC	SA	WA	TAS	NT*	ACT	All
The GST	46%	39%	47%	51%	50%	42%	53%	44%	46%
Mining super-profits tax	66%	59%	65%	78%	66%	70%	42%	70%	65%
Bank super-profits tax	79%	84%	75%	84%	85%	82%	90%	80%	80%
Welfare payments	71%	72%	64%	64%	74%	75%	82%	72%	70%
Superannuation tax	56%	62%	59%	56%	55%	53%	83%	57%	58%
Income tax	74%	74%	75%	74%	77%	72%	86%	76%	75%
Company tax	64%	64%	62%	67%	64%	66%	71%	59%	64%
Tax fraud/tax cheating	74%	74%	76%	77%	75%	88%	100%	73%	76%
Tax loopholes for the wealthy	82%	82%	85%	85%	81%	90%	90%	82%	83%
Carbon tax	50%	39%	46%	58%	51%	47%	31%	61%	48%
None of these	5%	3%	5%	5%	3%	5%	0%	5%	4%

\* note: Results for the NT should be treated with caution due to the very small sample size (n=11)

### Last election vote

	Coalition	Labor	Greens	Other/Not answered	All
The GST	40%	47%	44%	52%	45%
Mining super-profits tax	59%	72%	79%	63%	67%
Bank super-profits tax	77%	83%	87%	78%	81%
Welfare payments	74%	72%	69%	62%	70%
Superannuation tax	57%	59%	55%	56%	57%
Income tax	76%	74%	76%	74%	75%
Company tax	65%	62%	65%	63%	64%
Tax fraud/tax cheating	81%	76%	69%	74%	76%
Tax loopholes for the wealthy	82%	85%	92%	79%	84%
Carbon tax	40%	56%	68%	42%	49%
None of these	3%	5%	1%	7%	4%

### Income

	< 40K	40 - 80K	>80K	All
The GST	48%	46%	43%	45%
Mining super-profits tax	68%	68%	64%	67%
Bank super-profits tax	83%	81%	78%	81%
Welfare payments	73%	71%	67%	70%
Superannuation tax	53%	59%	59%	57%
Income tax	71%	79%	72%	75%
Company tax	67%	64%	60%	64%
Tax fraud/tax cheating	82%	77%	72%	76%
Tax loopholes for the wealthy	90%	86%	76%	84%
Carbon tax	48%	51%	47%	49%
None of these	4%	3%	6%	4%