

# Conservatives Closer to Majority Government as NDP Ties Liberals

*Little movement on leadership traits; Dion fails to get any traction.*

[CALGARY - Sept. 27, 2008] - The governing Conservative Party stands a good chance of forming a majority administration next month, as the Liberal Party is tied with the New Democratic Party (NDP) for the first time in the campaign, a new *Toronto Star* / Angus Reid poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,508 adults, 40 per cent of decided voters would back the Tories in the Oct. 14 federal ballot, a two-point increase in a week and four points above the party's share of the vote in the 2006 electoral process (36.3%).

The Grits and the NDP are even at 21 per cent, with the Liberals now nine points below their 2006 total (30.2%) and the New Democrats surpassing their last showing in a federal ballot (17.5%). The Bloc Québécois is once again in fourth place with 10 per cent, while the Greens fell to seven per cent.

As has been the case for the first three weeks of the campaign, the Tories remain dominant in Alberta (67%) and Manitoba and Saskatchewan (52%). In Ontario, the Conservatives have amassed a 12-point lead over the Liberals (39% to 27%), with the NDP a close third (25%).

The Bloc has regained a substantial advantage in Quebec (39%), with the Tories in second place (27%). Atlantic Canada gives the Liberals with a slight edge over the Conservatives. In British Columbia, the Tories are leading the NDP (43% to 24%), with the Liberals (18%) and Greens (13%) far behind. The Greens did not surpass the 10-point threshold in any other province.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: Con. 40%, Lib. 21%, NDP 21%, BQ 10%, Grn. 7%**
- **Approval Ratings: Harper 36%, Layton 35%, May 29%, Dion 12%**
- **Momentum Scores: May +2, Layton +2, Harper -18, Dion -20**
- **Bloc regains strength in Quebec and Liberals edge competition in Atlantic Canada; Tories lead everywhere else**

Full topline results are at the end of this release

*From September 24 to September 25, 2008 Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,508 adult Canadians. The margin of error for the total sample is +/-2.5 %, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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### *Retention Rates*

The survey shows the Conservatives holding on to 85 per cent of Canadians who supported them in the 2006 election. The retention rate for the Bloc is equally high at 82 per cent, while the NDP stands at 76 per cent. Just 59 per cent of decided voters who backed the Liberals in the last House of Commons ballot are sticking with the same party this time around, with support bleeding to the Tories (21%), the NDP (13%), and the Greens (6%).

### *Harper Gains, Rivals Stagnant*

As the third week of the federal campaign draws to a close, the approval rating for Conservative leader and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has improved to 36 per cent, up four points in a week, while his momentum score is -18 (12% of respondents say their opinion of Harper has improved, while 30% say it has worsened).

The approval rating for Liberal Party leader Stéphane Dion remains low (from 13% last week to 12% today). The opposition leader also posted a negative momentum score (-20).

NDP leader Jack Layton also dropped one point (33%), but kept a positive momentum score (+2). In Quebec, Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe has a 33 per cent approval rating, and a -6 momentum score. Green Party leader Elizabeth May still holds a positive momentum score (+2), and her approval rating improved to 29 per cent (+1).

In the preferred prime minister question, Harper remains ahead of his rivals with 33 per cent (+1), followed by Layton with 18 per cent (-1), Dion with nine per cent, Duceppe with three per cent, and May with two per cent.

Harper continues to get better numbers than his two main rivals in most qualities and characteristics. At least two-in-five respondents think of Harper as a strong and decisive leader (48%), who has a vision for Canada's future (48%), understands complex issues (43%), and who can manage the economy effectively (41%).

More than half of respondents (52%) believe Dion cares about the environment, but—for the third week in a row—the Liberal leader cannot clear the 40 per cent mark in any of the remaining questions. Layton's numbers have stabilized, with 53 per cent of Canadians regarding him as an environmentalist, and more than two-in-five claiming he has a vision for Canada's future, understands the problems of Canadians, and is honest and trustworthy.

The main federal leaders continue to post low numbers on three specific areas. Roughly one-in-four Canadians (27%, +3) believe Harper cares about the environment, even fewer (16%, -2) regard Layton as

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a person who can manage the economy effectively, and less than one-in-ten (9%, -1) perceive Dion as a strong and decisive leader.

The proportion of Canadians who believe the Tories deserve a majority in the House of Commons remains stable at 27 per cent (-1), while 34 per cent (-4) think they do not deserve to form a government after this year's election. Roughly one-in-five (21%) would be content with a Conservative minority.

In all, 34 per cent of respondents think Canada is on the right track.






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## Voting Intention –Conservative Majority Government Likely

*If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency?*






	Latest			Past surveys			
	Sept. 24 -25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10- 12, 2008	Sept. 8-9 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	2006 Election
	40%	38%	39%	38%	36%	35%	36.3%
	21%	24%	23%	24%	28%	30%	30.2%
	21%	19%	18%	21%	18%	17%	17.5%
	10%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	10.5%
	7%	10%	10%	7%	8%	8%	4.5%
Other	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1.0%

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*If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency?*

	Latest	Provincial Breakdown					
	Sept. 24 -25, 2008	BC	Alta.	Prai.	Ont.	Que.	Atl.
	40%	43%	67%	52%	39%	27%	34%
	21%	18%	6%	22%	27%	15%	37%
	21%	24%	19%	19%	25%	12%	27%
	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	39%	0%
	7%	13%	8%	3%	7%	5%	2%
Other	2%	3%	1%	4%	1%	2%	0%

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## Stephen Harper's approval rating at 36%

*Do you approve or disapprove of Stephen Harper's performance as leader of the Conservative Party?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Approve	36%	32%	36%	32%	32%	32%	32%
Disapprove	44%	47%	43%	43%	46%	42%	42%
Not sure	20%	21%	21%	24%	22%	26%	26%

## Stephen Harper's momentum score at -18

*Over the course of the past month, would you say your opinion of Stephen Harper has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Improved	12%	11%	12%	11%	10%	10%	8%
Stayed the same	51%	51%	53%	49%	54%	54%	53%
Worsened	30%	32%	30%	31%	31%	29%	29%
Not sure	7%	6%	6%	9%	5%	7%	9%
Momentum Score	-18	-21	-18	-20	-21	-19	-21

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## Stéphane Dion's approval rating at 12%

*Do you approve or disapprove of Stéphane Dion's performance as leader of the Liberal Party?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Approve	12%	13%	15%	11%	13%	12%	10%
Disapprove	61%	61%	58%	54%	58%	56%	60%
Not sure	27%	26%	27%	35%	30%	33%	30%

## Stephane Dion's momentum score at -20

*Over the course of the past month, would you say your opinion of Stéphane Dion has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Improved	12%	14%	12%	10%	12%	9%	6%
Stayed the same	47%	43%	48%	46%	47%	44%	51%
Worsened	32%	36%	29%	29%	31%	35%	28%
Not sure	9%	8%	11%	16%	10%	12%	14%
Momentum Score	-20	-22	-17	-19	-19	-26	-21

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## Jack Layton's approval rating at 35%

*Do you approve or disapprove of Jack Layton performance as leader of the NDP?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Approve	35%	36%	29%	30%	27%	30%	34%
Disapprove	30%	32%	33%	30%	36%	33%	31%
Not sure	35%	32%	37%	40%	37%	37%	34%

## Jack Layton's momentum score at +2

*Over the course of the past month, would you say your opinion of Jack Layton has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?*

	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008
Improved	17%	17%	11%
Stayed the same	55%	56%	58%
Worsened	15%	15%	17%
Not sure	13%	11%	14%
Momentum Score	+2	+2	-6

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## Gilles Duceppe's approval rating at 33% (Quebec Only)

*Do you approve or disapprove of Gilles Duceppe's performance as leader of the Bloc Quebecois?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Approve	33%	35%	33%	39%	40%	29%	42%
Disapprove	33%	42%	42%	35%	34%	44%	31%
Not sure	33%	23%	25%	27%	26%	27%	27%

## Gilles Duceppe's momentum score at -6 (Quebec Only)

*Over the course of the past month, would you say your opinion of Gilles Duceppe has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?*

	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008
Improved	12%	11%	10%
Stayed the same	56%	46%	54%
Worsened	18%	27%	24%
Not sure	14%	17%	12%
Momentum Score	-6	-16	-14

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## Elizabeth May's approval rating at 29%

*Do you approve or disapprove of Elizabeth May's performance as leader of the Green Party?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Approve	29%	28%	25%	21%	20%	17%	22%
Disapprove	26%	25%	23%	20%	24%	22%	19%
Not sure	45%	47%	52%	59%	56%	61%	59%

## Elizabeth May's momentum score at +2

*Over the course of the past month, would you say your opinion of Elizabeth May has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?*

	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008
Improved	16%	19%	20%
Stayed the same	42%	38%	36%
Worsened	14%	12%	13%
Not sure	29%	31%	32%
Momentum Score	+2	+7	+7

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**Preferred Prime Minister – Harper 33%, Layton 18%, Dion 9%**

*Which of these five leaders would make the best Prime Minister of Canada?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24 -25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
<b>Stephen Harper</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Jack Layton</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>16%</b>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Stéphane Dion</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Giles Duceppe</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Elizabeth May</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<b>None of these</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>12%</b>

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## Qualities and Characteristics - Harper

*Thinking about the following qualities and characteristics, please say whether you think they apply to Stephen Harper?*

	Apply	Does not apply	Not sure
Is a strong and decisive leader	48% (-2)	33%	20%
Has a vision for Canada's future	48% (-2)	31%	11%
Understands complex issues	43% (-2)	31%	25%
Can manage the economy effectively	41% (+1)	33%	26%
Understands the problems of Canadians	38% (+4)	40%	22%
Inspires confidence	35% (+1)	45%	20%
Generally agrees with you on issues you care about	32% (+2)	47%	22%
Is honest and trustworthy	31% (=)	42%	26%
Cares about the environment	27% (+3)	46%	27%

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## Qualities and Characteristics - Dion

*Thinking about the following qualities and characteristics, please say whether you think they apply to Stéphane Dion?*

	Apply	Does not apply	Not sure
Cares about the environment	52% (-2)	18%	30%
Has a vision for Canada's future	34% (-4)	32%	33%
Is honest and trustworthy	33% (-2)	32%	36%
Understands complex issues	29% (-2)	35%	35%
Understands the problems of Canadians	24% (-2)	41%	35%
Generally agrees with you on issues you care about	21% (-3)	47%	32%
Can manage the economy effectively	16% (-2)	43%	40%
Inspires confidence	10% (-4)	59%	31%
Is a strong and decisive leader	9% (-1)	58%	33%

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## Qualities and Characteristics

*Thinking about the following qualities and characteristics, please say whether you think they apply to Jack Layton?*

	Apply	Does not apply	Not sure
<b>Cares about the environment</b>	53% (-1)	15%	32%
<b>Has a vision for Canada's future</b>	46% (+2)	23%	31%
<b>Understands the problems of Canadians</b>	45% (=)	23%	32%
<b>Is honest and trustworthy</b>	43% (-1)	21%	36%
<b>Is a strong and decisive leader</b>	35% (-2)	27%	38%
<b>Inspires confidence</b>	35% (-2)	32%	34%
<b>Generally agrees with you on issues you care about</b>	33% (-3)	35%	32%
<b>Understands complex issues</b>	32% (-3)	27%	41%
<b>Can manage the economy effectively</b>	16% (-2)	37%	47%

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## The Conservative Minority Government

*Which of these statements comes closer to your own point of view?*

	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008
The Conservative government has performed well, and deserves a majority in the House of Commons	27%	27%	28%	24%
The Conservative government has performed adequately, and deserves to stay in office with a minority	21%	19%	22%	22%
The Conservative government has performed poorly, and does not deserve to form a government after the next election	34%	38%	36%	34%
Not sure	18%	16%	13%	20%

## Canada on the Right Track for 34%

*Overall, do you think Canada is headed in the right track, or the wrong track?*

	Latest	Past surveys					
	Sept. 24-25, 2008	Sept. 17-18, 2008	Sept. 10-12, 2008	AUG 2008	JUL 2008	JUN 2008	MAY 2008
Right track	34%	32%	32%	32%	32%	34%	32%
Wrong track	38%	40%	39%	36%	40%	33%	42%
Not sure	28%	28%	29%	32%	28%	34%	26%

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*Angus Reid Strategies is a full-service polling and market research firm which is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995.*

*Angus Reid Strategies, along with its sister company, Vision Critical, is now the largest Canadian-owned market research enterprise. In addition to its four offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices San Francisco, New York and London, England. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.*

*Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.*

*Over the last year, Angus Reid has covered five elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes. <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=194>*

*More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF.WP.pdf>*

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**For more information, please contact  
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:  
[www.angusreidstrategies.com](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com)**

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