

CANADIAN POLITICAL PULSE

Conservatives Keep Lead in Canada as Liberal Voters Ponder Change

While large majorities of Tory and NDP supporters are content with Stephen Harper and Jack Layton, only 38 per cent of Liberal voters in 2008 would keep Michael Ignatieff at the helm.

[TORONTO – Dec. 8, 2010] – The Conservative Party would coast to another minority government if a new federal election were held today, and many Liberal Party supporters in Canada are questioning whether their current leader should be at the helm when the next ballot is called, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion / *Toronto Star* poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,013 Canadian adults, 38 per cent of respondents (+1 since October) would back the governing Conservative Party in the next federal election.

The Liberal Party is second with 26 per cent (=), followed by the New Democratic Party (NDP) with 18 per cent (-1), the Bloc Québécois with 10 per cent (=), and the Green Party with seven per cent (+1). Stagnation has evidently hit all five federal parties, which are within a point of their totals in the 2008 federal election.

Regional Breakdowns

Half of voters in Alberta (50%) and Manitoba and Saskatchewan (51%) continue to express a preference for the Conservatives. In British Columbia, the NDP has dropped to second place with 30 per cent, with the Tories now ahead by nine points.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: Con. 38%, Lib. 26%, NDP 18%, BQ 10%, Grn. 7%,**
- **Approval Rating: Harper 26%, Ignatieff 14%, Layton 25%**
- **46% of Liberal voters in 2008 believe it is time to change the leader of the party**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From December 6 to December 7, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,013 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%, 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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In Ontario, the Conservatives have extended their advantage over the Liberals (44% to 31%). In Quebec, the Bloc is still ahead (39%), with the three federalist parties far behind (Lib. 19%, Con. 18%, NDP 17%).

Leaders

Respondents across the country were asked if the five main federal parties should keep their current leader or change their current leader before the next federal election takes place. While 44 per cent of Canadians would prefer to see a different person leading the governing Conservatives, Stephen Harper gets a vote of confidence from 79 per cent of those who voted for the Tories in the 2008 federal ballot.

Across Canada, 51 per cent of respondents would keep Jack Layton as leader of the New Democratic Party (NDP), along with 80 per cent of those who voted for the NDP in 2008. Gilles Duceppe posts similar numbers (64% of Quebecers want him to stay as leader, along with 86% of Bloc voters from 2008). Half of Canadians (51%) are undecided on whether Elizabeth May should remain as leader of the Greens, but 64 per cent of those who voted for the Green Party in 2008 would keep her.

The situation is unquestionably different for Michael Ignatieff, with a majority of Canadians (56%) and almost half of Liberal voters in 2008 (46%) claiming that the Grits should change their leader before the next federal election.

Approval and Momentum

The approval rating for each of the three main leaders fell by two points since October. Prime Minister and Conservative leader Stephen Harper stands at 26 per cent this month, NDP leader Jack Layton is at 25 per cent, and Liberal Party and Official Opposition leader Michael Ignatieff is last with 14 per cent.

Layton maintains the best momentum score of the three leaders at -9, followed by Ignatieff with -19 and Harper with -22.

Attributes

Canadians were asked to select up to six words or expressions from a list to describe the four party leaders sitting in the House of Commons. The top five results for each one of the leaders are:

- *Stephen Harper* – *Secretive (43%), arrogant (39%), out of touch (33%), intelligent (34%), boring (30%)*
- *Michael Ignatieff* – *Arrogant (38%), boring (37%), out of touch (37%), inefficient (33%), intelligent (28%)*
- *Jack Layton* – *Intelligent (36%), honest (31%), compassionate (31%), down to earth (29%), open (29%)*
- *Gilles Duceppe* – *Arrogant (31%), out of touch (26%), intelligent (26%), boring (19%), secretive (19%)*

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Legislatures

Starting this month, Angus Reid Public Opinion will provide an assessment of the way Canadians feel about various legislative bodies. One third of respondents (33%) approve of the way the House of Commons is handling its job, while 43 per cent disapprove. The rating is decidedly lower for the Senate of Canada (Approve 23%, Disapprove 47%). Just about three-in-ten Canadians (28%) endorse the way their provincial legislature is performing, while half of respondents (51%) disapprove.

Analysis

As a whole, the Canadian electorate did not go through a major shift over the past month, with the Conservatives still entrenched in “minority government” territory and the opposition parties practically stagnant.

The survey does provide sobering news for Michael Ignatieff, whose negative attributes have increased markedly this time around—including the proportion of Canadians who see him as out of touch, weak and inefficient—and with almost half of Liberal voters in 2008 calling for a change before the next election is called.

This year's editions of the Canadian Political Pulse can be accessed here:

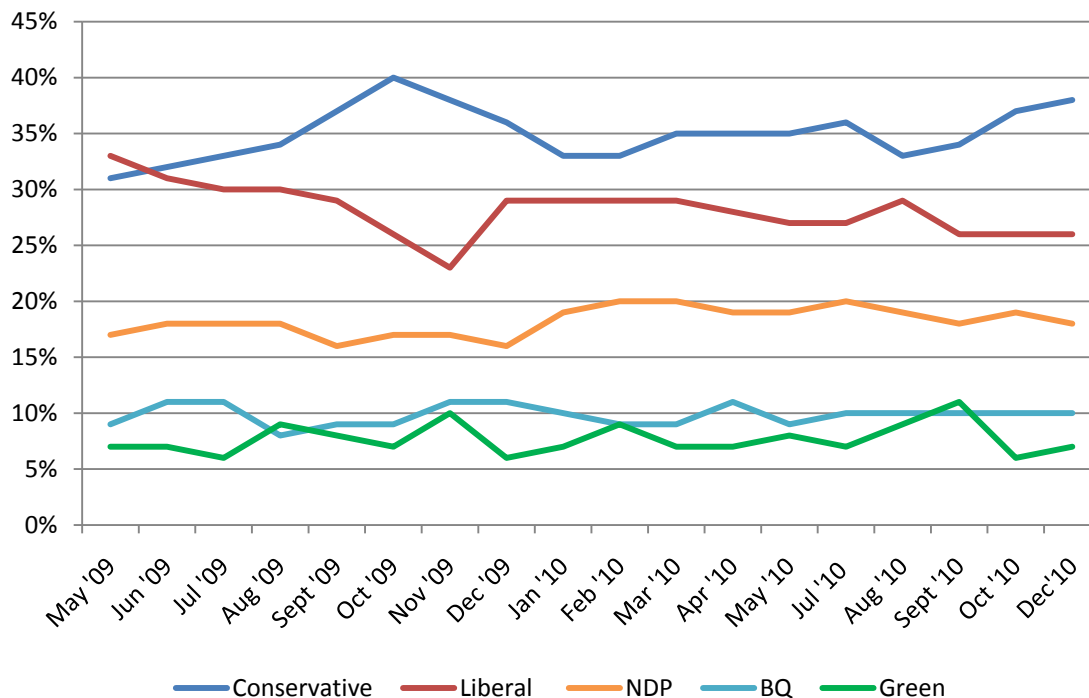
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If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency?



Canadian Political Pulse

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	Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL	2008 Election
Conservative Party	38%	39%	50%	51%	44%	18%	41%	37.6%
Liberal Party	26%	25%	22%	24%	31%	19%	38%	26.2%
New Democratic Party	18%	30%	10%	22%	16%	17%	17%	18.2%
Bloc Québécois	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	39%	0%	10.0%
Green Party	7%	4%	16%	3%	8%	5%	4%	6.8%
Other party	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1.2%

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Canadian Political Pulse

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

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Conservative Party	38%	41%	35%	34%	36%	45%
Liberal Party	26%	27%	24%	23%	27%	27%
New Democratic Party	18%	15%	22%	20%	19%	14%
Bloc Québécois	10%	10%	10%	11%	10%	8%
Green Party	7%	7%	7%	10%	6%	5%
Other party	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%

Canadian Political Pulse

Do you think each of the following parties should keep their current leader or change their current leader before the next federal election? – Stephen Harper (Conservative)

	Total	Conservative voters in 2008
Keep the leader	37%	79%
Change the leader	44%	14%
Not sure	19%	7%

Canadian Political Pulse

Do you think each of the following parties should keep their current leader or change their current leader before the next federal election? – Michael Ignatieff (Liberal)

	Total	Liberal voters in 2008
Keep the leader	18%	38%
Change the leader	56%	46%
Not sure	26%	15%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Do you think each of the following parties should keep their current leader or change their current leader before the next federal election? – Jack Layton (NDP)

	Total	NDP voters in 2008
Keep the leader	51%	80%
Change the leader	23%	9%
Not sure	26%	11%

Canadian Political Pulse

Do you think each of the following parties should keep their current leader or change their current leader before the next federal election? – Gilles Duceppe (Bloc Québécois) **Quebec Only**

	Total	Bloc Québécois voters in 2008
Keep the leader	64%	86%
Change the leader	23%	8%
Not sure	13%	6%

Canadian Political Pulse

Do you think each of the following parties should keep their current leader or change their current leader before the next federal election? – Elizabeth May (Green)

	Total	Green voters in 2008
Keep the leader	30%	64%
Change the leader	19%	17%
Not sure	51%	19%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of each of the following people?
(Change since October 2010)

Total Canada			
	Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper	Liberal Party and Official Opposition leader Michael Ignatieff	New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jack Layton
Approve	26% (-2)	14% (-2)	25% (-2)
Disapprove	47% (+1)	47% (+4)	34% (+3)
Not sure	27% (+1)	39% (-1)	41% (-1)

Canadian Political Pulse

Over the course of the past month, would you say your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same or worsened?
(Change since October 2010)

Total Canada			
	Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper	Liberal Party and Official Opposition leader Michael Ignatieff	New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jack Layton
Improved	8% (=)	6% (-2)	6% (-2)
Stayed the same	50% (-3)	52% (-3)	64% (-3)
Worsened	30% (+1)	25% (+2)	15% (+3)
Not sure	12% (+2)	16% (+2)	15% (+2)
<i>Momentum Score</i>	-22	-19	-9

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Canadian Political Pulse

Here are some words that people may use to describe Stephen Harper / Michael Ignatieff / Jack Layton / Gilles Duceppe. Please select up to six words you think describe him. *(Change since October 2010)*

Total Canada				
	Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper	Liberal Party and Official Opposition leader Michael Ignatieff	New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jack Layton	Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe
Down to earth	16% (+3)	7% (-1)	29% (+2)	11% (+3)
Arrogant	39% (=)	38% (+5)	16% (=)	31% (-2)
Open	8% (+1)	10% (+1)	29% (+3)	9% (=)
Secretive	43% (+3)	18% (+2)	7% (=)	19% (+2)
Efficient	23% (+5)	6% (-1)	14% (+4)	10% (+2)
Inefficient	26% (+3)	33% (+10)	18% (-3)	20% (+1)
Compassionate	9% (+2)	7% (-1)	31% (+5)	9% (+1)
Uncaring	29% (-1)	22% (+4)	7% (=)	17% (=)
Honest	16% (+3)	11% (+1)	31% (+3)	15% (+2)
Dishonest	29% (+3)	17% (-1)	10% (+1)	16% (-3)
Strong	23% (+5)	7% (-2)	16% (+5)	13% (+2)
Weak	13% (-2)	26% (+6)	14% (-2)	13% (=)
Exciting	5% (+3)	2% (-1)	12% (+3)	6% (+2)
Boring	30% (-2)	37% (+7)	16% (+3)	19% (-2)
In touch	12% (-1)	4% (-4)	17% (-4)	6% (-3)
Out of touch	33% (-2)	37% (+6)	19% (+1)	26% (-2)
Intelligent	34% (+3)	28% (-6)	36% (+6)	26% (+7)
Foolish	16% (+1)	17% (+1)	14% (=)	17% (=)
None of these	9% (-2)	18% (-2)	17% (-2)	29% (=)

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Canadian Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the way the following institutions are handling their jobs? – ***The House of Commons***

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Approve	33%	40%	29%	34%	33%	33%	30%
Disapprove	43%	46%	37%	28%	42%	49%	47%
Not sure	24%	14%	33%	38%	25%	19%	23%

Canadian Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the way the following institutions are handling their jobs? – ***The Senate of Canada***

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Approve	23%	30%	21%	11%	25%	24%	19%
Disapprove	47%	47%	38%	45%	44%	58%	48%
Not sure	29%	23%	42%	44%	32%	18%	33%

Canadian Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the way the following institutions are handling their jobs? – ***Your provincial legislature***

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Approve	28%	24%	23%	39%	27%	28%	40%
Disapprove	51%	65%	48%	29%	51%	54%	36%
Not sure	21%	10%	29%	32%	23%	17%	24%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical 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 Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial 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.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record can be found at:
<http://www.angus-reid.com/services/record-of-accuracy/>

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at
<http://www.angus-reid.com/about/>

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

Copies of this poll are available on our website:
<http://www.angus-reid.com>

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