

CANADIAN FEDERAL ELECTION 2011

Tories Lead in Canada, NDP Firmly in Second Place Due to Quebec Strength

High approval numbers continue for Jack Layton, as Liberal support and momentum for Michael Ignatieff plummet.

[OTTAWA – Apr. 27, 2011] – The New Democratic Party (NDP) has solidified its position as the second most popular party in Canada, and is now five points behind the leading Conservatives as a federal election looms, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll conducted in partnership with the *Toronto Star* and *La Presse* has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,040 Canadian adults, 35 per cent of decided voters (-1 since mid-April) would support the governing Conservative Party in the May 2 federal election.

The NDP is second with 30 per cent (+5), followed by the Liberal Party with 22 per cent (-3), the Bloc Québécois with seven per cent (-2), and the Green Party with five per cent (=).

The Conservatives remain strong across Western Canada, with three-in-five Albertans (60%) and 44 per cent of British Columbians saying they would vote for the Tory candidate in their riding.

The New Democrats are now in first place in Quebec with 38 per cent, 11 points ahead of the sovereignist Bloc Québécois. The NDP is three points behind the Liberals in Ontario (27% to 30%), with the Tories solidly in first place (37%).

The NDP has managed to gain significantly compared to its result in the last federal election, while the remaining four parties are currently below their 2008 totals. The party is attracting more than one third of

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: Con. 35%, NDP 30%, Lib. 22%, BQ 7%, Grn. 5%**
- **Best PM: Harper 31%, Layton 27%, Ignatieff 11%, Duceppe 3%, May 2%**
- **Approval: Layton 49%, Harper 36%, May 25%, Ignatieff 21%, Duceppe 13%**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From April 25 to April 26, 2011, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,040 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%, 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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decided voters aged 18 to 34 (37%, +7 since mid-April), while the Tories hold on to a similar proportion of respondents aged 35 to 54 (38%) and those over the age of 55 (also 38%).

The Conservatives continue to post an impressive retention rate, keeping 82 per cent of their voters in the 2008 federal election. The proportion of electors who are sticking by the NDP is also high (77%). The Bloc and the Liberals hold lower retention rates, at 70 per cent and 64 per cent respectively. In fact, 24 per cent of Liberal voters in 2008—and 27 per cent of Bloc voters in the same election—are now supporting the New Democrats.

While the NDP maintains the lowest proportion of committed voters at 71 per cent—those respondents who say they will definitely vote for this party on May 2—this proportion has increased by 12 points since the mid-April poll. The Conservatives preserve the highest level of committed voters (84%).

Approval, Momentum and Preferred Prime Minister

NDP leader Jack Layton continues to hold a considerable edge on approval, as half of Canadians (49%, -1) are satisfied with the way he is doing his job. More than one third of respondents approve of Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper (36%, +3). Green leader Elizabeth May garners the approval of 25 per cent of Canadians (-1). Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff is now fourth on this indicator with 21 per cent (-3), while Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe is at 13 per cent.

Layton's momentum score increased markedly since [the last Angus Reid Public Opinion poll](#) and now stands at +36, with almost half of Canadians (46%) saying that they now have an improved opinion of the NDP leader. The remaining contenders all posted negative momentum scores, with 44 per cent of respondents saying that their opinion of Ignatieff has worsened since the start of the election.

Harper holds a four-point edge on Layton in the preferred Prime Minister question (31% to 27%), with Ignatieff dropping to 11 per cent. The Liberal leader gets his highest level of support on this question in Atlantic Canada (14%).

Issues

There was very little movement in this question since mid-April, with Harper getting the best score on handling the economy (38%) and crime (37%), and Layton keeping his dominance on health care (38%) and ethics and accountability (31%). Despite her party getting the support of only one-in-twenty decided voters, May is seen as the best person to handle the environment (34%).

Conservative Majority

Three-in-ten Canadians (29%) believe the Conservative government has performed well, and deserves a majority in the House of Commons after the May 2 election. However, a majority of respondents would prefer either a minority for the Tories (15%) or a different party forming the government (43%).

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Strategic Voting

About three-in-ten Canadians (29%) say they definitely or probably would consider voting for a party they dislike to force the defeat of a specific candidate in their riding. Liberal voters (43%) and NDP voters (33%) are more likely to partake in this practice than Conservatives (21%).

Also, more than a third of Canadians (37%) are considering voting strategically in order to reduce the chances of a specific party forming the government, even if it means casting a ballot for a candidate they dislike. More than half of Liberals (53%) and more than two-in-five NDP supporters (43%) are thinking of this option on election day.

Election Outcomes

Overall, none of four possible election outcomes gets the endorsement of a majority of Canadians. Two-in-five (39%) would be satisfied with a Conservative majority after May 2, but more than seven-in-ten supporters of current opposition parties dislike this notion. A similar proportion of Canadians (38%) would also be content with a Conservative minority government, if the Tories win more seats than any other single party.

The idea of a coalition government featuring the Liberals and the NDP, if these two parties have more combined seats than the Tories, is appealing to 41 per cent of Canadians. Grit and NDP supporters like this scenario, but four-in-five Tories reject it. By far, the least popular option is a Liberal-NDP coalition government with the support of the Bloc. Liberals are split on this idea, half of New Democrats express dissatisfaction, and Tories decry it by a 9-to-1 margin.

Analysis

Earlier this month, we showed the NDP moving into a tie with the Liberals for the first time since the 2008 federal campaign. Now, the NDP surge has become more solid, with marked increases in Quebec and Ontario, and a higher level of committed voters who say they will not change their mind before election day. These gains have come at the expense of the Liberals and the Bloc. The Grits are holding on to just 64 per cent of their voters in the 2008 election, and one-in-four of these voters who supported the Stéphane Dion-led Liberals in 2008 are now backing the NDP. The Bloc is also losing 27 per cent of its voters to the NDP, and is no longer the frontrunner in Quebec.

The shift is not affecting the Conservatives too much. While slightly down from the last poll, the governing party maintains the highest level of committed voters (84%) and the highest retention rate of all contending parties (82%). However, there has been very little movement on the preferred outcome question, suggesting that the call for a majority mandate has not attracted many undecided voters to the Tory fold.

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In this scenario, the possibility of a majority mandate for the Conservatives hinges on voter turnout and on the way the centre-left vote will split in the ridings that are being defended by Liberal incumbents. Half of Liberal voters say they would be willing to vote strategically to reduce the chances of a specific party forming the government.

While there has been an increase in the proportion of respondents who are [open to the coalition scenarios since December](#), the notion is still not palatable for a plurality of Canadians. The idea of the Bloc buttressing a Liberal-NDP government is only appealing for supporters of the sovereigntist party.

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About Angus Reid Public Opinion

[Angus Reid Public Opinion](#) is a public affairs practice headed by Dr. Angus Reid: an industry visionary who has spent more than four decades asking questions to figure out what people feel, how they think and who they will vote for. A team of talented and experienced practitioners with a unique and profound understanding of global issues conduct high quality research throughout the world on a daily basis for corporations, governments, academic researchers, and non-profit organizations.

About Vision Critical®

[Vision Critical](#) is a global research and technology firm that creates software and services solutions for over 600 clients, including one third of the world's top 100 brands. The company has offices across North America, Europe and Australia as well as a Global Partner Program that provides other research companies and consultants with access to top-of-the-line technology. Its Sparq™ product is the most widely adopted community panel platform on the planet.

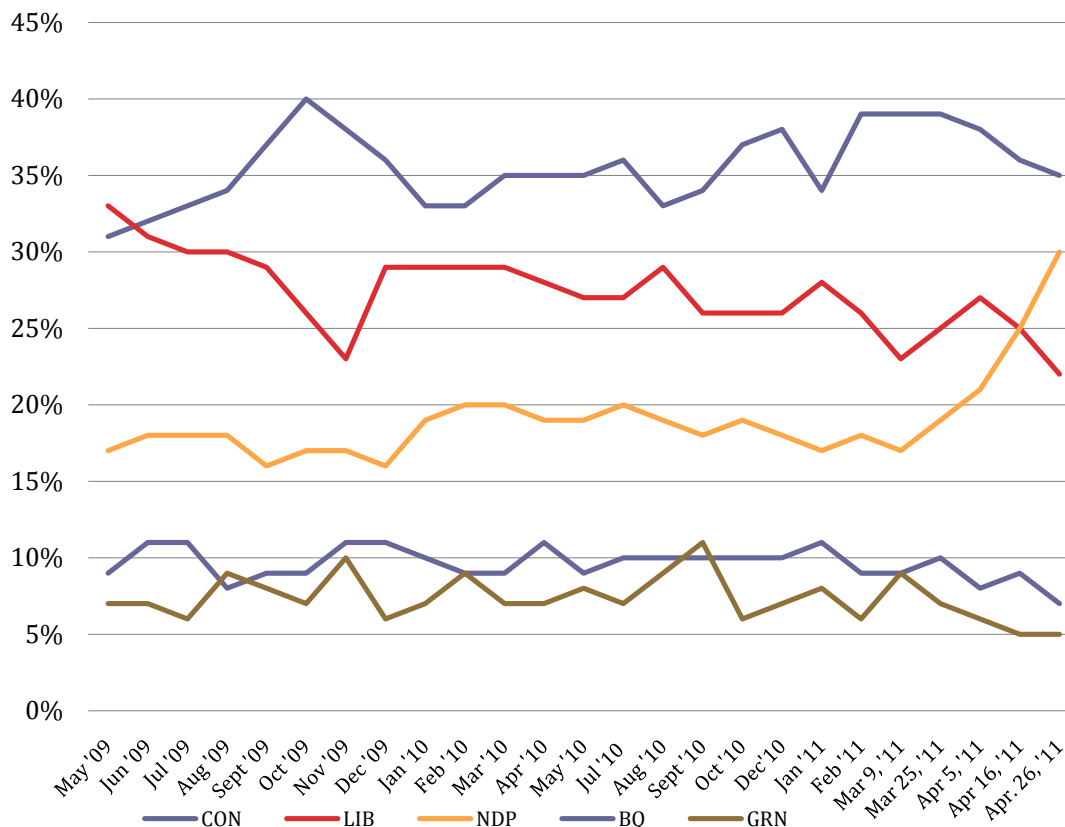
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**For more information, please contact
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If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency?



Canadian Political Pulse

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

	Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL	2008 Election
Conservative Party	35%	44%	60%	50%	37%	14%	35%	37.6%
New Democratic Party	30%	30%	21%	33%	27%	38%	32%	18.2%
Liberal Party	22%	16%	12%	16%	30%	16%	29%	26.2%
Bloc Québécois	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	0%	10.0%
Green Party	5%	10%	6%	1%	6%	2%	4%	6.8%
Other party	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	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?

	Gender		
	Total	Male	Female
Conservative Party	35%	39%	31%
New Democratic Party	30%	28%	32%
Liberal Party	22%	20%	24%
Bloc Québécois	7%	8%	7%
Green Party	5%	4%	6%
Other party	1%	1%	0%

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?

	Age			
	Total	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Conservative Party	35%	28%	38%	38%
New Democratic Party	30%	37%	28%	27%
Liberal Party	22%	22%	21%	23%
Bloc Québécois	7%	6%	8%	8%
Green Party	5%	8%	5%	3%
Other party	1%	0%	1%	0%

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Canadian Political Pulse

And, how certain are you that you will vote for this party? – *Decided Voters who expressed a preference*

	Party Support in May 2 Election			
	Con.	Lib.	NDP	BQ
I will definitely vote for this party	84%	76%	71%	80%
I could change my mind before the election takes place	16%	24%	29%	20%

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?

	Vote in the 2008 Federal Election			
	Con.	Lib.	NDP	BQ
Conservative Party	82%	8%	11%	1%
Liberal Party	5%	64%	8%	3%
New Democratic Party	10%	24%	77%	27%
Bloc Québécois	2%	0%	1%	70%
Green Party	1%	3%	2%	0%
Other party	0%	0%	0%	0%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of each of the following people?

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	Green Party leader Elizabeth May
Approve	36%	21%	49%	13%	25%
Disapprove	50%	57%	25%	63%	26%
Not sure	15%	22%	26%	24%	49%

Canadian Political Pulse

Based on what you have seen, read and heard, do you find the following politicians appealing or unappealing as a leader?

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	Green Party leader Elizabeth May
Appealing	41%	29%	67%	19%	29%
Unappealing	54%	64%	27%	67%	38%
Not sure	5%	7%	6%	14%	32%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Since the beginning of the election, would you say your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same or worsened?

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	Green Party leader Elizabeth May
Improved	14%	15%	46%	5%	9%
Stayed the same	43%	35%	38%	47%	54%
Worsened	39%	44%	10%	36%	11%
Not sure	4%	7%	6%	13%	26%
<i>Momentum Score</i>	-25	-29	+36	-31	-2

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Canadian Political Pulse

Which of these leaders is best suited to deal with each of the following issues?

Total Canada

	Crime	Health Care	Economy	Environment	Ethics / Accountability
Stephen Harper	37%	21%	38%	16%	19%
Michael Ignatieff	13%	13%	18%	6%	11%
Jack Layton	16%	40%	18%	21%	31%
Gilles Duceppe	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Elizabeth May	1%	3%	2%	34%	5%
None of them	9%	7%	8%	6%	13%
Not sure	22%	14%	14%	15%	18%

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Canadian Political Pulse

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

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Stephen Harper	31%	38%	49%	48%	33%	14%	31%
Jack Layton	27%	22%	15%	24%	25%	40%	28%
Michael Ignatieff	11%	10%	8%	9%	12%	12%	14%
Gilles Duceppe	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%	8%	1%
Elizabeth May	2%	5%	2%	1%	2%	0%	5%
None of them	13%	11%	12%	12%	14%	13%	12%
Not sure	12%	13%	13%	6%	12%	13%	10%

Canadian Political Pulse

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

	Age & Gender					
	Total	Male	Female	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Stephen Harper	31%	37%	26%	23%	33%	37%
Jack Layton	27%	29%	26%	34%	25%	25%
Michael Ignatieff	11%	11%	12%	10%	9%	15%
Gilles Duceppe	3%	2%	3%	4%	2%	2%
Elizabeth May	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	1%
None of them	13%	12%	14%	13%	15%	11%
Not sure	12%	8%	16%	14%	13%	10%

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Canadian Political Pulse

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

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
The Conservative government has performed well, and deserves a majority in the House of Commons	29%	35%	46%	43%	30%	14%	28%
The Conservative government has performed adequately, and deserves to stay in office with a minority	15%	20%	12%	12%	17%	11%	19%
The Conservative government has performed poorly, and does not deserve to form a government after the next election	43%	31%	27%	33%	41%	61%	44%
Not sure	13%	13%	14%	12%	12%	14%	10%

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Strategic Voting

There has been a lot of talk in recent elections about the concept of “strategic voting”, which entails a voter supporting a candidate other than his or her true preference in order to avoid a specific outcome. Would you consider any of the following scenarios with your vote on May 2nd? –

Voting for a party you dislike to force the defeat of a specific candidate in your riding

	Party Support in May 2 Election				
	Total	Con.	Lib.	NDP	BQ
Definitely would consider	12%	6%	21%	16%	9%
Probably would consider	17%	15%	22%	17%	17%
Probably would not consider	20%	20%	20%	20%	19%
Definitely would not consider	42%	54%	31%	38%	49%
Not sure	9%	5%	7%	9%	6%

Strategic Voting

There has been a lot of talk in recent elections about the concept of “strategic voting”, which entails a voter supporting a candidate other than his or her true preference in order to avoid a specific outcome. Would you consider any of the following scenarios with your vote on May 2nd? –

Voting for a candidate you dislike to reduce the chances of a specific party forming the government

	Party Support in May 2 Election				
	Total	Con.	Lib.	NDP	BQ
Definitely would consider	17%	9%	29%	20%	13%
Probably would consider	20%	17%	24%	23%	24%
Probably would not consider	16%	18%	14%	16%	16%
Definitely would not consider	39%	52%	27%	35%	43%
Not sure	8%	4%	5%	6%	5%

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Possible Election Outcomes

Here are some prospective scenarios that could result from the upcoming federal election. Would you personally be satisfied or dissatisfied with each one of these outcomes? –

The Conservatives win more seats than all other parties combined, and form a majority government.

Vote in the 2008 Federal Election					
	Total	Lib.	Con.	NDP	BQ
Very satisfied	27%	5%	70%	5%	3%
Moderately satisfied	12%	8%	12%	16%	7%
Moderately dissatisfied	9%	10%	7%	11%	9%
Very dissatisfied	45%	73%	8%	66%	78%
Not sure	8%	4%	3%	3%	3%

Possible Election Outcomes

Here are some prospective scenarios that could result from the upcoming federal election. Would you personally be satisfied or dissatisfied with each one of these outcomes? –

The Conservatives win more seats than any other single party, and form a minority government.

Vote in the 2008 Federal Election					
	Total	Lib.	Con.	NDP	BQ
Very satisfied	8%	7%	13%	4%	6%
Moderately satisfied	30%	15%	52%	28%	17%
Moderately dissatisfied	24%	32%	19%	23%	26%
Very dissatisfied	29%	40%	12%	40%	48%
Not sure	9%	4%	5%	5%	3%

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Possible Election Outcomes

Here are some prospective scenarios that could result from the upcoming federal election. Would you personally be satisfied or dissatisfied with each one of these outcomes? –

The Conservatives win more seats than any other single party, but the Liberals and the NDP have more combined seats than the Conservatives. The Liberals and the NDP form a coalition government.

Vote in the 2008 Federal Election					
	Total	Lib.	Con.	NDP	BQ
Very satisfied	15%	29%	3%	21%	18%
Moderately satisfied	27%	41%	10%	39%	27%
Moderately dissatisfied	16%	13%	18%	19%	24%
Very dissatisfied	34%	13%	66%	17%	25%
Not sure	9%	4%	4%	4%	6%

Possible Election Outcomes

Here are some prospective scenarios that could result from the upcoming federal election. Would you personally be satisfied or dissatisfied with each one of these outcomes? –

The Conservatives win more seats than any other single party, but the Liberals, the NDP and the Bloc have more combined seats than the Conservatives. The Liberals and the NDP form a coalition government, with the support of the Bloc.

Vote in the 2008 Federal Election					
	Total	Lib.	Con.	NDP	BQ
Very satisfied	9%	11%	2%	12%	33%
Moderately satisfied	23%	37%	8%	32%	36%
Moderately dissatisfied	17%	26%	8%	25%	11%
Very dissatisfied	42%	22%	78%	26%	17%
Not sure	9%	3%	5%	6%	3%

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