

Federal Politics



- **The Liberal Party remains at 38%**
- **Paul Martin's popularity rating is not improving, but he remains the leader with the necessary qualities to be Prime Minister**
- **71% of Canadians want some light shed on the sponsorship scandal**

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1. Results

1.1 Despite its efforts, the Liberal Party remains at 38%

Voting intentions in Canada remain stable and if elections had been held last week, the Liberal Party would have garnered 38% of the voting intention after distribution of the undecided. This is a 12-point lead over the Conservative Party that would have garnered 26% of the votes. The NDP ranks 3rd with 17% and the Bloc Québécois still gets 12% while the Green Party obtains only 4% and 15% are undecided.

However, if we observe the results per region there is an evolution, except in Ontario where the LPC obtains 46% of the votes and enjoys a 17-point lead over the CP (29%) and also in Quebec where the Bloc Québécois (46%) has a 12-point lead over the Liberal Party (34%).

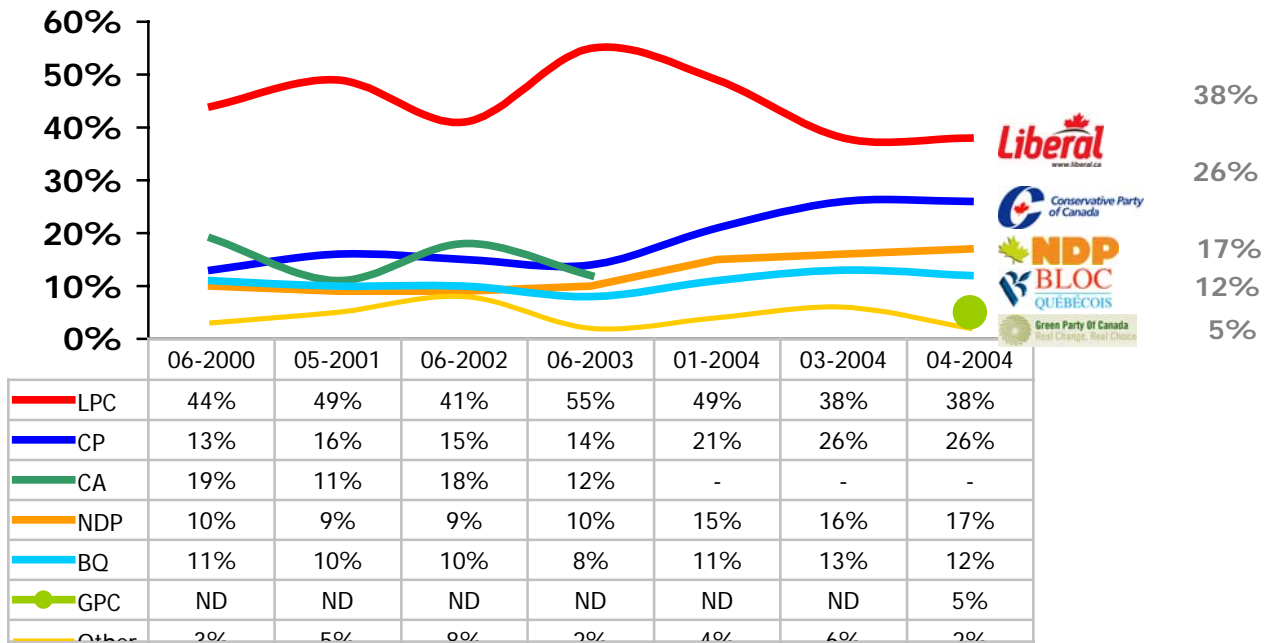
In fact, the LPC has gained 8 points in the Atlantic Provinces where today it obtains 44% of the voting intention, that is a 17-point lead on the Conservative Party, which went from 39% in March to 27% today. Moreover, the LPC has also made some important gains (10 points) in the Prairies, which is neck and neck with the Conservative Party at 31%, while the NDP remains at 25% of voter support.

Moreover, a heated battle is on the horizon in British Columbia where the LPC obtains 31%, the NDP 29% and the CP 23%. Inversely, Alberta stands out, giving 60% of the vote to the Conservative Party, a 36-point lead over the LPC.

Question: *If federal elections were held today, for which political party would you vote for, would it be for the...?*

(n=1500)	Before distribution N=1500	After distributor N=1136	Atlantic Provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
...Liberal Party	29%	38%	44%	34%	46%	35%	24%	31%
...Conservative Party of Canada	20%	26%	27%	8%	29%	31%	60%	23%
...NDP (New Democratic Party)	13%	17%	21%	8%	19%	25%	14%	29%
...Bloc Québécois	9%	12%	-	46%	-	-	-	-
...Green Party of Canada	4%	5%	-	3%	4%	5%	2%	13%
Other	2%	2%	8%	1%	2%	4%	-	3%
Would spoil ballot	1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Would not vote	7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Do not know	13%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Refusal	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Evolution of Voting Intentions June 2000 - April 2004



1.2 Paul Martin's rating is not getting improving

Though Paul Martin remains the person who would make the best Prime Minister of Canada in the eyes of 34% of Canadians, his popularity rating seems to be weakening somewhat compared to last month when 39% would have chosen him. His closest rival, Stephen Harper enjoys 4 more points compared to the most recent poll and now has 17%, two times less than the current Prime Minister. Jack Layton brings up the rear with 8%.

In contrast, we see that even though Paul Martin remains the most popular, he has lost in all Canadian regions, and this, to Stephen Harper's advantage. In Alberta, the situation is reversed and Harper leads by 17 points.

Also, since last March, excluding CP supporters, supporters of the other parties still preferred Paul Martin as Prime Minister, which is not the case today. 72% of Liberals choose Paul Martin, 62% of Conservatives choose Stephen Harper, 45% of Bloc supporters, Gilles Duceppe and 40% of New Democrats, Jack Layton.

Question: *Among the following party leaders, who would make the best Prime Minister of Canada after the next federal election ?*

n=1500	Total Population	Atlantic Provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
...Paul Martin	34%	32%	33%	39%	32%	20%	32%
...Stephen Harper	17%	21%	9%	16%	20%	37%	17%
...Jack Layton	8%	5%	6%	9%	10%	7%	12%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	6%	-	23%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%	3%	4%
None	10%	14%	12%	9%	8%	9%	12%
Do not know	21%	23%	14%	23%	27%	23%	22%
Refusal	2%	4%	1%	2%	1%	1%	-

1.3 The main priority for Canadians is health care

47% of Canadians consider that priority number one for the Government of Canada in the next years is our health care system. However, 19% believe that priority should be placed on jobs and the economy, 16% say public finances, the debt and tax cuts, 10%, public service management and accountability, and only 2% for national unity.

On the other hand, Albertans set themselves apart in terms of priorities with 31% of them saying the Government of Canada should place a priority on public finances, debt and tax cuts. Thus, there are significantly less Albertans who view jobs and the economy (8%) as a priority.

Question : *Among the following choices, please tell me which issue you feel should be the top priority of the Government of Canada in the near future ?*

n=1500	Total Population	Atlantic Provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
...The healthcare system	47%	55%	49%	49%	43%	36%	45%
...Jobs and the economy	19%	23%	20%	18%	18%	8%	23%
...Public finances, tax cuts and debt management	16%	6%	17%	14%	16%	31%	15%
...Public service management and accountability	10%	4%	9%	10%	12%	12%	11%
...National unity	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%
None	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	5%	2%
Don't know/Refusal	4%	9%	1%	4%	5%	4%	2%

1.4 Canadians place their trust in Paul Martin when it comes to domestic issues

Regardless of the issue, more Canadians trust Paul Martin.

Thus, 37% of Canadians place more trust in Paul Martin when it comes to public finances, as well as national unity. 35% also have the same view on jobs and the economy, 30% with respect to the healthcare system, and 26% when it comes to public service management and accountability. However, as the following table demonstrates, Stephen Harper obtains the popular favour of Albertans at all levels.

We note, however, that more than a quarter of the population is unable to choose among the leaders, and this, for each statement.

Question: *Between the federal party leaders, which one would you trust most to tackle the following issues:*

n=1500	Total Population	Atlantic Provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
...Public finances, tax cuts and debt management							
...Paul Martin	37%	36%	41%	39%	33%	20%	38%
...Stephen Harper	18%	17%	9%	18%	20%	44%	15%
...Jack Layton	6%	6%	5%	6%	8%	3%	8%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	4%	-	18%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	4%	4%	3%	1%	4%	1%
None	7%	11%	5%	7%	8%	6%	9%
Don't know/Refusal	25%	27%	18%	27%	31%	23%	28%
...National unity							
...Paul Martin	37%	36%	33%	41%	41%	26%	40%
...Stephen Harper	14%	16%	10%	11%	14%	30%	13%
...Jack Layton	6%	4%	6%	6%	7%	4%	7%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	5%	-	21%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	4%	4%	3%	-	1%	2%
None	8%	10%	7%	7%	5%	10%	8%
Don't know/Refusal	29%	30%	20%	32%	33%	29%	30%
...Jobs and the economy							
...Paul Martin	35%	37%	36%	38%	38%	22%	34%
...Stephen Harper	18%	17%	10%	17%	20%	36%	19%
...Jack Layton	7%	5%	4%	8%	6%	7%	13%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	5%	-	23%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	3%	5%	3%	-	2%	4%
None	6%	11%	6%	6%	5%	7%	7%
Don't know/Refusal	25%	27%	17%	28%	32%	27%	24%

n=1500	Total Population	Atlantic Provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
...The healthcare system							
...Paul Martin	30%	32%	32%	31%	28%	26%	25%
...Stephen Harper	17%	17%	9%	15%	25%	35%	18%
...Jack Layton	11%	11%	6%	13%	9%	8%	16%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	6%	-	23%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	2%	5%	4%	1%	1%	4%
None	8%	12%	7%	8%	6%	6%	11%
Don't know/Refusal	25%	28%	18%	29%	30%	24%	27%
...Public service management and accountability							
...Paul Martin	26%	34%	25%	26%	31%	15%	26%
...Stephen Harper	20%	16%	10%	21%	21%	41%	18%
...Jack Layton	10%	7%	6%	13%	6%	8%	13%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	6%	-	26%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	1%	4%	4%	-	3%	4%
None	8%	11%	5%	8%	8%	8%	9%
Don't know/Refusal	27%	31%	23%	27%	34%	25%	30%

1.5 Canadians believe that Paul Martin is the leader that has the necessary qualities to be Prime Minister

Among the current federal party leaders, Paul Martin is, without a doubt, the leader that has all the necessary qualities to be Prime Minister of the country according to Canadians. In fact, 43% are of the opinion he is the best person to represent Canada around the world, 38% consider he is the most competent to manage the country, 37% describe him as a strong and decisive leader. Once again, Albertans are the only Canadians who do not share this opinion and tend to favour Stephen Harper.

Moreover, though he is ahead of his rivals, Paul Martin's rating is lower when it comes to human values. Thus, 24% of Canadians interviewed claim that Martin is the leader who shares their values compared to 16% who choose Harper, 10% Layton and 3% Harris. It is worth noting that Quebeckers are more likely to consider Gilles Duceppe as the leader who shares their values (34%) while in Alberta it is Stephen Harper for 39% of respondents.

Finally, one out of five Canadians (21%) believes that Paul Martin is the most trustworthy, while 15% state that it is Stephen Harper, 9% Jack Layton and 3% Jim Harris. We note that 18% consider that none of them are trustworthy.

However, we notice that a quarter of the population and more, were unable to choose among the leaders.

Question: *Tell me which of the federal party leaders...:*

n=1500	Total Population	Atlantic Provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
...is the best person to represent Canada around the world							
...Paul Martin	43%	47%	47%	42%	42%	34%	43%
...Stephen Harper	13%	10%	8%	14%	14%	28%	13%
...Jack Layton	6%	5%	5%	7%	9%	6%	9%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	3%	-	14%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	-	3%	3%	1%	3%	3%
None	7%	9%	6%	8%	6%	6%	8%
Don't know/Refusal	25%	29%	17%	28%	28%	23%	24%
...has the competence to manage the country							
...Paul Martin	38%	41%	39%	40%	33%	24%	39%
...Stephen Harper	15%	9%	9%	14%	16%	34%	14%
...Jack Layton	7%	10%	5%	7%	9%	5%	10%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	4%	-	15%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	2%	-	4%	3%	1%	3%	-
None	10%	13%	10%	8%	12%	8%	12%
Don't know/Refusal	25%	28%	17%	29%	29%	26%	26%
...is a strong and decisive leader							
...Paul Martin	37%	36%	37%	41%	34%	23%	40%
...Stephen Harper	16%	18%	10%	13%	21%	36%	14%
...Jack Layton	6%	4%	5%	7%	10%	2%	8%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	5%	-	21%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%	4%	1%
None	7%	10%	7%	8%	7%	7%	8%
Don't know/Refusal	26%	31%	17%	28%	27%	28%	30%
...shares your values							
...Paul Martin	24%	25%	21%	26%	25%	18%	27%
...Stephen Harper	16%	16%	5%	16%	22%	39%	12%
...Jack Layton	10%	14%	7%	11%	10%	9%	13%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	8%	-	34%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	-	3%	3%	2%	2%	5%
None	13%	12%	14%	12%	13%	8%	17%
Don't know/Refusal	26%	33%	16%	32%	29%	24%	26%
...most trustworthy							
...Paul Martin	21%	29%	15%	22%	23%	14%	28%
...Stephen Harper	15%	15%	5%	17%	22%	35%	12%
...Jack Layton	9%	7%	6%	11%	7%	6%	12%
...Gilles Duceppe (QC only)	8%	-	32%	-	-	-	-
...Jim Harris	3%	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%	3%
None	18%	17%	23%	16%	14%	17%	17%
Don't know/Refusal	27%	30%	18%	31%	31%	27%	28%

1.6 More than 8 out of 10 Canadians believe that Paul Martin was aware of the irregularities in the sponsorship scandal but are divided when it comes to his level of responsibility

Only 7% of Canadians are of the opinion that Paul Martin could not have known what was being hatched while the sponsorship scandal was going on and so must not be held responsible today. Inversely, a strong majority (82%) believe he must have known something about the scandal, but opinions are divided on his level of responsibility. In fact, 41% think he knew but should not be held responsible since he was not personally implicated, compared to 41% who believe he should be held personally responsible since he knew what was going on. 12% have no opinion on the subject or refuse to answer.

We note that there are proportionately more Quebeckers (49%) than Canadians from other regions who hold Paul Martin responsible for the sponsorship scandal, while Ontarians (37%) and respondents from the Atlantic Provinces (31%) are less likely to share this opinion.

Question: What has now been called the sponsorship scandal has been a key issue on the federal scene for the past few months. Which of the following three statements best represent your opinion about Prime Minister Martin vis-à-vis the sponsorship scandal?

n=1500	Total Population	AP	QC	ON	PR	AL	BC
... Prime Minister Martin knew nothing of the scandal while it was going on and should not be held personally responsible for it	7%	8%	8%	7%	6%	1%	7%
... Prime Minister Martin must have known something about the scandal but was not personally involved and should not be held responsible for it	41%	37%	38%	43%	37%	41%	43%
... Prime Minister Martin should be held personally responsible for the sponsorship scandal since he must have known about it while he was in Cabinet	41%	31%	49%	37%	43%	46%	37%
Don't know/Refusal	12%	24%	4%	13%	15%	12%	13%

1.7 Too much importance is placed in the sponsorship scandal compared to other domestic issues, but 71% of Canadians still want some light shed on the sponsorship issue

56% of Canadians say they are tired of hearing about the sponsorship scandal and want to hear about more pressing issues, compared to 37% who are of the opposite opinion. Nevertheless, 71% consider it is necessary to take the time to get to the bottom of the sponsorship scandal even if that means we will continue hearing about it for a long time to come. In fact, we notice that this opinion is shared by all respondents, regardless of their political allegiance.

Question: *Tell me if you STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE or STRONGLY DISAGREE with the following statement?*

n=1500	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/Refusal
... I am tired of all this talk about the sponsorship scandal. It's about time we went on to talk about other more pressing issues	56%	37%	6%
... We should take all the time necessary to get to the bottom of the sponsorship scandal, even if this means we will continue hearing about it for months	71%	22%	7%

1.8 Canadians do not agree on the nature of Canada-US relations

Canadians are divided with 46% considering it is important for the Prime Minister of Canada to have strong ties with the American President. Inversely, as many (47%) respondents believe that the Prime Minister should keep some distance with the President even if this means disagreeing on key foreign policy issues.

On the other hand, Quebeckers and Ontarians have diametrically opposing views on the question: a strong majority of Quebeckers (68%) are of the opinion there should be some distance between the 2 heads of state, compared to a majority of Ontarians (55%) who value stronger ties between the two.

Question: *Tell me which of the following statements best represents your views about the relationship that our Prime Minister of Canada should have with the President of the United States.*

n=1500	Total Population	AP	QC	ON	PR	AL	BC
... It is important that our Prime minister tries to have stronger ties with the President of the United-States compared to what we have seen over the last couple of years	46%	47%	30%	55%	55%	51%	40%
... It is important that our Prime Minister keeps some distance with the President of the United-States even if it means disagreeing on key foreign objectives	47%	42%	68%	37%	41%	43%	50%
Don't know/Refusal	7%	12%	2%	8%	3%	6%	10%

2. Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1500 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres between April 20 and April 24, 2004. Up to ten call-backs were made in the case of non-response.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to geographic location, gender and language spoken at home to ensure a sample representative of the entire Canadian adult population. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1500 respondents is of ± 2.5 , 19 times out of 20.