

ONTARIO POLITICAL LANDSCAPE: PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENT & ISSUE AGENDA

**Ontario PCs Rise 8 Points (38%; +8)
into Statistical Tie with Liberals (39%; -1)**

**Tories make Gains in East, Southwest, & Hamilton-Niagara,
whereas Grits extend their dominance of Toronto**

NDP (17%; -3) Posts 3-Point Loss

**Electoral Shift occurs amidst the Rise of Crime (19%; +13)
& Taxes (16%; +7) on the Public Issue Agenda**

From December 6 to 11, 2005, Leger Marketing – the Canadian representative of the Gallup International Association – conducted telephone interviews among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,000 adult Ontarians. The margin of error for the total sample is $\pm 3.1\%$, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current regional, gender, and age Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of the province.

The total Decided Voters sample (n=789) has an associated margin of error of $\pm 3.5\%$, 19 times out of 20. Across the regions, Decided Voters sub-samples are as follows: Toronto (n=197; $\pm 7.0\%$), 905 Belt (n=192; $\pm 7.1\%$), Hamilton-Niagara (n=104; $\pm 9.6\%$), Southwest (n=103; $\pm 9.7\%$), East (n=113; $\pm 9.2\%$, and North (n=55 $\pm 13.2\%$). Discrepancies between totals due to rounding – Specifically, the Decided Vote results are as follows: Liberals (38.5%), PCs (37.5%), NDP (16.6%), and Other (7.4%).

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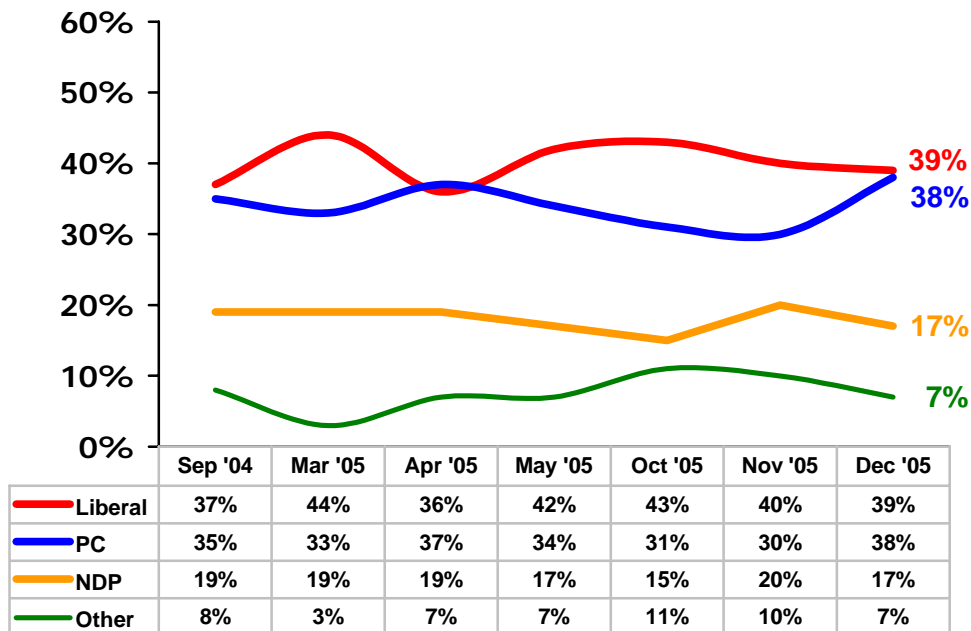
Ontario PCs (38%) Rise into Statistical Tie with Liberals (39%)

- Although the provincial Liberal vote is stable (39%; -1), the Progressive Conservatives (38%) have gained 8 points since November to reduce the Grits' previously comfortable 10-point lead into a statistical tie with just a 1-point edge. The NDP (17%) post a 3-point loss in support.

Q1A. Thinking about how you feel right now, if a provincial election were held tomorrow, which of the following parties would you, yourself, be most likely to vote for? **Q1B.** Well, which party would you say you are leaning towards?

Decided Voters (n=789): Decided Voters (Q1A) + Leaners (Q1B), comprising 79% of electorate. Undecided Voters = 12%. Abstain/Spoil Ballot = 3%. Refuse to Say=6%. Discrepancies between totals due to rounding – Specifically, the Decided Vote results are as follows: Liberals (38.5%), PCs (37.5%), NDP (16.6%), and Other (7.4%).

Provincial Voting Intentions in Ontario



Regional Findings: Tory Fortunes Rise in East, Southwest, & Hamilton-Niagara

- The electoral shift is driven primarily by a rise in Tory support in the East (48%; +10) and Southwest (47%; +10) of the province, although they also now have the edge in Hamilton-Niagara (42%; +7).
- Meanwhile, the Liberals have further extended their dominance in Toronto (54%; +11), and continue to hold their lead in the 905 Belt (43%; -2). They remain statistically tied with the NDP in the North.

Provincial Vote Intentions in Ontario: Regional Results							
Region \ Party	ONTARIO	Toronto	905 Belt (Suburbs)	Hamilton-Niagara	SouthWest	East	North
Liberals	39%	54%	43%	38%	26%	32%	34%
PCs	38%	23%	36%	42%	47%	48%	27%
NDP	17%	18%	13%	16%	15%	16%	32%
Some Other Party	7%	5%	7%	4%	13%	5%	8%

The Public Issue Agenda: Rising Concerns about Crime and Taxes

- When asked to name the most important issues for Ontario's leaders to focus upon right now, Health Care (58%; -1) remains the top-tier provincial issue on the public agenda.
- Dropping 7 points since April 2005, Education (31%) still remains the sole secondary issue on the provincial agenda.
- Notably, since April 2005, Crime (19%) and Taxes (16%) have risen 13 points and 7 points respectively to now clearly occupy the third tier on the issue agenda.
 - Crime is much more of a concern in the GTA (29%) than in Hamilton-Niagara (19%), the Southwest (10%), or the East (10%). Comparatively, Taxes are more of a concern in the Southwest (22%), Hamilton-Niagara (18%), and the East (17%) than in the GTA (12%).

Q1A. To begin... Thinking about the issues facing Ontario right now, which one issue do you feel should receive the most attention from Ontario's leaders – that is, which one issue should they give top priority to?
Q1B. And, what other important issues should Ontario's leaders be focusing on right now?
(N=1,000. Open-End. Total Mentions: Multiple responses allowed. Therefore, sum total may be greater than 100%. All Total Mentions of 5% or greater are displayed below.)

