

CANADIAN POLITICAL PULSE

Harper Not Most Popular Politician, But Canadians Want Him as PM

Ignatieff remains highly unpopular. Layton is praised, but not chosen by many to face tough challenges.

[TORONTO – Jul. 12, 2010] – Prime Minister Stephen Harper is not the most popular leader but people want him on the job when Canada faces serious challenges, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,031 Canadian adults, 36 per cent of respondents (+1 since late May) would support the governing Conservative Party in the next federal election.

The Liberal Party is second with 27 per cent (=), followed by the New Democratic Party (NDP) with 20 per cent (+1), the Bloc Québécois with 10 per cent (+1), and the Green Party with seven per cent (-1).

Regional Breakdowns

Albertans (62%) and respondents in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (55%) continue to express a preference for the Tories.

The federal Liberals register their highest level of support in Atlantic Canada (50%)—and their lowest in British Columbia (16%) and Alberta (15%).

The NDP is more popular in BC (33%) than anywhere else. In Quebec, the Bloc leads with 39

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: Con. 36%, Lib. 27%, NDP 20%, BQ 10%, Grn. 7%**
- **Approval Rating: Harper 31%, Layton 31%, Ignatieff 14%**
- **Momentum: Layton -3, Harper -21, Ignatieff -24**
- **Harper: Secretive (45%), Arrogant (43%)**
- **Ignatieff: Out of touch (39%), Arrogant (37%)**
- **Layton: Intelligent (36%), Down to earth (31%)**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From July 6 to July 8 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,031 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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per cent, followed by the Liberals at 24 per cent.

Approval and Momentum

Harper's approval rating stands at 31 per cent, tied with NDP leader Jack Layton. However, almost half of Canadians (48%) disapprove of the way Harper is doing his job, while only one-in-three (32%) feel the same way about Layton.

Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff remains highly unpopular. Just 14 per cent of respondents approve of the way he is handling his duties, while a majority (53%) voice disapproval.

Ignatieff continues to post the worst momentum score, this time of -24, meaning that while five per cent of respondents now have a better opinion of him, 29 per cent of Canadians now have a worse impression. Harper's momentum is -21, while Layton fares much better than his two rivals at -3.

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 results for each one of the leaders are:

- **Stephen Harper** – Secretive (45%), arrogant (43%), out of touch (34%), intelligent (34%), uncaring (32%) and boring (30%).
- **Michael Ignatieff** – Out of touch (39%), arrogant (37%), boring (36%), intelligent (33%), inefficient (31%) and weak (26%).
- **Jack Layton** – Intelligent (36%), down to earth (31%), compassionate (31%), honest (28%), open (26%) and out of touch (22%).
- **Gilles Duceppe** – Arrogant (34%), out of touch (32%), intelligent (23%), inefficient (19%), boring (19%) and dishonest (17%).

In a separate question, which aims to review how Canadians relate to the four leaders on a personal level, Layton emerges as an affable choice. Canadians pick the NDP leader over the other three contenders as the best man to have a beer with at a bar (34%), best to babysit their kids (30%), and best to play with in a sports team (27%).

Ignatieff is seen as the brainier of all, with Canadians picking him over the others to play in their trivia quiz team (26%), and as the best person to recommend a book to read (22%).

Harper has the edge on most policy matters, with at least three-in-ten respondents seeing the current prime minister as the best person to lead Canada in the event of a terrorist attack (37%), to negotiate with United States President Barack Obama on trade and security issues (36%), to deal with Russia on matters of Arctic sovereignty (35%) and to be in charge if there is another sovereignty referendum in Quebec (31%).

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When it comes to who would be best at representing the country at the next round of climate change talks, Harper (27%) and Layton (26%) are virtually tied.

Analysis

Throughout the year, the Conservatives have maintained their standing in the mid-30s, still away from majority territory. The G8/G20 summits did not provide a bounce for the governing party, and Stephen Harper's actions are rated disparagingly by almost half of Canadians. Despite the fact that two-in-five respondents regard him as secretive and arrogant, the incumbent prime minister is the first option for Canadians on most major policy issues.

The Liberals are slightly ahead of their 2008 election total, with the support of about one-in-four decided voters. Michael Ignatieff continues to struggle on approval and momentum, and while he shares some of the negative words that are used to describe Harper (such as arrogant and boring), he is also perceived as inefficient and weak.

The NDP's Jack Layton, like his two main rivals, is seen as an intelligent politician, but is clearly regarded as friendly, with people using words such as down to earth, compassionate and honest to describe him. It is important to note that the good showing for the NDP in British Columbia—where Layton took part in a campaign against the unpopular harmonized sales tax (HST) last month—could become a problem for the Conservatives in the next federal election. The NDP finished in second place in 11 of the 22 federal ridings that the Tories currently hold in BC.

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

[January 2010](#) / [February 2010](#) / [March 2010](#) / [April 2010](#) / [May 2010](#)

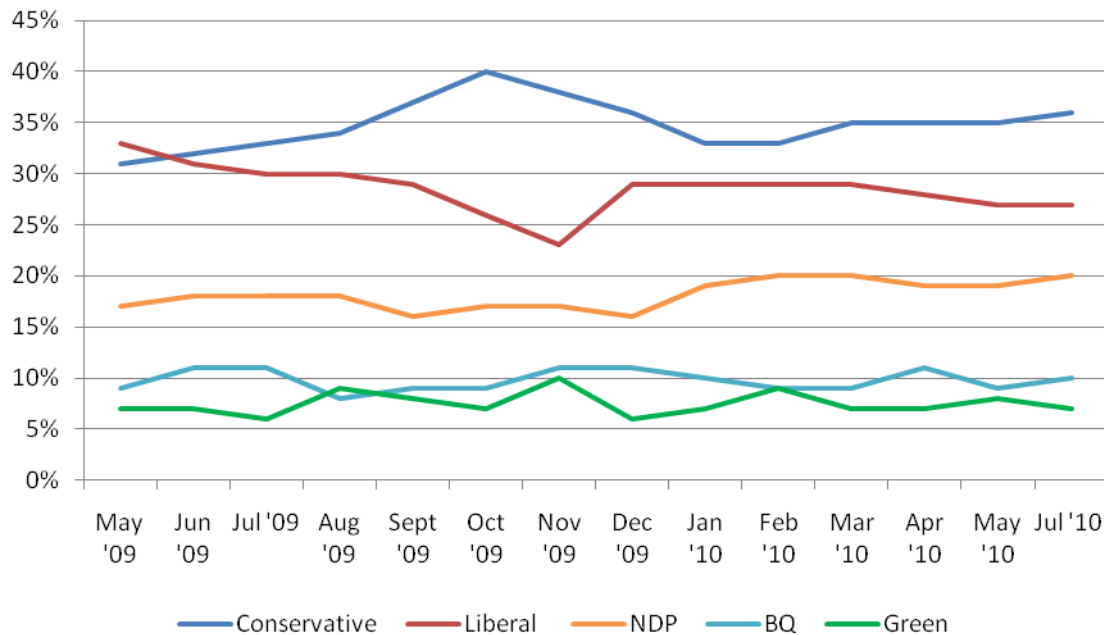
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If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency?



Canadian Political Pulse

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	Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL	2008 Election
Conservative Party	36%	35%	62%	55%	38%	19%	33%	37.6%
Liberal Party	27%	16%	15%	23%	31%	24%	50%	26.2%
New Democratic Party	20%	33%	17%	18%	20%	15%	16%	18.2%
Bloc Québécois	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	39%	0%	10.0%
Green Party	7%	13%	3%	4%	9%	3%	1%	6.8%
Other party	1%	2%	4%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1.2%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of each of the following people?
(Change since May 25-27)

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	31% (+2)	14% (+1)	31% (+1)
Disapprove	48% (-2)	53% (-3)	32% (-2)
Not sure	21% (=)	33% (+2)	37% (+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 May 25-27)

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	11% (+3)	5% (+1)	9% (+2)
Stayed the same	46% (-7)	52% (-2)	67% (-5)
Worsened	32% (=)	29% (-3)	11% (+1)
Not sure	10% (+2)	13% (+3)	14% (+2)

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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

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%	7%	31%	9%
Arrogant	43%	37%	18%	34%
Open	9%	8%	26%	11%
Secretive	45%	20%	7%	16%
Efficient	19%	6%	12%	11%
Inefficient	26%	31%	20%	19%
Compassionate	9%	8%	31%	8%
Uncaring	32%	18%	5%	16%
Honest	15%	11%	28%	14%
Dishonest	29%	20%	10%	17%
Strong	21%	8%	14%	11%
Weak	13%	26%	15%	14%
Exciting	2%	3%	9%	6%
Boring	30%	36%	17%	19%
In touch	12%	5%	18%	4%
Out of touch	34%	39%	22%	32%
Intelligent	34%	33%	36%	23%
Foolish	14%	17%	17%	20%
None of these	8%	17%	15%	26%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Thinking about these political leaders, which ONE of them would you prefer for each of the following?

Total Canada					
	Stephen Harper	Michael Ignatieff	Jack Layton	Gilles Duceppe	None / Not sure
Having a beer with you at the local bar	16%	6%	34%	9%	35%
Babysitting your kids or a relative's kids	17%	3%	30%	6%	44%
Being part of your trivia quiz team	17%	26%	15%	8%	34%
Being on your sports team	15%	4%	27%	7%	47%
Giving you a good recommendation on a book to read	15%	22%	18%	8%	38%
Being the Prime Minister in the event of a terrorist attack	37%	14%	11%	3%	35%
Representing the country at next round of climate change talks	27%	13%	26%	5%	29%
Negotiating with President Obama on trade and security issues	36%	18%	14%	4%	28%
Being the Prime Minister in the event of another Quebec referendum	31%	15%	12%	9%	33%
Negotiating with Russia over Arctic sovereignty	35%	17%	12%	5%	30%

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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 recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a high-quality, multi-streamed approach and an in-depth screening procedure.

The panels are highly engaged communities with industry leading response rates and are researched with state-of-the-art sampling techniques, combined with deep profiling on demographic, behavioural and attitudinal characteristics. 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.visioncritical.com/record-of-accuracy>

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

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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.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>**

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