

## ***MORIBUND LANDSCAPE: NO PARTY SHOWS POSITIVE MOMENTUM***

[Ottawa – December 16, 2010] – In our final poll of 2010, both lead parties have fallen back slightly. The Liberals appear to have fallen further, but none of these changes are of much significance in a log jammed political landscape.

The Conservatives are ending the year at 32.0 points, virtually tied with their 2010 average of 32.2 per cent. Nevertheless, they enjoy a significant but modest lead of 5.5 points over the moribund Liberals who, at 26.5 points, are at their lowest levels of support since July.

The Conservative Party's lead is largely built on a better performance with men and older voters. In fact, there is now a vivid straight line relationship between age and Conservative support. The Conservatives do worst of all national parties with younger voters but progressively improve to the point that they now enjoy the support of nearly half of senior voters.

The Liberals, meanwhile, hold a statistically significant lead with the university educated (but no other groups) and have relinquished their lead with those born outside Canada to the Conservatives. They have also ceded their position as the lead federalist option in Québec and are now tied with the conservative there. The two parties are in a virtual tie in Ontario.

In any case, the Liberals are showing no ability to exploit the obvious opening with younger voters (they now do best with seniors) or women. These problems are severe and explain why they can make no headway against a pretty thin 32 points for the Conservative Party. The key conclusion may be that while the Conservatives are not doing very well at all at 32 points and only 38 per cent approval of federal direction, but the rising dissatisfaction is scattered ineffectually across four other choices. There is no evidence that the Liberals are providing a common ground for the large women's and Gen X and Y votes that are unhappy with the Conservatives but not comfortable with the Liberals. The strength of the Green Party with both the Gen Y and Gen X cohorts is a new feature of the voter landscape and appears to be stabilising (but these voters are less committed).

So nothing much is very settled as Parliament adjourns for the Christmas holidays. It is very

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- **National federal vote intention:**
  - ☒ **32.0% CPC**
  - ☒ **26.5% LPC**
  - ☒ **17.1% NDP**
  - ☒ **10.9% Green**
  - ☒ **10.6% BQ**
  - ☒ **3.1% other**
- **Direction of country:**
  - ☒ **49.7% right direction**
  - ☒ **36.6% wrong direction**
  - ☒ **13.7% DK/NR**
- **Direction of government:**
  - ☒ **38.1% right direction**
  - ☒ **49.4% wrong direction**
  - ☒ **12.5% DK/NR**

*Please note that the methodology is provided at the end of this document.*

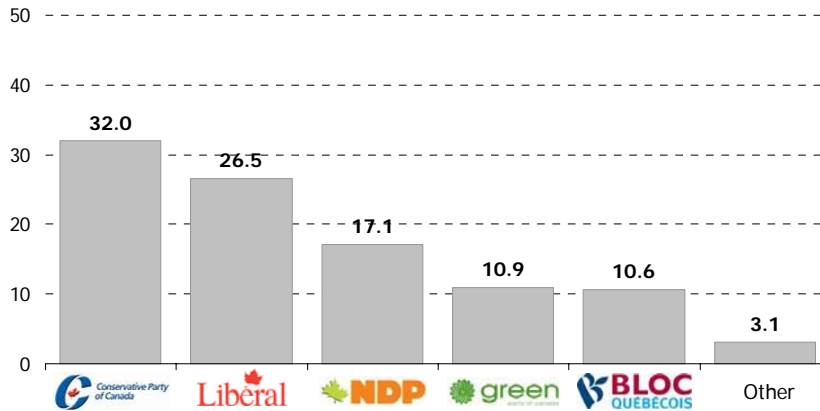
difficult to predict where things will evolve in the New Year, but with no party cracking even one in three and less than two in five happy with overall federal direction, there is no sense of pervasive Christmas cheer evident in voter outlook on this parliament.

The key question for the New Year will be if and how the under 40 vote (and the women's vote) will engage and settle in an otherwise inert political landscape.

## Top Line Results:

### Federal vote intention: December 9-15

Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?



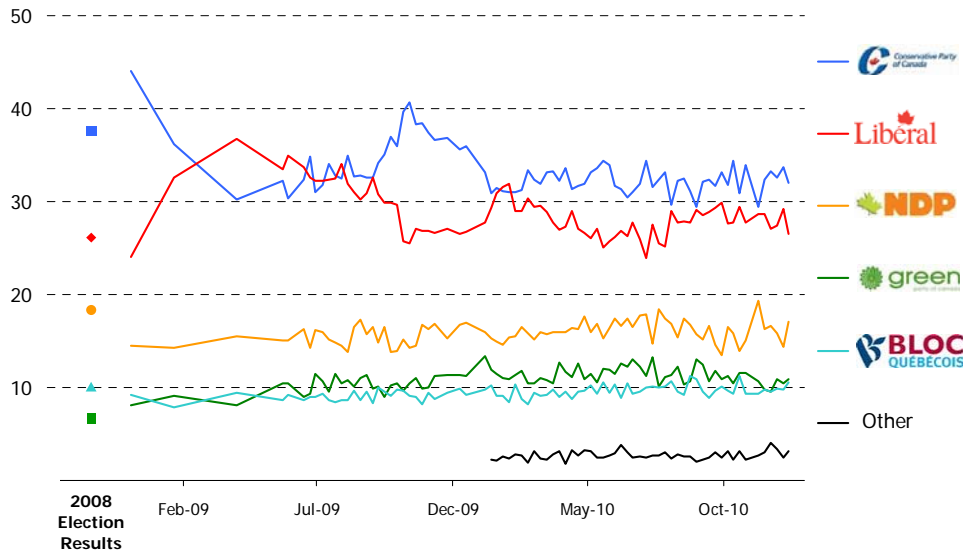
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only. Our survey also finds that 15.0% of Canadians are undecided/ineligible to vote.

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BASE: Decided voters; December 9-15, 2010 (n=2,135)

### Weekly tracking of federal vote intention

Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?



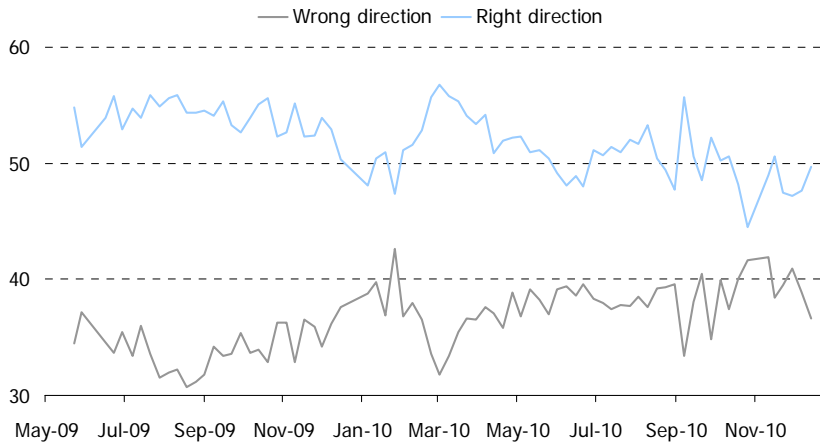
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only. Our survey also finds that 15.0% of Canadians are undecided/ineligible to vote.

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BASE: Decided voters; most recent data point December 9-15, 2010 (n=2,135)

## Direction of country

Q. All things considered, would you say the country is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

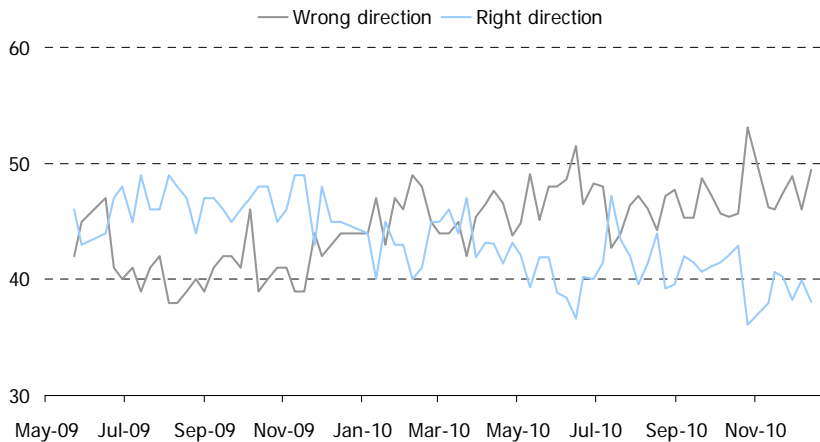


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BASE: Canadians; most recent data point December 9-15, 2010 (n=half sample)

## Direction of government

Q. All things considered, would you say the Government of Canada is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?



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BASE: Canadians; most recent data point December 9-15, 2010 (n=half sample)

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## Methodology:

EKOS' weekly tracking polls are conducted using Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) technology, which allows respondents to enter their preferences by punching the keypad on their phone, rather than telling them to an operator.

In an effort to reduce the coverage bias of landline only RDD, we created a dual landline/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able to reach those with both a landline and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and landline only households. This dual frame yields a near perfect unweighted distribution on age group and gender, something almost never seen with traditional landline RDD sample or interviewer-administered surveys.

The field dates for this survey are December 9-15, 2010<sup>1</sup>. In total, a random sample of 2,490 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 2,135 decided voters). The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-2.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Please note that the margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as region, sex, age, education). All the data have been statistically weighted to ensure the samples composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that these dates are not inclusive of weekends, as we do not survey on Saturday or Sunday.