

CANADIAN POLITICAL PULSE

New Democrats Edge Slumping Conservatives in Canada

With Justin Trudeau as leader, the Liberals have potential to once again become the most popular federal party in Canada.

[OTTAWA – Jun. 18, 2012] – The New Democratic Party (NDP) currently enjoy the political momentum in Canada, following a noticeable drop in the approval rating for Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll in partnership with the *Toronto Star* has found.

The online survey of a representative national sample of 1,500 Canadian adults also found that, if Justin Trudeau became the leader of the Liberals, he would have the most potential of all leadership candidates to take the party from third to first place at the federal level.

Voting Intention

Across Canada, 35 per cent of decided voters and leaners (+2 since May) would support the NDP in the next federal election, while 34 per cent (-3) would cast a ballot for the Tories.

The Liberal Party is third with 19 per cent (+1), followed by the Bloc Québécois with six per cent (-1), and the Green Party with five per cent (+1).

The Conservatives remain the most popular choice for voters in Alberta (58%), Manitoba and Saskatchewan (55%) and Ontario (38%). The New Democrats maintain the upper hand in Quebec (42%) and are now the clear frontrunners in British Columbia (40%). The Liberals have their best showing in Atlantic Canada (24%) and Ontario (23%).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention in Canada: NDP 35% (+2), Con. 34% (-3), Lib. 19% (+1), BQ 6% (-1), Grn. 5% (+1)**
- **Approval Rating: Mulcair 45% (-1), Harper 38% (-7), Rae 38% (+4), May 35% (+1)**
- **With Justin Trudeau as leader, the Liberals would have a double-digit lead over the Conservatives, with the NDP in third place**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From June 15 to June 16, 2012, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,500 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.5%, 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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Among male decided voters, the Conservative lead over the NDP has dwindled from 15 points last month to just six (39% to 33%). Among women, the New Democrats hold a seven-point advantage (37% to 30%). Middle-aged voters are evenly split among the Tories and the NDP. The Conservatives keep the upper hand among respondents over the age of 55 (44%), and the New Democrats remain ahead among those aged 18-to-34 (40%).

Three federal parties—Conservatives, NDP and Bloc—continue to keep the support of at least four-in-five of the voters who supported them in the May 2011 federal election. The Liberals maintain a retention rate of 72 per cent, and are losing 18 per cent of their voters to the NDP.

Approval and Momentum

The approval rating for New Democratic Party (NDP) and Official Opposition leader Thomas Mulcair is stable at 45 per cent (-1), while Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper dropped seven points in a month (38%). Interim Liberal Party leader Bob Rae increased his standing by four points (38%), while Green Party leader Elizabeth May did not go through any severe fluctuations (35%, +1).

Mulcair managed to post a positive momentum score this month (+2), while Rae (-2), May (-13) and Harper (-30) all had a negative outcome.

Liberal Party Leadership

This survey was conducted after interim Liberal leader Bob Rae announced that he will not seek to become the party's full time leader. Respondents were provided with the names of 12 people who have either announced they are running for the Liberal leadership, or have been as possible candidates.

The most popular prospective Liberal leader is Justin Trudeau, who is seen as a good choice for the job by 42 per cent of Canadians. Marc Garneau is regarded as a good option by 23 per cent of respondents, but only three other possible contenders surpass 10 per cent: Mark Carney (15%), Ralph Goodale (14%) and Gerard Kennedy (11%).

Six of the prospective candidates were also included in a separate question to see whether voting intention would be impacted if they served as leaders of the Liberal Party. A similar question has been asked before by Angus Reid Public Opinion to gauge support for a [merged centre-left party](#) in 2010, for the [NDP under different leaders](#) in 2011, for a [coalition of centre-right parties](#) in British Columbia earlier this year.

The fortunes of the Liberals do not vary greatly under Dominic LeBlanc, David McGuinty, Ralph Goodale and Gerard Kennedy: the Grits would still be a distant third behind the Tories and the NDP. However, two possible leaders do generate momentum for the Liberals. With Marc Garneau as leader, Canada's political scene becomes a three-way race, with the Conservatives (32%), the Liberals (28%) and the New

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Democrats (27%) separated by a few points. A Liberal Party led by Justin Trudeau would become the national frontrunner (40%), with substantial leads over the Conservatives (30%) and the NDP (21%).

The notion of a merger between the New Democrats and the Liberals is endorsed by 38 per cent of Canadians, with the highest support coming from Quebec (46%) and the lowest in Alberta (24%). A merger of New Democrats and Greens is backed by 35 per cent of respondents, while just 28 per cent would consent to uniting the Liberals and the Greens.

Recently, some NDP and Liberal riding associations across the country have mused that they are considering supporting a joint candidate between the two of them in the next federal election to consolidate support and improve the chances of that joint candidate defeating the riding's Conservative candidate. If this scenario materialized in their riding, 38 per cent of Canadians would be willing to vote for the joint NDP/Liberal candidate—including 37 per cent in British Columbia, 38 per cent in Ontario and 44 per cent in Quebec.

Analysis

Currently, the federal NDP seem to enjoy all the political momentum in Canada, achieving a statistical dead-heat with the ruling Conservatives. This success seems to be bolstered by the fact that NDP leader, Thomas Mulcair, currently boasts a strong approval rating among Canadians, in particular in British Columbia and Quebec, which have come to represent a stronghold for the official opposition. By comparison, the Conservatives dropped points nationally, in a month that saw a significant decline in Stephen Harper's approval rating.

With the announcement that interim leader Bob Rae will not seek the leadership of the Liberal Party, the organization is forced to look into the future, and it seems that two Quebecers are currently in the best position to help the party. Marc Garneau would position the Liberals in competitive footing with the New Democrats, but it is Justin Trudeau who appears to have the popularity and name recognition which could help the Grits regain support across the country.

Early musings about the Liberals and NDP working together at the riding association level to support a joint candidate does not currently demonstrate strong potential to defeat local Conservative candidates, although voters in Ontario and Quebec express the greatest appetite for this scenario. Whether at the party level or individual riding level, a joining of forces of the NDP and Liberals does not appear to be the solution to loosening the Conservatives' grip on national power.

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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.

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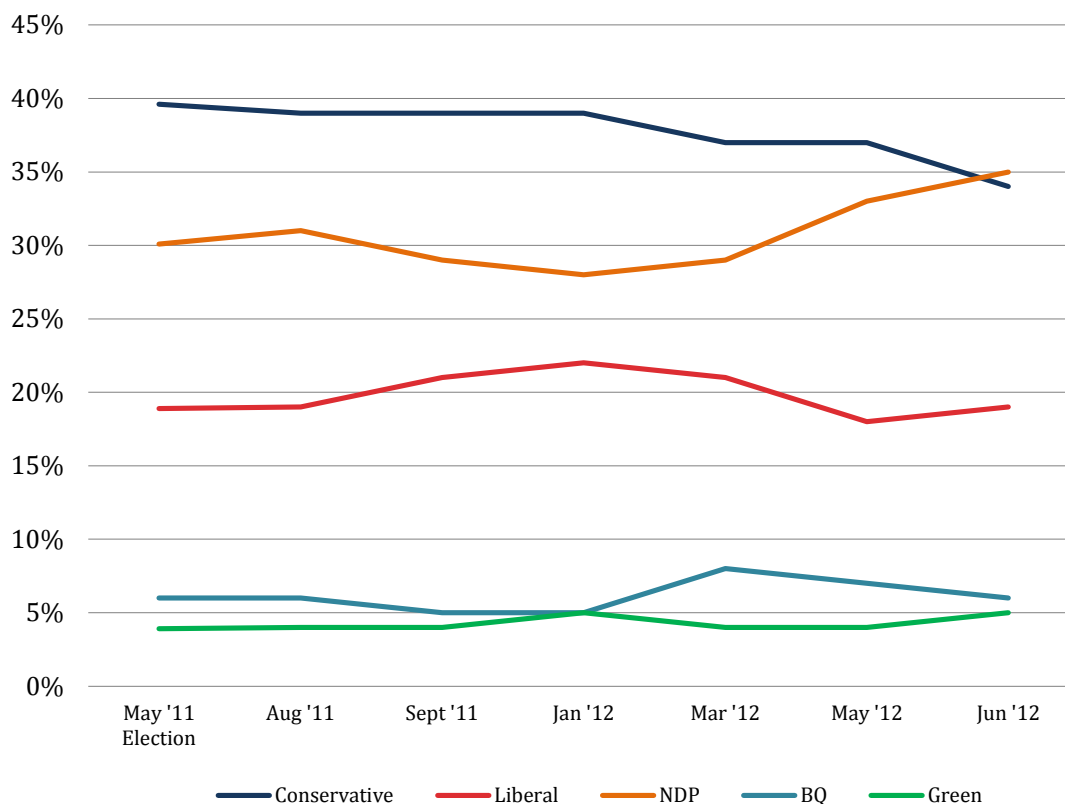
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**For more information, please contact
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If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency?



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?

	Total	Region						2011 Election
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL	
New Democratic Party	35%	40%	22%	33%	32%	42%	36%	30.1%
Conservative Party	34%	34%	58%	55%	38%	16%	30%	39.6%
Liberal Party	19%	19%	13%	10%	24%	16%	24%	18.9%
Bloc Québécois	6%	--	--	--	--	23%	--	6.0%
Green Party	5%	7%	7%	3%	6%	3%	10%	3.9%
Other party	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	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?

	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
New Democratic Party	35%	33%	37%
Conservative Party	34%	39%	30%
Liberal Party	19%	17%	20%
Bloc Québécois	6%	6%	6%
Green Party	5%	4%	7%
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?

	Total	Age		
		18-34	35-54	55+
New Democratic Party	35%	40%	35%	30%
Conservative Party	34%	25%	34%	44%
Liberal Party	19%	18%	20%	18%
Bloc Québécois	6%	8%	5%	5%
Green Party	5%	9%	5%	3%
Other party	1%	1%	1%	0%

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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?

Vote in the 2011 Federal Election					
	Con.	NDP	Lib.	BQ	Grn.
New Democratic Party	7%	85%	18%	13%	18%
Conservative Party	86%	1%	7%	0%	2%
Liberal Party	5%	8%	72%	5%	1%
Bloc Québécois	1%	4%	3%	80%	0%
Green Party	0%	2%	1%	2%	78%
Other party	0%	0%	1%	0%	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?

Total Canada				
	Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper	Interim Liberal Party leader Bob Rae	New Democratic Party (NDP) and Official Opposition leader Thomas Mulcair	Green Party leader Elizabeth May
Improved	8%	11%	20%	2%
Stayed the same	46%	62%	48%	55%
Worsened	38%	13%	18%	15%
Not sure	8%	14%	14%	28%
Momentum Score	-30	-2	+2	-13

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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	New Democratic Party (NDP) and Official Opposition leader Thomas Mulcair	Interim Liberal Party leader Bob Rae	Green Party leader Elizabeth May
Approve	38%	45%	38%	35%
Disapprove	53%	33%	44%	37%
Not sure	9%	22%	18%	28%

Canadian Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of each of the following people? –
“Approve” listed

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper	38%	35%	58%	50%	43%	23%	30%
New Democratic Party (NDP) and Official Opposition leader Thomas Mulcair	45%	43%	27%	36%	40%	66%	42%
Interim Liberal Party leader Bob Rae	38%	34%	34%	25%	37%	42%	44%
Green Party leader Elizabeth May	35%	43%	31%	33%	37%	29%	40%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Do you think each of the following politicians would make a good choice or a bad choice to lead the federal Liberal Party in the future?

	Good choice	Bad choice	Not sure
Justin Trudeau	42%	24%	34%
Marc Garneau	23%	16%	61%
Mark Carney	15%	13%	72%
Ralph Goodale	14%	18%	68%
Gerard Kennedy	11%	15%	73%
Dominic LeBlanc	9%	14%	77%
Scott Brison	9%	17%	74%
David McGuinty	9%	26%	65%
Martha Hall Findlay	6%	16%	77%
Martin Cauchon	5%	17%	78%
Jonathan Mousley	2%	14%	84%
Shane Geschiere	1%	15%	84%

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Canadian Political Pulse

Suppose that each one of the candidates listed below was already the federal Liberal Party leader. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency under each scenario?

- All Canadians

	Justin Trudeau	Gerard Kennedy	Dominic LeBlanc	Marc Garneau	David McGuinty	Ralph Goodale
Conservative Party	24%	26%	26%	25%	26%	27%
Liberal Party	34%	17%	15%	23%	16%	17%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	18%	25%	24%	22%	25%	24%
Bloc Québécois	5%	5%	7%	6%	5%	5%
Green Party	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%
<i>Undecided / Would not vote</i>	15%	23%	23%	20%	24%	23%

Canadian Political Pulse

Suppose that each one of the candidates listed below was already the federal Liberal Party leader. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency under each scenario?

- Decided Voters

	Justin Trudeau	Gerard Kennedy	Dominic LeBlanc	Marc Garneau	David McGuinty	Ralph Goodale
Conservative Party	30%	35%	35%	32%	35%	35%
Liberal Party	40%	22%	20%	28%	21%	23%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	21%	31%	31%	27%	31%	30%
Bloc Québécois	6%	6%	8%	7%	6%	6%
Green Party	4%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%

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Canadian Political Pulse

There has been some talk recently about starting a movement that would merge some of the federal political parties in an effort to combine forces and resources and defeat the current Conservative government. Would you approve or disapprove of each of the following mergers? –

“Approve” listed

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
The New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Liberal Party	38%	35%	24%	33%	37%	46%	41%
The New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Green Party	35%	39%	28%	31%	32%	44%	29%
The Liberal Party and the Green Party	28%	29%	27%	24%	26%	30%	32%

Canadian Political Pulse

As you may have heard, some NDP and Liberal riding associations are considering supporting a joint candidate between the two of them in the next federal election to consolidate support and improve the chances of that joint candidate defeating the riding’s Conservative candidate. If this scenario occurred in your riding in the next federal election, which candidate are you most likely to support?

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
The Conservative candidate	30%	30%	51%	46%	33%	15%	24%
The candidate representing BOTH the NDP and the Liberals	38%	37%	22%	31%	38%	44%	46%
Some other candidate	8%	6%	10%	1%	5%	16%	4%
Undecided / Would not vote	24%	26%	17%	21%	24%	24%	26%

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