

## BUDGET FAILS TO PROPEL CONSERVATIVES

NDP GETTING ALBERTA BOOST?

[Ottawa – May 8, 2015] Despite a heavily publicized budget, the Liberals appear to be closing the gap and are now tied with the Conservatives, who are now at 30.3 points and have seen a gentle erosion in their support since their peak of 35 points in early February. The current government effectively “sold the farm”, as it were, pulling out all of the stops and sparing no expense in marketing what was clearly a highly visible budget. In the end, however, the budget was not well received.<sup>1</sup> Conservative fortunes have stalled, virtually eliminating any chance of an early election call.

The NDP, meanwhile, have been consistently polling around 23-24 points for several weeks now, territory that was relatively foreign to them just a few short months ago. We now have a pretty tight three-way race with the Liberals and Conservatives tied and holding a small advantage over the NDP.

Regionally, there have been no decisive movements aside from the elimination of the Conservative lead in Ontario. The NDP have also enjoyed a modest improvement in the west, particularly in Alberta, where they have enjoyed a slow but continuous rise since mid-February. Seniors, who responded well to the April 21<sup>st</sup> budget, have nestled back into their old patterns and the commanding lead enjoyed by the Conservatives last week has narrowed from 18 points to just seven.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Federal vote intention:**
  - ▣ **30.3% Conservative Party**
  - ▣ **29.6% Liberal Party**
  - ▣ **24.2% NDP**
  - ▣ **7.3% Green Party**
  - ▣ **4.2% Bloc Québécois**
  - ▣ **4.5% Other**
  
- **Best plan for the country:**
  - ▣ **27% Conservative Party**
  - ▣ **22% Liberal Party**
  - ▣ **21% NDP**
  - ▣ **19% Other**
  - ▣ **11% DK/NR**
  
- **Bets plan for individuals:**
  - ▣ **26% Conservative Party**
  - ▣ **25% Liberal Party**
  - ▣ **24% NDP**
  - ▣ **15% Other**
  - ▣ **10% DK/NR**
  
- **Clearest plan:**
  - ▣ **30% Conservative Party**
  - ▣ **21% Liberal Party**
  - ▣ **18% NDP**
  - ▣ **22% Other**
  - ▣ **9% DK/NR**

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

 [twitter.com/EKOS Research](https://twitter.com/EKOS_Research)

 [facebook.com/EKOS Research](https://facebook.com/EKOS_Research)

<sup>1</sup> EKOS Research Associates, “Budget Lands with a Thud as Voters’ Intentions Locked In”, May 1, 2015. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/t2fqFI>

## Federal vote intention

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

### National Results



### 2011 Election Results



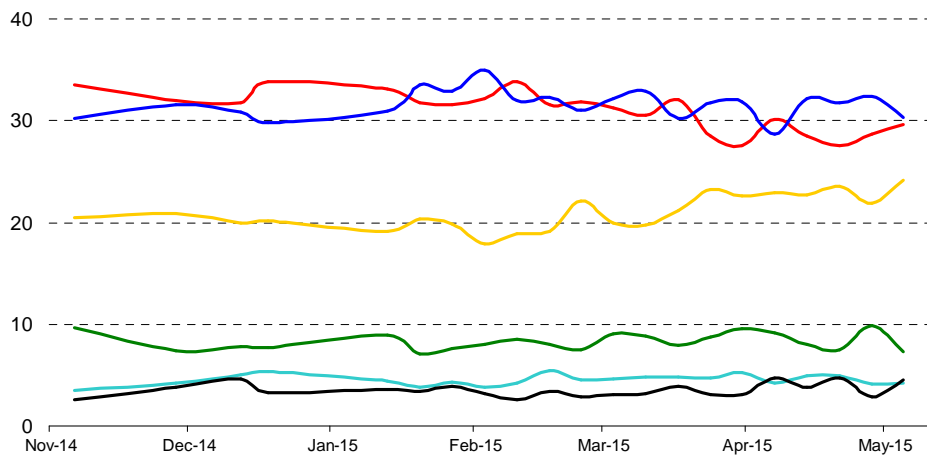
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only.

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BASE: Canadians; April 29-May 5, 2015 (n=3,017), MOE +/- 1.8%, 19 times out of 20

## Tracking federal vote intention

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

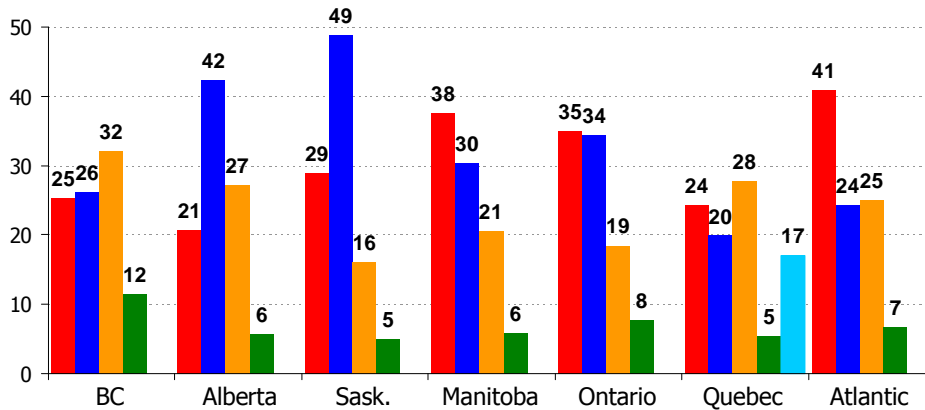


Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only.  
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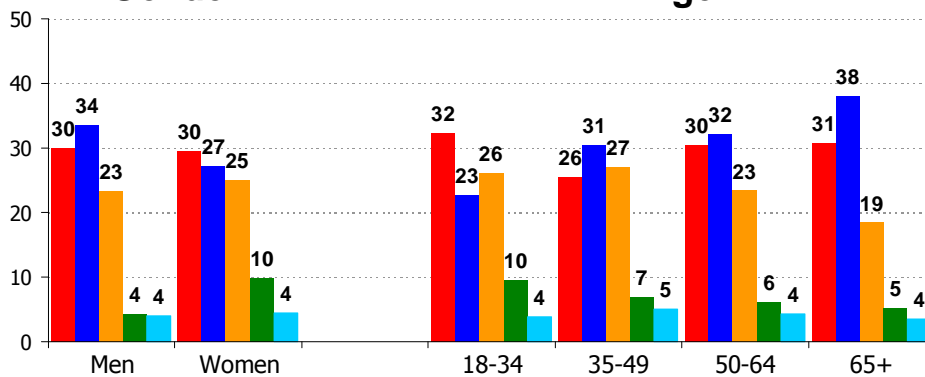
BASE: Canadians; April 29-May 5, 2015 (n=3,017), MOE +/- 1.8%, 19 times out of 20

## Vote intention by key demographics

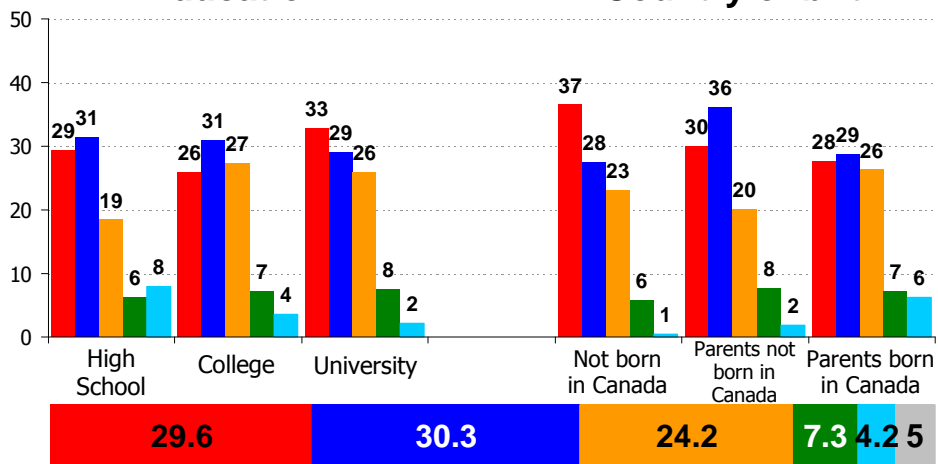
Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?



### Gender



### Education



■ Liberal 
 ■ Conservative 
 ■ NDP 
 ■ green 
 ■ BLOC QUEBÉCOIS 
 ■ Other

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BASE: Canadians; April 29-May 5, 2015 (n=3,017), MOE +/- 1.8%, 19 times out of 20

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## Implications of the Alberta election

In this week's historic election, the Alberta NDP formed government for the first time, putting an end to the Progressive Conservative Association's 44-year dynasty. Was this all a result of Rachel Notley's leadership? Or were there other forces at work? While leadership is certainly important, we believe that the results reflect a broader transformation seen throughout Canada. Anxious about middle class stagnation (47% of Albertans select restoring middle class progress as their most important election issue<sup>2</sup>), Albertans were growing weary of the model of austerity and trickle-down economics, instead favouring a shift from staples and extraction to innovation and, as Ms. Notley described it, "value-added" economics.

Another major implication of the Alberta election was the education gap between parties. The Alberta election showed a clear rejection of Progressive Conservatives by Alberta's university graduates. Furthermore, we saw a remarkable unification of the university and college votes,<sup>3</sup> who usually stand light-years apart in terms of vote-intention (college graduates have traditionally supported the Conservatives, while university graduates have traditionally supported the progressive options, particularly the Liberals). Could this be a sign that Canada's "elite" are growing weary of the anti-intellectualism and indifference – even hostility – to professionalism and science evident in some of the conservative movement in Canada? All of this remains important to watch.

Another interesting finding is that the "orange fever" that has gripped Alberta predates the provincial election (and was not the product of some last-minute shift). At the federal level, the NDP have been steadily gaining ground in Alberta for some time. In February, the federal NDP were polling in the low-to-mid teens in Alberta. Since then, they have enjoyed a slow but steady rise and now stand at 27 points. While none of the week-to-week movements have been statistically significant in and of themselves, the overall trend is very much real and significant.

Finally, the Alberta election has shown that a motivated center-left can move en masse to produce some pretty shocking results. In Alberta, the NDP were the most plausible non-conservative rallying point for what became a traffic-light coalition of Liberal, NDP, and Green Party supporters. It is unclear how this election will affect voters' strategic impulses at the federal level. Nearly 70 per cent of voters are distributed over the four center and left options. For now, the Liberals are seen as the best progressive option, but by a much less decisive margin than the Alberta NDP.

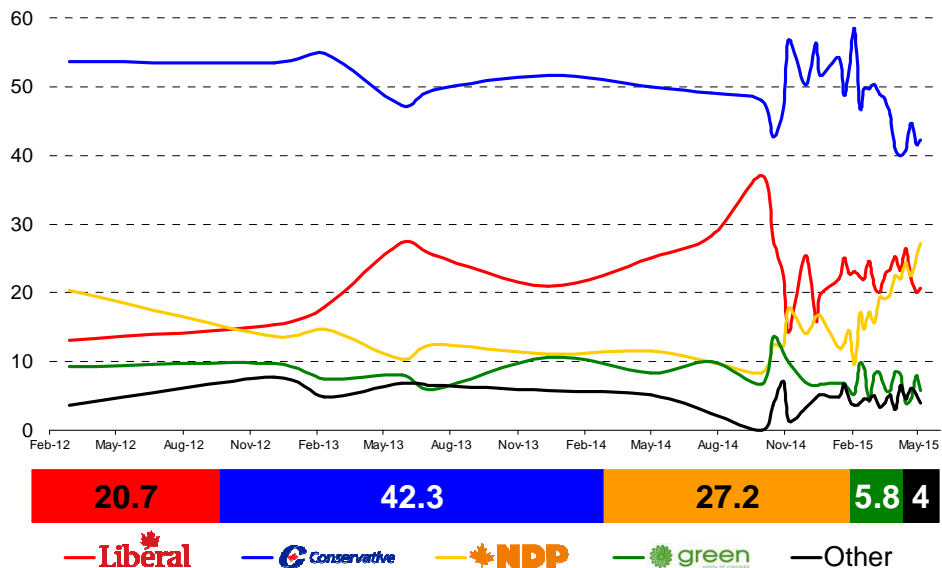
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<sup>2</sup> EKOS Research Associates, "*Liberals rebound in Quebec as Harper's emotional connections with voters weaker*", April 10, 2015. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/wAaHBV>

<sup>3</sup> EKOS Research Associates, "*Alberta NDP Headed to a Win, Likely a Majority*", May 4, 2015. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/unW3Ka>

## Tracking vote intention: Alberta

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.  
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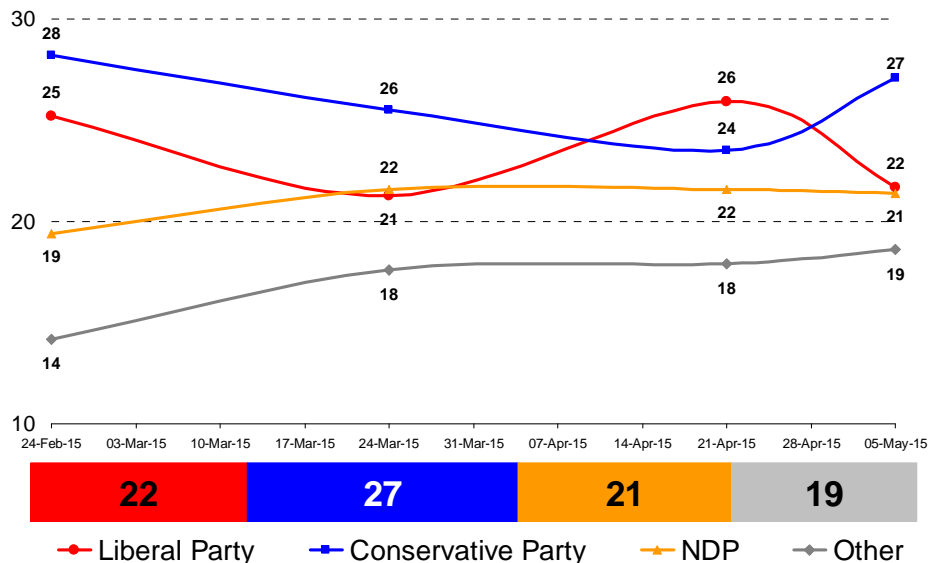
BASE: Alberta residents; April 29-May 5, 2015 (n=994), MOE +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20

## Liberals make progress on clarity; lose ground on best plan for country

In this release, we updated our tracking on which party has the best and clearest plan. Earlier this week, the Liberals unveiled a major plank of their platform detailing their plan for the middle class. The announcement seems to have had a somewhat polarizing effect. The Liberals have enjoyed a modest uptick in terms of clarity of their plan and are now tied for best poised to deliver the best plan for individual Canadians. However, they seem to have lost credibility on presenting the best plan for the country as a whole, with just 22 per cent of Canadians identifying the Liberals as the best party to do so, five points behind the Conservatives.

### Best plan for improving the country

Q. Which party has the best plan or ideas for IMPROVING THE COUNTRY?

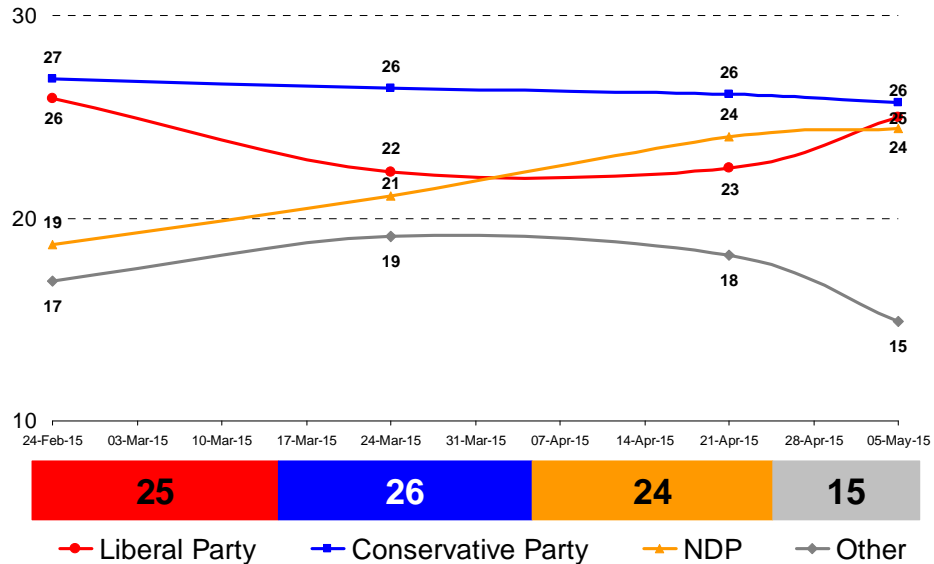


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BASE: Canadians (third-sample); April 29-May 5, 2015 (n=982), MOE +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20

## Best plan for individual citizens

Q. Which party has the best plan or ideas for YOU PERSONALLY?

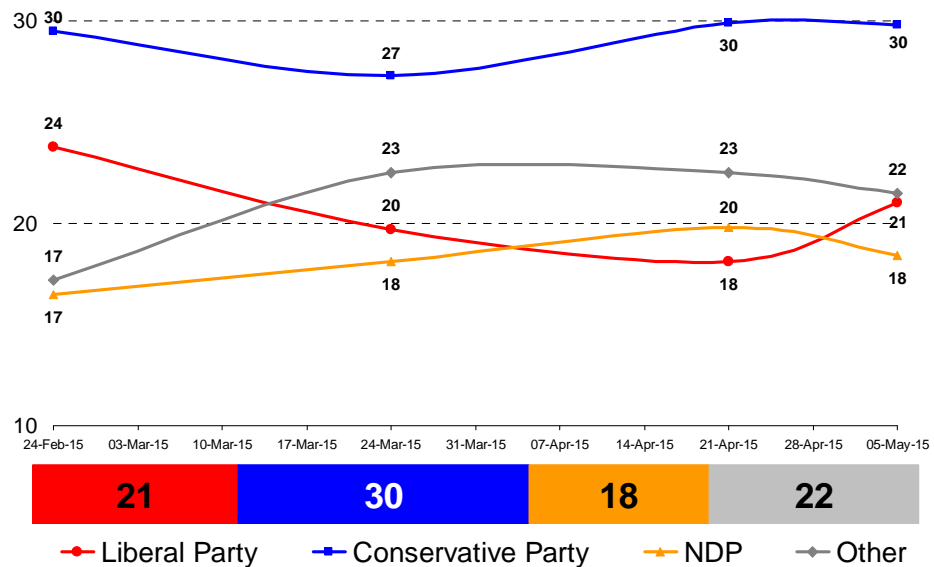


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BASE: Canadians (third-sample); April 29-May 5, 2015 (n=1,106), MOE +/- 3.0%, 19 times out of 20

## Party that presents the clearest plan

Q. Which party has the clearest plan or ideas for the future?



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BASE: Canadians (third-sample); April 29-May 5, 2015 (n=929), MOE +/- 3.2%, 19 times out of 20

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## Final comments

It will be important to watch the impacts of the latest Liberal announcements and see if the NDP majority in Alberta has any impact at the federal level over the next week. What is clear is that a massively promoted Conservative budget has largely missed the mark and the Conservatives are falling back, not moving forward.



## Detailed tables:

<b>National Federal Vote Intention (decided and leaning voters only)</b>								
<i>Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for? [If undecided] Even if you do not have a firm idea, are you leaning towards a party? [If yes] As it stands, towards which party are you leaning?</i>								
	Liberal Party	Conser- vative Party	NDP	Green Party	Bloc Québécois	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>24.2%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>2597</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>REGION</b>								
British Columbia	25.4%	26.2%	32.1%	11.5%	–	4.7%	335	5.4
Alberta	20.7%	42.3%	27.2%	5.8%	–	3.9%	892	3.3
Saskatchewan	29.0%	48.8%	16.1%	5.0%	–	1.1%	88	10.5
Manitoba	37.6%	30.4%	20.5%	5.9%	–	5.6%	101	9.8
Ontario	35.0%	34.4%	18.5%	7.8%	–	4.3%	656	3.8
Quebec	24.3%	19.9%	27.8%	5.4%	17.1%	5.6%	346	5.3
Atlantic Canada	40.8%	24.4%	25.1%	6.8%	–	3.0%	168	7.6
<b>GENDER</b>								
Male	30.0%	33.5%	23.3%	4.3%	4.0%	4.8%	1212	2.8
Female	29.5%	27.2%	25.1%	9.8%	4.4%	4.0%	1347	2.7
<b>AGE</b>								
<35	32.3%	22.8%	26.1%	9.6%	3.8%	5.5%	197	7.0
35-49	25.6%	30.5%	27.1%	7.0%	5.1%	4.7%	434	4.7
50-64	30.4%	32.2%	23.4%	6.1%	4.3%	3.6%	884	3.3
65+	30.8%	38.0%	18.5%	5.3%	3.5%	3.8%	1039	3.0
<b>EDUCATION</b>								
High school or less	29.3%	31.4%	18.5%	6.2%	8.0%	6.7%	640	3.9
College or CEGEP	25.9%	30.9%	27.3%	7.2%	3.6%	5.0%	792	3.5
University or higher	32.8%	29.0%	25.9%	7.5%	2.2%	2.6%	1107	3.0
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b>								
Not born in Canada	36.6%	27.5%	23.1%	5.8%	0.5%	6.5%	415	4.8
Parents not born in Canada	30.0%	36.1%	20.1%	7.6%	1.8%	4.4%	726	3.6
Both parents born in Canada	27.7%	28.7%	26.2%	7.2%	6.2%	4.0%	1422	2.6

### **Best Plan for Improving the Country**

*Q. [THIRD-SAMPLE ONLY] Which party has the best plan or ideas for IMPROVING THE COUNTRY?*

	Liberal Party	Conservative Party	NDP	Other	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
British Columbia	25.0%	15.7%	24.6%	20.1%	14.6%	134	8.5
Alberta	13.9%	36.7%	20.9%	11.1%	17.4%	335	5.4
Saskatchewan	19.4%	32.1%	29.7%	2.5%	16.2%	26	19.2
Manitoba	10.7%	27.0%	28.8%	13.0%	20.4%	38	15.9
Ontario	23.4%	30.8%	16.4%	21.9%	7.5%	258	6.1
Quebec	21.6%	23.7%	27.2%	19.4%	8.1%	116	9.1
Atlantic Canada	24.6%	22.1%	19.6%	17.8%	15.9%	70	11.7
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	26.9%	30.4%	22.1%	16.3%	4.3%	434	4.7
Female	19.4%	27.2%	22.8%	22.4%	8.1%	494	4.4
<b>AGE</b>							
<35	21.9%	21.3%	27.8%	23.5%	5.4%	64	12.3
35-49	17.9%	22.9%	25.0%	25.1%	9.1%	148	8.1
50-64	26.3%	31.5%	17.9%	16.7%	7.6%	330	5.4
65+	25.7%	38.7%	19.1%	13.0%	3.5%	382	5.0
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	24.8%	35.0%	14.9%	19.8%	5.5%	231	6.5
College or CEGEP	20.7%	30.1%	21.2%	20.3%	7.8%	294	5.7
University or higher	24.0%	23.0%	29.1%	19.1%	4.8%	387	5.0
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b>							
Not born in Canada	18.1%	33.7%	21.0%	22.6%	4.6%	160	7.8
Parents not born in Canada	24.4%	32.7%	19.1%	14.9%	8.9%	269	6.0
Both parents born in Canada	23.4%	25.1%	24.4%	21.0%	6.1%	497	4.4
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Liberal Party	66.0%	11.2%	9.9%	7.7%	5.2%	215	6.7
Conservative Party	5.8%	85.1%	2.5%	3.9%	2.7%	313	5.5
NDP	4.9%	7.5%	72.9%	11.7%	3.0%	205	6.8
Green Party	15.8%	1.3%	13.6%	68.1%	1.3%	53	13.5
Bloc Québécois	20.8%	0.0%	16.4%	62.8%	0.0%	21	21.4

### **Best Plan for Individual Citizens**

*Q. [THIRD-SAMPLE ONLY] Which party has the best plan or ideas for YOU PERSONALLY?*

	Liberal Party	Conservative Party	NDP	Other	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>1106</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
British Columbia	16.2%	21.3%	28.8%	19.8%	13.9%	146	8.1
Alberta	22.8%	36.7%	18.0%	10.8%	11.8%	353	5.2
Saskatchewan	11.7%	44.8%	15.9%	18.8%	8.7%	49	14.0
Manitoba	24.6%	30.8%	20.7%	16.4%	7.5%	48	14.1
Ontario	30.2%	25.2%	22.0%	11.8%	10.8%	280	5.9
Quebec	21.8%	22.7%	29.0%	20.9%	5.6%	144	8.2
Atlantic Canada	32.1%	17.0%	29.5%	9.9%	11.5%	83	10.8
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	26.1%	33.1%	23.4%	12.7%	4.7%	486	4.5
Female	26.0%	20.0%	27.6%	18.1%	8.3%	566	4.1
<b>AGE</b>							
<35	28.2%	21.0%	34.3%	9.5%	6.9%	92	10.2
35-49	24.8%	25.0%	24.3%	18.8%	7.0%	180	7.3
50-64	25.1%	30.0%	19.4%	20.1%	5.4%	366	5.1
65+	25.9%	32.8%	21.0%	13.3%	7.1%	415	4.8
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	24.6%	29.4%	20.8%	16.4%	8.8%	272	5.9
College or CEGEP	23.0%	24.0%	27.9%	17.9%	7.2%	343	5.3
University or higher	29.5%	26.5%	27.3%	13.3%	3.5%	430	4.7
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b>							
Not born in Canada	27.2%	26.4%	29.7%	13.1%	3.5%	166	7.6
Parents not born in Canada	20.2%	31.6%	19.4%	22.0%	6.8%	286	5.8
Both parents born in Canada	27.9%	24.5%	26.5%	13.5%	7.7%	604	4.0
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Liberal Party	74.9%	9.0%	9.3%	4.5%	2.2%	257	6.1
Conservative Party	7.0%	78.5%	5.0%	5.7%	3.9%	345	5.3
NDP	6.9%	5.6%	78.3%	7.8%	1.4%	230	6.5
Green Party	9.6%	5.7%	15.2%	64.2%	5.3%	50	13.9
Bloc Québécois	1.5%	0.0%	8.5%	74.1%	16.0%	26	19.2

### **Clearest Plan**

*Q. [THIRD-SAMPLE ONLY] Which party has the clearest plan or ideas for the future?*

	Liberal Party	Conservative Party	NDP	Other	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>18.4%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
British Columbia	12.4%	30.8%	23.0%	24.5%	9.4%	120	9.0
Alberta	10.9%	35.1%	22.0%	18.6%	13.5%	306	5.6
Saskatchewan	22.8%	45.8%	11.0%	10.6%	9.9%	29	18.2
Manitoba	23.6%	33.2%	6.6%	15.9%	20.7%	37	16.1
Ontario	19.4%	33.3%	18.5%	17.1%	11.6%	241	6.3
Quebec	25.6%	21.4%	19.0%	30.7%	3.4%	131	8.6
Atlantic Canada	36.6%	26.3%	11.1%	16.3%	9.7%	60	12.7
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	23.0%	35.3%	17.2%	20.1%	4.5%	420	4.8
Female	20.7%	26.8%	19.9%	23.8%	8.9%	473	4.5
<b>AGE</b>							
<35	27.6%	21.5%	16.5%	30.1%	4.3%	77	11.2
35-49	16.1%	37.0%	15.5%	22.3%	9.1%	159	7.8
50-64	19.7%	28.4%	24.1%	18.4%	9.5%	295	5.7
65+	23.2%	39.3%	19.2%	13.5%	4.8%	359	5.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	24.8%	24.7%	10.8%	32.8%	6.9%	246	6.3
College or CEGEP	21.1%	32.5%	22.6%	17.4%	6.4%	267	6.0
University or higher	19.2%	35.4%	22.1%	16.7%	6.6%	369	5.1
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b>							
Not born in Canada	21.1%	28.7%	22.0%	17.9%	10.4%	156	7.9
Parents not born in Canada	23.1%	32.8%	15.9%	21.4%	6.8%	244	6.3
Both parents born in Canada	20.6%	30.1%	19.5%	23.4%	6.4%	497	4.4
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Liberal Party	56.6%	10.4%	11.0%	15.0%	7.1%	238	6.4
Conservative Party	3.0%	88.8%	4.7%	1.1%	2.4%	296	5.7
NDP	8.9%	5.4%	63.2%	17.5%	5.0%	176	7.4
Green Party	20.9%	3.1%	8.8%	60.4%	6.9%	52	13.6
Bloc Québécois	15.4%	4.0%	0.0%	77.8%	2.7%	17	23.8

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## Methodology:

This study was conducted using High Definition Interactive Voice Response (HD-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 a landline and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and landline only households.

The field dates for this survey are April 29-May 5, 2015. In total, a random sample of 3,017 Canadian adults aged 18 and over responded to the survey. The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-1.8 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 by **age, gender, region, and educational attainment** to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.