



Conservatives Take Seven-Point Lead

But more Canadians prefer a Liberal government to a Conservative one.

[TORONTO – September 16, 2009] – With the possibility of a federal election beginning in the next two weeks, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservatives are ahead of Michael Ignatieff's Liberals by 36 per cent (up 3% since September 3rd) to 29 per cent (down 3%), the Canadian Political Pulse conducted by Angus Reid Strategies in partnership with the *Toronto Star* has found.

The NDP remains in third place with 17 per cent, the BQ has 10 per cent and the Greens are at seven per cent – all three parties essentially unchanged from their result in last year's federal election.

Only one in three Canadians (31%, down one point) support the opposition parties forcing an election this year, while nearly twice as many (58%, up one point) are opposed to an election. Support for an early ballot is highest in Quebec (at 38%), but even there more people (44%) are opposed.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting intention: Con 36%, Lib 29%, NDP 17%, BQ 10%, Grn 7%**
- **31% support opposition parties toppling the Conservative government; 58% are opposed**
- **Preferred outcome of a federal election: Con Majority 34%, Con Minority 12%, Lib Minority 23%, Lib Majority 31%**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From September 11 to September 13 Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among 1,002 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%, 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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If there is an election, the most popular outcome would be some type of Liberal government: 31 per cent of people prefer a Liberal majority and another 23 per cent think a Liberal minority is the best outcome of an election. A Liberal minority is more popular amongst people who voted BQ and NDP in 2008.

While a majority of people's preferred outcome is some sort of Liberal government, the single most popular outcome is a Conservative majority (34%), while only one in eight Canadians (12%) would like the status quo of a Conservative minority to continue. It is also worth noting that support for a majority of either stripe now approaches two thirds (65%), a clear demonstration that patience is wearing thin for minority governments.

However, when Canadians are asked what they think the most likely outcome of a federal election will be, half of them (49%) think it will be the status quo: a Conservative minority. Another 28 per cent expect a Liberal minority, 14 per cent expect a Conservative majority and only one in ten (10%) think the Liberals will win a majority. Canadians are tired of the current situation, but expect it to continue regardless, which perhaps explains why so many are opposed to having an election.

Best Represents

Respondents were asked which of the federal political parties best represent certain groups. More people (28%) choose the Conservatives as the party that best represents people like them than any other party; about one in five (21%) choose the Liberals, 16 per cent say the NDP, nine per cent the BQ and six per cent the Greens. It is worth noting that all of these numbers are lower than the respective ballot support of each of the parties.

Older people are more likely to see the Conservatives representing people like them, as are Canadians in middle and high income households. The Liberals are more likely to be chosen by people with a university education as the party that best represents them.

Canadians are split on which party best represents the middle class, with the Conservatives at 25 per cent and the Liberals at 24 per cent. One in five (21%) say it is the NDP and the same number say none of the parties best represents the middle class. This is a crucial battle ground, and the party that can take a decisive lead on this measure could certainly win the election.

Canadians were also asked which party best represents the needs of their province. Residents of Alberta (64%), and Manitoba and Saskatchewan (30%) are most likely to choose the Conservative party. The Liberals were the top choice in Ontario (31%) and Atlantic Canada (27%), while predictably the BQ was the top choice in Quebec (51%). British Columbia is in some ways the most interesting result, with a tie between the NDP and Conservatives (both at 26%) for who best represents the province.

The Provinces

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In vote-rich Ontario, the Conservatives have a 12 point lead over the Liberals, and this province is the source of their growth. Quebec is keeping the Liberal vote competitive, with a near tie between the BQ (40%) and the Liberals, only four points behind (at 36%). In the west, the Conservatives lead in British Columbia (41%), Alberta (64%), Manitoba and Saskatchewan (47%). The most competitive region is the Atlantic provinces, where the NDP (34%) has a small lead over the Conservatives and Liberals (tied at 31%).

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Canadian Political Pulse - TREND

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

	Sep 11-13	Sep 1-2	2008 Election
Conservative	36%	33%	37.6%
Liberal	29%	32%	26.2%
NDP	17%	19%	18.2%
BQ	10%	9%	10.0%
Green	7%	7%	6.8%

Canadian Political Pulse -REGIONS

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

	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Conservative	36%	41%	64%	47%	41%	13%	31%
Liberal	29%	22%	18%	29%	29%	36%	31%
NDP	17%	26%	6%	14%	18%	10%	34%
BQ	10%	--	--	--	--	40%	--
Green	7%	6%	9%	10%	10%	2%	4%

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Canadian Political Pulse –TOPPLING THE GOVERNMENT

Do you support or oppose the opposition parties in the House of Commons toppling the government to force a new federal election this year?

	Voted in 2008					
	Total	CON	LIB	NDP	BQ	GRN
Strongly Support	13%	3%	25%	18%	29%	12%
Moderately Support	18%	3%	24%	26%	26%	31%
Moderately Oppose	16%	9%	19%	18%	13%	28%
Strongly Oppose	43%	83%	25%	22%	22%	27%

Canadian Political Pulse – ELECTION OUTCOMES

If you had to choose, which one of these four possible electoral outcomes would you prefer?

And, if you had to pick one, which one of these four possible electoral outcomes do you believe will actually happen?

	PREFER	EXPECT
Conservative Majority	34%	14%
Conservative Minority	12%	49%
Liberal Minority	23%	28%
Liberal Majority	31%	10%

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Canadian Political Pulse –PEOPLE LIKE YOU

Which party best represents the needs of: People like you ?

	Total	Age			Household Income		
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Under \$50k	\$50k to \$99k	\$100k +
Conservative	28%	23%	25%	37%	21%	31%	40%
Liberal	21%	19%	19%	24%	18%	22%	21%
NDP	16%	18%	18%	11%	18%	17%	11%
BQ	9%	6%	10%	10%	13%	8%	5%
Green	6%	11%	4%	4%	8%	5%	6%
None of them	20%	22%	24%	14%	22%	17%	18%

Canadian Political Pulse –THE MIDDLE CLASS

Which party best represents the needs of: the Middle Class ?

	Total	Age			Household Income		
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Under \$50k	\$50k to \$99k	\$100k +
Conservative	25%	21%	24%	32%	20%	27%	28%
Liberal	24%	24%	24%	23%	23%	27%	20%
NDP	21%	23%	19%	20%	19%	22%	18%
BQ	7%	5%	6%	10%	10%	7%	3%
Green	3%	4%	3%	1%	3%	3%	2%
None of them	21%	23%	24%	14%	25%	16%	18%

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Canadian Political Pulse –YOUR PROVINCE

Which party best represents the needs of: Your Province ?

	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Conservative	26%	64%	30%	29%	6%	24%
Liberal	14%	11%	15%	31%	22%	27%
NDP	26%	6%	26%	13%	2%	21%
BQ	--	--	--	--	51%	--
Green	7%	2%	6%	3%	1%	4%
None of them	24%	17%	22%	23%	16%	24%

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Angus Reid Strategies is a full-service polling and market research firm which 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 Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995.

Angus Reid Strategies, along with its sister company, Vision Critical, is now the largest Canadian-owned market research enterprise. 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 Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.

Angus Reid Strategies, 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.

www.angusreidstrategies.com/arsmakeshistory

Since 2006, Angus Reid Strategies 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.

www.angusreidstrategies.com/neweraofpolling

www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2008.12.09_QuebecElection.pdf

More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at www.angusreidstrategies.com/comingofage

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
www.angusreidstrategies.com**

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