



# Federal Conservatives Widen Lead over Liberals

*Harper leads Ignatieff in the Best Prime Minister category by 11 points.*

[TORONTO – September 26, 2009] – The threat of a federal election is still looming but not much has changed in the minds of Canadian voters, a new Angus Reid Strategies/*Toronto Star* poll has found.

The Canadian Political Pulse has found that the Conservative Party is up one point since a mid-September poll, to 37 per cent; the Liberals have remained stagnant at 29 per cent. The New Democratic Party is down one point to 16 per cent, the Bloc Québécois is down to 9 per cent (-1), and the Greens have added one point to reach eight per cent.

“The threat of an election has only increased the Conservative lead,” said Jodi Shanoff, Vice-President of Public Affairs at Angus Reid Strategies. “Despite his advertising Ignatieff has not been able to close the leadership gap with Harper.”

Though voting-intention may not be showing a great shift, there is some movement in the way Canadians perceive the party leaders. Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s momentum stands at -20, meaning that 11 per cent of respondents now have a better opinion of him than three months ago, while 31 per cent have a worse opinion of

## KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting intention: Con 37%, Lib 29%, NDP 16%, BQ 9%, Grn 8%**
- **All leaders score negative momentum: Harper -20, Ignatieff -32, Layton -10, Duceppe -6**
- **Best prime minister: Harper 27%, Ignatieff 16%, Layton 12%**
- **Harper preferred over Ignatieff to lead on economy, health care and crime. Ignatieff leads on foreign affairs**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From September 23 to September 24, 2009, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among 997 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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him. Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff scores a worse momentum of -32. The NDP's Jack Layton scores a negative momentum of -10, and the BQ's Gilles Duceppe's sits at -6.

Ignatieff's momentum is worse than Harper's for the first time since the Canadian Political Pulse has been asking this question with Ignatieff as Liberal leader.

In the category of preferred prime minister, the incumbent is ahead with 27 per cent, followed by the Liberal leader with 16 per cent, Layton with 12 per cent, and both Duceppe and Green Party leader Elizabeth May with three per cent. Just over a fifth (22%) of Canadians say that none of them is well suited to head the government.

### **Leadership and Issues**

Canadians think Prime Minister Harper is best suited to deal with the economy (33%), health care (23%), and crime (38%) than Ignatieff, who scores 23 per cent, 16 per cent and 12 per cent in these issues, respectively. Ignatieff is trusted by most Canadians on handling foreign affairs (30%, followed closely by Harper at 28%).

Layton is a close second to Harper on health care (22%), and is preferred by more people to handle the environment (27%, compared to Harper and Ignatieff, both at 17%).

Canadians describe the current prime minister as mostly secretive (45%), boring (44%), and intelligent (43%). They qualify Ignatieff as primarily arrogant (51%), intelligent (46%) and out of touch (39%).

### **Regions**

Support for the Conservatives remains especially high in Alberta (61%), and Manitoba and Saskatchewan (47%). Notably, the Tories are also very strong in Ontario (44%). The Grits remain particularly strong in Atlantic Canada (57%), and in Quebec (26%).

British Columbia (23%) and Atlantic Canada (21%) continue to pull the numbers up for the NDP. Ontario (10%), Manitoba and Saskatchewan (10%), and BC (14%) hold the highest number of Canadians supporting the Greens.

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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 23-24	Sep 11-13	2008 Election
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>37.6%</b>
<b>Liberal</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>26.2%</b>
<b>NDP</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>18.2%</b>
<b>BQ</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>
<b>Green</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>

### 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
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Liberal</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>NDP</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>BQ</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Green</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>

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### Canadian Political Pulse -REGIONS

Over the course of the past month, would your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same or worsened -Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper ?

	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Improved</b>	11%	14%	14%	6%	15%	8%	7%
<b>Stayed the same</b>	52%	50%	55%	62%	54%	44%	58%
<b>Worsened</b>	31%	36%	25%	25%	28%	38%	30%
<b>Not sure</b>	6%	0%	5%	7%	4%	10%	6%

### Canadian Political Pulse -REGIONS

Over the course of the past month, would your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same or worsened -Liberal and Official Opposition leader Michael Ignatieff ?

	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Improved</b>	12%	8%	4%	12%	13%	9%	28%
<b>Stayed the same</b>	33%	31%	24%	38%	26%	41%	42%
<b>Worsened</b>	44%	57%	62%	37%	50%	33%	24%
<b>Not sure</b>	11%	4%	10%	12%	10%	18%	6%

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### Canadian Political Pulse -REGIONS

Over the course of the past month, would your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same or worsened -New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jack Layton?

	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Improved</b>	10%	12%	9%	10%	7%	12%	12%
<b>Stayed the same</b>	61%	64%	62%	58%	61%	59%	68%
<b>Worsened</b>	20%	20%	22%	20%	25%	15%	13%
<b>Not sure</b>	9%	4%	7%	12%	8%	13%	7%

### Canadian Political Pulse -REGIONS

Over the course of the past month, would your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same or worsened - Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe?

	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Improved</b>	9%	--	--	--	--	9%	--
<b>Stayed the same</b>	61%	--	--	--	--	61%	--
<b>Worsened</b>	15%	--	--	--	--	15%	--
<b>Not sure</b>	14%	--	--	--	--	14%	--

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### Canadian Political Pulse -REGIONS

Which of these leaders would make the best Prime Minister of Canada?

	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Stephen Harper</b>	27%	29%	38%	36%	33%	16%	19%
<b>Michael Ignatieff</b>	16%	17%	11%	10%	18%	11%	34%
<b>Jack Layton</b>	12%	17%	9%	9%	8%	17%	13%
<b>Gilles Duceppe</b>	3%	1%	1%	3%	0%	10%	0%
<b>Elizabeth May</b>	3%	2%	1%	1%	5%	1%	1%
<b>None of them</b>	22%	20%	23%	17%	23%	23%	14%
<b>Not sure</b>	17%	15%	18%	25%	13%	21%	18%

### Canadian Political Pulse

Which of these leaders is best suited to deal with (total Canada):

	Economy	Environment	Health care	Foreign affairs	Crime
<b>Stephen Harper</b>	33%	16%	23%	28%	38%
<b>Michael Ignatieff</b>	23%	16%	16%	30%	12%
<b>Jack Layton</b>	9%	27%	22%	6%	10%
<b>Gilles Duceppe</b>	6%	6%	7%	4%	6%
<b>Not sure</b>	29%	36%	32%	33%	35%

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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 ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), Springboard America ([www.springboardamerica.com](http://www.springboardamerica.com)) and Springboard UK ([www.springboarduk.com](http://www.springboarduk.com)) online panels, which are recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panels are maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. These premier online survey platforms present 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.*

[http://angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2008.10.15\\_Election.pdf](http://angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2008.10.15_Election.pdf)

*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.*

[http://angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2008.03.28\\_Anniversary\\_1.pdf](http://angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2008.03.28_Anniversary_1.pdf)

[http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2008.12.09\\_QuebecElection.pdf](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2008.12.09_QuebecElection.pdf)

[http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2009.05.13\\_BCElection.pdf](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2009.05.13_BCElection.pdf)

[http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2009.06.10\\_NSElection.pdf](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2009.06.10_NSElection.pdf)

*More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF.WP.pdf>*

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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](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com)  
.com**

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