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## ONTARIO LIBERALS HOLD SMALL BUT STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT LEAD

UNDERLYING DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS SUGGEST MCGUINTY POISED TO CAPTURE SOME FORM OF GOVERNMENT

[Ottawa – September 27, 2011] – With barely a week to go until the 40th Ontario general election, McGuinty's Liberals have a slight but statistically significant lead over Hudak's Progressive Conservative Party (34.9 to 31.4). Horwath and the NDP, meanwhile, are further back at 24.7 points.

In what may appear to be a fairly tight three-way race, the underlying demographic patterns and levels of emotional engagement may provide clues as to how voters will behave on election day. First, the demographic pluses which carved a majority for Harper in the May 2nd election and left the federal Liberal Party in ruins do not appear to be in place here. The Ontario Liberals are leading in crucial boomer cohort and are close on the senior cohort, two groups that are key with respect to turnout.

Similarly, the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party carries a significant advantage in that they lead with seniors, a group that has historically held the highest turnout rates. However, much of their support comes from those with no post-secondary education – a group with a much lower propensity to vote. The NDP, meanwhile, reaps a disproportionate amount of their support from younger and more economically vulnerable voters, which will present a substantial obstacle when it comes time to get their supporters out to vote.

We also measured emotional responses to the McGuinty government. In short, Liberals are hopeful, Conservatives are angry, and NDP are discouraged. The patterns of emotional engagement seem to favour the Liberals and the Progressive Conservative, as the sense of discouragement expressed by NDP supporters suggests a weak "get-out-the-vote". Liberals seem

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Ontario provincial vote intention:**
  - ☒ 34.9% LPO
  - ☒ 31.4% PC
  - ☒ 24.7% NDP
  - ☒ 6.3% Green
  - ☒ 1.8% other
- **Direction of province (Ontario):**
  - ☒ 62% right direction
  - ☒ 38% wrong direction
- **Direction of provincial government (Ontario):**
  - ☒ 51% right direction
  - ☒ 49% wrong direction
- **Impact of majority Conservative government on provincial vote intention:**
  - ☒ 43% less likely to vote PC
  - ☒ 34% neither more or less likely
  - ☒ 16% more likely to vote PC
  - ☒ 8% DK/NR
- **Emotions towards McGuinty government:**
  - ☒ 27% Hopeful
  - ☒ 26% Discouraged
  - ☒ 24% Angry
  - ☒ 10% Happy
  - ☒ 13% DK/NR

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

to have enough positive emotion to combat the anger of the older Progressive Conservative constituency. The Liberal positive base is strongly linked to the university educated and the education themes of McGuinty. It is also worth noting that the federal Liberals had very little emotional engagement with Ontario voters in the last election.

Regionally, there is no evidence that the crumbling of the Liberal fortress of Toronto is occurring at the provincial level. In fact, the Liberal Party of Ontario maintains a huge lead in the core GTA and does very well in 905 Ontario. The Progressive Conservative Party, meanwhile, does well in Eastern Ontario and Ottawa and also fares well in more economically nervous Southwestern Ontario. The NDP, meanwhile, does better in the North, though the Progressive Conservative have strength there too.

It is also interesting to note that Ontarians are not wildly unhappy with provincial direction (in fact, they appear quite positive) and they are split in terms of the direction of the provincial government, with attitudes largely split along party lines. Notably, the Ontario Liberal Party base is highly unified in their happiness with Ontario government direction, a plus akin to the advantage that Prime Minister Stephen Harper had in the May 2nd election.

Lastly, the presence of a strong Conservative majority appears to make the Ontario voter more likely to vote non-Progressive Conservative, but this is more likely to favour the Liberal Party of Ontario and the advantage is even stronger with those who are more likely to actually vote (judged against past voting behaviour, demographics and emotional response). In particular, the negative impacts of a Conservative majority on Progressive Conservative prospects are strongest in Toronto (both metro and 905). This suggests that the "trifecta" scenario has had a modest chilling impact on Hudak's prospects

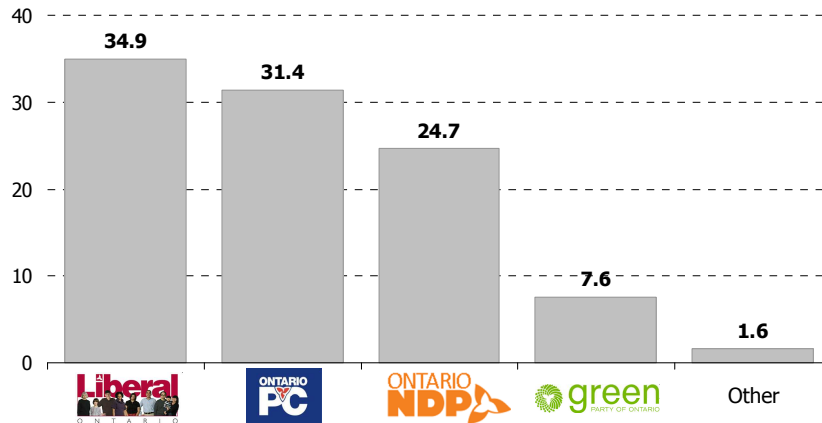
In the end, it appears that the NDP's support is centred around voters with historically low turnout rates while the Liberals and Progressive Conservative have somewhat stronger bases. Barring a pratfall in the debates, McGuinty may well be poised to capture some form of government.



## Top Line Results:

### Provincial vote Intention

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



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

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BASE: Decided voters in Ontario; September 21-25, 2011 (n=1,869)

### Provincial vote intention by federal vote intention

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

CURRENT VOTE INTENTION	Vote Intention (Overall)	Federal Vote Intention				
		LPC	CPC	NDP	GP	Other
	34.9	87.4	12.6	23.3	13.8	17.9
	31.4	3.9	76.9	6.1	3.7	22.2
	24.7	4.9	6.9	64.9	20.1	0.0
	7.6	2.9	3.0	4.3	61.9	0.0
Other	1.6	0.9	0.7	1.5	0.6	59.9

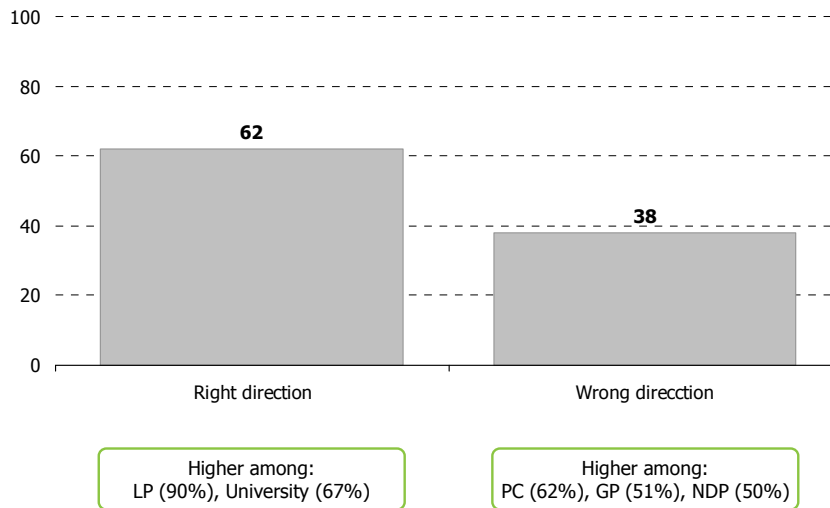
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BASE: Decided voters in Ontario; September 21-25, 2011 (n=1,869)



## Direction of province

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

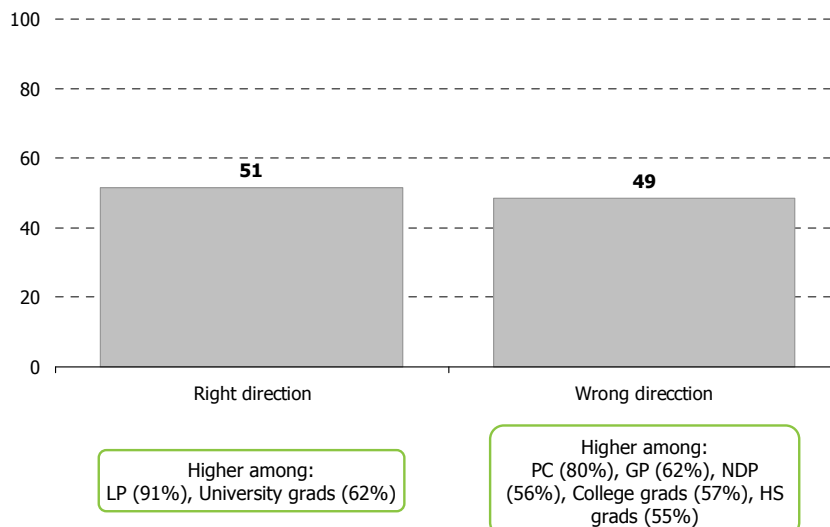


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**BASE:** Ontarians (half-sample); September 21-25, 2011 (n=932)

## Direction of provincial government

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

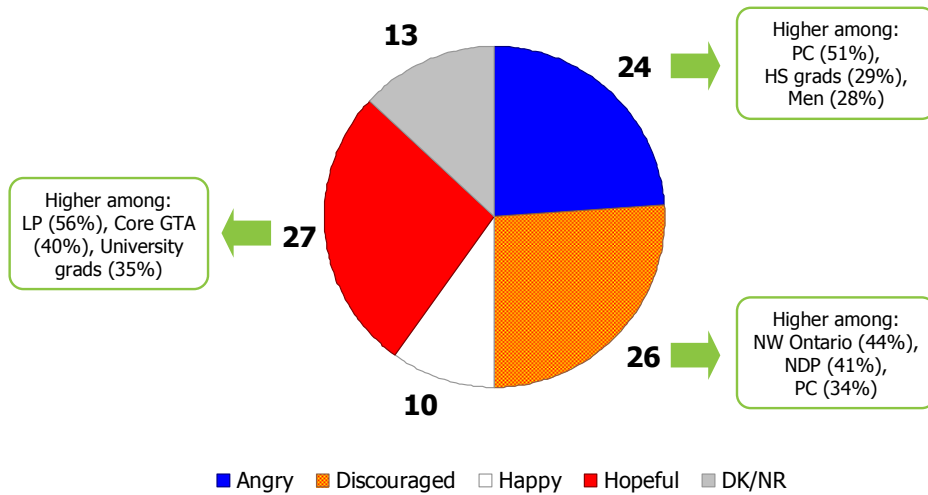


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**BASE:** Ontarians (half-sample); September 21-25, 2011 (n=1,038)

## Emotions associated with McGuinty Liberal government

Q. When thinking about Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?

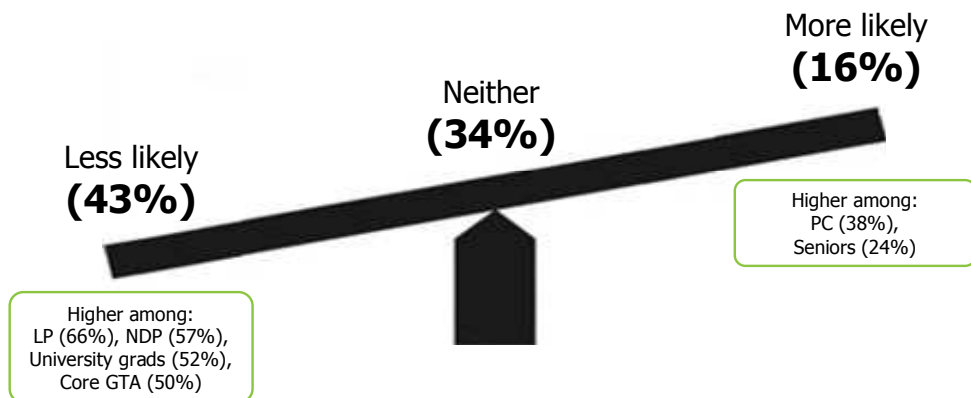


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BASE: Eligible voters; September 21-25, 2011 (n=1,940)

## Impact of majority Conservative government on vote intention

Q. Does the presence of a strong majority Conservative federal government make you less or more likely to vote for a Conservative choice in the next provincial election?



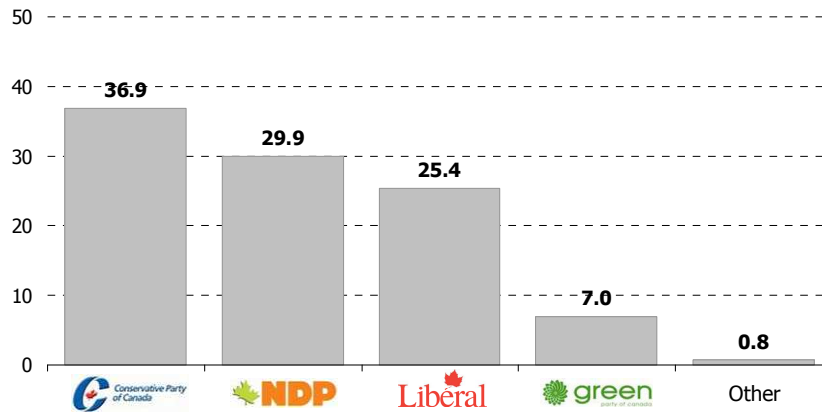
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BASE: Eligible voters; September 21-25, 2011 (n=1,940)



### Federal vote intention (Ontario only)

*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:** Decided voters in Ontario; September 21-25, 2011 (n=1,834)



## Detailed Tables:

<b>Provincial vote intention (Ontario)</b>							
<i>Base: Decided and leaning voters</i>							
<i>Q. If a provincial election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?</i>							
	Liberal	NDP	PC	Green	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>PROVINCIALY</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>31.4%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1869</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	35.7%	20.3%	35.1%	7.5%	1.4%	984	3.1
Female	34.0%	28.9%	27.8%	7.6%	1.7%	885	3.3
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	12.2%	34.0%	22.5%	27.1%	4.2%	97	10.0
25-44	37.8%	26.3%	28.3%	5.7%	1.9%	434	4.7
45-64	37.6%	24.4%	31.6%	5.5%	0.9%	810	3.4
65+	37.2%	16.3%	42.2%	3.6%	0.8%	528	4.3
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	23.1%	25.2%	39.1%	10.8%	1.8%	493	4.4
College or CEGEP	28.0%	28.9%	34.2%	7.0%	1.9%	585	4.1
University or higher	46.6%	21.3%	24.9%	6.0%	1.2%	791	3.5
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH</b>							
Canada	34.3%	24.6%	32.8%	6.7%	1.6%	1448	2.6
Outside Canada	36.9%	24.9%	26.3%	10.5%	1.3%	421	4.8
<b>REGION</b>							
Toronto/Core GTA	46.6%	27.5%	19.1%	5.5%	1.3%	429	4.7
Suburban GTA	33.9%	20.6%	35.2%	9.2%	1.1%	431	4.7
Southwestern Ontario	26.7%	28.9%	33.6%	9.1%	1.7%	385	5.0
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	36.6%	15.2%	41.3%	5.9%	1.0%	357	5.2
Northeastern & Central Ontario	25.0%	32.9%	30.0%	9.2%	2.9%	216	6.7
Northwestern Ontario	27.0%	29.8%	33.5%	4.8%	4.9%	51	13.7
<b>FEDERAL VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Liberal Party	87.4%	4.9%	3.9%	2.9%	0.9%	474	4.5
Conservative Party	12.6%	6.9%	76.9%	3.0%	0.7%	719	3.7
NDP	23.3%	64.9%	6.1%	4.3%	1.5%	496	4.4
Green Party	13.8%	20.1%	3.7%	61.9%	0.6%	103	9.7
Other	17.9%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%	59.9%	13	27.2


**Direction of province (half sample)**

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

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>PROVINCIALLY</b>	<b>61.9%</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>GENDER</b>				
Male	60.6%	39.4%	496	4.4
Female	63.1%	36.9%	436	4.7
<b>AGE</b>				
<25	67.9%	32.1%	64	12.3
25-44	63.6%	36.4%	214	6.7
45-64	59.1%	40.9%	400	4.9
65+	59.0%	41.0%	254	6.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
High school or less	57.3%	42.7%	252	6.2
College or CEGEP	59.2%	40.8%	285	5.8
University or higher	66.5%	33.5%	395	4.9
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH</b>				
Canada	60.3%	39.7%	711	3.7
Outside Canada	66.9%	33.1%	221	6.6
<b>REGION</b>				
Toronto/Core GTA	71.7%	28.3%	220	6.6
Suburban GTA	62.0%	38.0%	218	6.6
Southwestern Ontario	62.1%	37.9%	190	7.1
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	54.4%	45.6%	169	7.5
Northeastern & Central Ontario	52.8%	47.2%	106	9.5
Northwestern Ontario	50.2%	49.8%	29	18.2
<b>PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION</b>				
Liberal Party	89.9%	10.1%	330	5.4
NDP	50.2%	49.8%	198	7.0
Progressive Conservative Party	37.7%	62.3%	285	5.8
Green Party	48.9%	51.1%	62	12.5
Other	34.2%	65.8%	9	32.7



**Direction of provincial government (half sample)**

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

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>PROVINCIALY</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>48.6%</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>GENDER</b>				
Male	50.2%	49.8%	526	4.3
Female	52.4%	47.6%	512	4.3
<b>AGE</b>				
<25	45.7%	54.3%	49	14.0
25-44	52.9%	47.1%	249	6.2
45-64	50.9%	49.1%	445	4.7
65+	52.2%	47.8%	295	5.7
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
High school or less	45.5%	54.5%	281	5.9
College or CEGEP	42.8%	57.2%	330	5.4
University or higher	61.5%	38.5%	427	4.7
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH</b>				
Canada	49.7%	50.3%	805	3.5
Outside Canada	57.1%	42.9%	233	6.4
<b>REGION</b>				
Toronto/Core GTA	61.4%	38.6%	236	6.4
Suburban GTA	50.5%	49.5%	244	6.3
Southwestern Ontario	43.0%	57.0%	206	6.8
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	54.0%	46.0%	203	6.9
Northeastern & Central Ontario	45.6%	54.4%	125	8.8
Northwestern Ontario	34.8%	65.2%	24	20.0
<b>PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION</b>				
Liberal Party	90.7%	9.3%	348	5.3
NDP	44.2%	55.8%	225	6.5
Progressive Conservative Party	20.1%	79.9%	346	5.3
Green Party	38.5%	61.5%	52	13.6
Other	47.1%	52.9%	14	26.2


**Emotions associated with McGuinty Liberal government**
*Base: Eligible voters*
*Q. When thinking about Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?*

	Angry	Discouraged	Happy	Hopeful	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>PROVINCIALITY</b>	<b>23.8%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>1940</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	28.2%	24.2%	10.9%	26.3%	10.5%	1009	3.1
Female	19.8%	27.9%	9.5%	27.7%	15.2%	931	3.2
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	21.1%	29.7%	5.9%	24.6%	18.8%	104	9.6
25-44	22.4%	25.6%	11.8%	25.3%	14.8%	453	4.6
45-64	24.7%	25.8%	9.4%	28.8%	11.4%	839	3.4
65+	26.7%	25.4%	11.0%	28.6%	8.3%	544	4.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	29.4%	26.6%	6.6%	19.8%	17.6%	520	4.3
College or CEGEP	26.9%	31.1%	7.7%	22.4%	11.8%	610	4.0
University or higher	18.2%	22.1%	14.1%	34.8%	10.8%	810	3.4
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH</b>							
Canada	25.2%	27.0%	9.8%	25.5%	12.5%	1506	2.5
Outside Canada	18.9%	23.0%	11.5%	32.4%	14.2%	434	4.7
<b>REGION</b>							
Toronto/Core GTA	12.9%	20.8%	13.2%	39.6%	13.6%	442	4.7
Suburban GTA	26.9%	23.6%	10.3%	25.3%	13.8%	450	4.6
Southwestern Ontario	28.8%	28.2%	9.4%	22.1%	11.5%	394	4.9
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	27.8%	26.0%	9.4%	24.3%	12.5%	372	5.1
Northeastern & Central Ontario	27.9%	35.1%	5.5%	18.6%	13.0%	229	6.5
Northwestern Ontario	14.5%	43.6%	11.6%	19.6%	10.7%	53	13.5
<b>PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Liberal Party	2.4%	7.9%	21.3%	56.1%	12.4%	678	3.8
NDP	23.6%	40.5%	6.6%	17.6%	11.7%	423	4.8
Progressive Conservative Party	51.0%	33.6%	1.8%	6.4%	7.2%	631	3.9
Green Party	20.1%	25.2%	9.6%	22.9%	22.1%	114	9.2
Other	18.8%	38.2%	4.8%	0.0%	38.2%	23	20.4


**Impact of majority Conservative government on vote intention**
*Base: Eligible voters*

*Q. Does the presence of a strong majority Conservative federal government make you less or more likely to vote for a Conservative choice in the next provincial election?*

	Less likely	Neither	More likely	DK/NR Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>PROVINCIALLY</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>34.1%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>1940</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	42.4%	35.4%	16.0%	6.3%	1009	3.1
Female	42.8%	32.8%	15.1%	9.3%	931	3.2
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	45.8%	33.9%	14.6%	5.7%	104	9.6
25-44	41.3%	38.9%	12.3%	7.5%	453	4.6
45-64	43.5%	33.9%	14.7%	7.9%	839	3.4
65+	41.4%	25.0%	24.1%	9.5%	544	4.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	33.5%	35.1%	21.4%	10.0%	520	4.3
College or CEGEP	36.7%	37.7%	17.5%	8.1%	610	4.0
University or higher	52.4%	30.9%	10.5%	6.2%	810	3.4
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH</b>						
Canada	42.5%	36.3%	14.4%	6.7%	1506	2.5
Outside Canada	42.9%	26.0%	19.4%	11.7%	434	4.7
<b>REGION</b>						
Toronto/Core GTA	50.3%	29.6%	11.7%	8.4%	442	4.7
Suburban GTA	40.8%	36.3%	14.8%	8.1%	450	4.6
Southwestern Ontario	40.7%	33.5%	18.5%	7.3%	394	4.9
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	38.5%	37.2%	17.6%	6.7%	372	5.1
Northeastern & Central Ontario	40.3%	35.4%	15.9%	8.4%	229	6.5
Northwestern Ontario	40.0%	33.9%	16.5%	9.6%	53	13.5
<b>PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION</b>						
Liberal Party	66.2%	22.7%	3.3%	7.7%	678	3.8
NDP	57.0%	28.5%	5.9%	8.6%	423	4.8
Progressive Conservative Party	7.3%	50.9%	37.8%	4.1%	631	3.9
Green Party	48.0%	30.0%	16.0%	6.1%	114	9.2
Other	48.0%	46.3%	2.5%	3.1%	23	20.4

## Methodology:

EKOS' weekly tracking polls are conducted using Interactive Voice Response (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. 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 September 21-25, 2011. In total, a random sample of 1,970 Ontario residents aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 1,869 decided and leaning voters). The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-2.2 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 Ontario according to Census data.