

Find the **Question** of the Day.

TORONTO STAR
www.thestar.com

TORONTO STAR
www.thestar.com

Canadians favour Rae to lead Liberals

But election win likely with Ignatieff Conservative popularity slipping: Poll

Oct. 14, 2006. 07:15 AM

LES WHITTINGTON

OTTAWA BUREAU

OTTAWA—Bob Rae is the favourite among Canadians to lead the Liberals even though he trails MP Michael Ignatieff in committed delegates to the party's December leadership convention, according to a new poll.

Rae, the former Ontario premier, is the choice of 26 per cent of the public, compared with 21 per cent for Ignatieff, according to EKOS Research Associates.

But Canadians, aware Ignatieff is ahead in the race for convention delegates, nonetheless say he'd have a better chance than Rae of winning the next federal election for the Liberals.

"What we are seeing is that Canadians' perception of who is most electable is being influenced by media coverage and the race for delegates, which Ignatieff is winning," said EKOS president Frank Graves.

The poll comes as Liberals gather for tomorrow's all-candidates' debate in Toronto.

EKOS surveyed the popularity among Canadians of the four Liberal frontrunners based on the delegate selection vote two weeks ago. On the question of which candidate would make the best party leader, former Liberal MPP Gerard Kennedy and former federal cabinet minister Stéphane Dion each garnered 12 per cent. (A total of 28 per cent said "none of the above" or "don't know.")

As for party standings, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's chances of winning a majority in the next election appear to be worsening as Conservative strength erodes and the Liberals inch upward in popularity. The poll gives the Conservatives 36 per cent of decided voter support, down from 38.7 per cent in mid-September, while the Liberals hold 31.7 per cent, up from 28.8 per cent last month.



TONY BOCK/TORONTO STAR

Bob Rae at the debate held for Liberal Party of Canada leadership candidates Tuesday, Oct. 10 in Toronto by the Empire Club of Canada.

Related Links

[Hebert: Ignatieff falls flat \(Oct. 16\)](#)

[Ignatieff on hot seat \(Oct. 16\)](#)

[Volpe calls story 'act of fiction' \(Oct. 16\)](#)

[Liberal leadership page](#)

[PDF: Meet the candidates \(Sept. 30\)](#)

[Full coverage: Liberal leadership](#)

Tag and Save

[Tag and save](#) this article to your Del.icio.us favourites.

[What is Del.icio.us?](#)

POWERED BY  [del.icio.us](#)

"The post-election 'honeymoon' that lifted Tory support tantalizingly close to majority territory seems to be waning, and the Liberals are closing ground," said Graves.

The New Democrats are at 16.2 per cent nationally, trailed by the Bloc Québécois with 9.9 per cent and the Green Party at 6.2.

Conservative popularity is being hurt by the Harper government's policies on Afghanistan and the environment, the pollster said. As a result, the federal Tories have slipped in Quebec while the Bloc and the Liberals are making gains there.

The Liberals continue on top in Ontario, with 40.6 per cent support compared with 36 per cent for the Conservatives and 16.7 per cent for the NDP. The Green Party has 6.8 per cent.

The latest poll results closely resemble the vote tally in the Jan. 23 election and, given that the Liberals can expect a boost from their leadership convention, the two largest parties could end up in a very close race, Graves remarked.

"Right now, almost anything is possible: another Conservative or Liberal minority government or even a majority for one or the other of the two major parties."

EKOS found confidence in the federal government is slipping. The percentage of respondents who say the government is headed in the right direction dropped to 47 per cent from 50 per cent last month, while those who say it is headed in the wrong direction rose to 45 per cent from 38 per cent.

Canadians were also asked to name their second choice for best Liberal leader among the four frontrunners. Rae came out on top with 25 per cent, followed by Ignatieff with 21. Dion was the second choice of 20 per cent and Kennedy, 16. One per cent said "other" and a total of 16 per cent said "none of the above" or "don't know."

On the question of which leadership hopeful would have the best chance of winning the next federal election for the Liberals, Kennedy (10 per cent) and Dion (9 per cent) trailed Ignatieff (30 per cent) and Rae (26 per cent). A total of 25 per cent said "none of the above" or "don't know."

EKOS surveyed 1,211 Canadians Oct. 10-12. The poll is considered accurate within plus-or-minus 2.8 percentage points.

[Get great home delivery subscription deals here!](#)

[FAQs](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Webmaster](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [My Subscription](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) | [Webmaking Blog](#)

[Home](#) | [GTA](#) | [Business](#) | [Waymoresports](#) | [A&E](#) | [Life](#)

Legal Notice: Copyright Toronto Star Newspapers Limited. All rights reserved. Distribution, transmission or republication of any material from www.thestar.com is strictly prohibited without the prior written permission of Toronto Star Newspapers Limited. For information please contact us using our [webmaster form](#). www.thestar.com online since 1996.

