

LIBERALS RETAIN NARROW NATIONAL LEAD

BUT LIBERAL MOMENTUM MAY BE STALLING

[Ottawa – June 18, 2009] – With talk of an election in the air, Michael Ignatieff's Liberals have retained a razor-thin lead over the Conservatives over the last week's polling by EKOS, released exclusively to cbc.ca. While the Liberals have opened up a substantial lead in the crucial battleground of Ontario, with the NDP flagging, the national race has tightened.

"The recent trends certainly favour the Liberals over the Conservatives, particularly in Ontario and Quebec, where most of the seats are," said EKOS President Frank Graves. "However, a Liberal victory starting from these numbers would be far from a certainty, and a majority victory looks like a distant hope for both major parties. Moreover, Canadians are getting more optimistic about the economy, a factor that may be favouring the Conservatives."

For the Conservatives, one serious problem is Stephen Harper's negative approval rating.

Substantially more Canadians disapprove of the job he is doing than approve; Michael Ignatieff, in contrast has an essentially neutral rating.

However, Harper's negatives are not as dramatic as they were a few months ago, and Ignatieff, who was winning Canadians over earlier in the year as they got to know him, is no longer doing so.

Interestingly, the two men appeal to similar constituencies. Both are most compelling to relatively prosperous male baby-boomers....And both leave many other segments of the population cold.

"Of course, there are regional differences, most notably between the West and Central Canada," said Graves. "It also appears that Ignatieff and the Liberals are more attractive to people with university education who view themselves as cosmopolitan sophisticates, with the Harper Tories doing better among people who are prosperous, but more likely were college-educated and self-made entrepreneurs."

HIGHLIGHTS

- **National federal vote intention:**
 - **33.7% LPC**
 - **32.4% CPC**
 - **16.3% NDP**
 - **9.0% Green**
 - **8.7% BQ**
- **Job approval: Stephen Harper:**
 - **33% approve**
 - **47% disapprove**
- **Job approval: Michael Ignatieff:**
 - **32% approve**
 - **34% disapprove**

Please note that the methodology and detailed tables of these and other results discussed in this release are provided at the end of this document.

In assessing the significance of the economy to party fortunes, it is important to recognize that Canadians differ over how to determine what constitutes a recovery. A plurality says an improvement in the unemployment rate would be the most important sign, but there are significant numbers, especially among current Conservative supporters, who look to broader growth figures, or even the stock or real estate markets.

"Of course these different indicators don't move together," said Graves. "We have already seen a run-up in the stock market. Growth may come back later next year, while unemployment is likely to continue getting worse for some time after that."

An increasing number of Canadians say they are already feeling more optimistic about the economy than they were three months ago, and they are naturally concentrated among the most prosperous. This could generate a drift of voters back to the Conservatives from the Liberals in this demographic even as working-class voters become more distressed and perhaps antagonistic to the Conservatives.

"Assuming there is no summer election, the Liberals need to re-double their efforts to capture those who are more sensitive to labour markets than they are to stock or property markets or abstract measures of economic growth," said Graves. "The Liberals have a better chance of capturing these economically insecure Canadians than the Conservatives do, but so far Ignatieff is not yet finding a receptive audience among these people. This might create an opening for the NDP."

"Similarly, the Liberals might have a better chance than the Conservatives of appealing to young voters who, if they came off the bench as they did in the 2008 U.S. election, could be a powerful force. So far those under 45 years of age have largely been looking on while the baby boomers wrestle for control of the political system. At the moment, unlike Barack Obama, neither Harper nor Ignatieff inspires much enthusiasm among these younger voters."

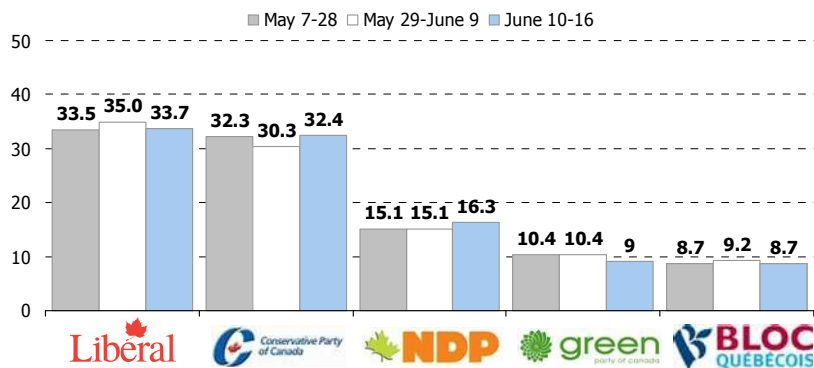
The daily tracking within this larger poll continues to show a high degree of volatility. The Liberals experienced a very substantial drop, for example, from Monday to Tuesday, while the NDP and Conservatives edged up.

"Was this a reaction to the threat of a summer election, which we know from our previous polling, people don't want?" asked Graves. "We have seen sudden spikes and troughs in the daily numbers before, sometime apparently unrelated to the flow of events. However, it is possible that the Liberals paid at least a momentary price for appearing ready to inflict an unwanted election."

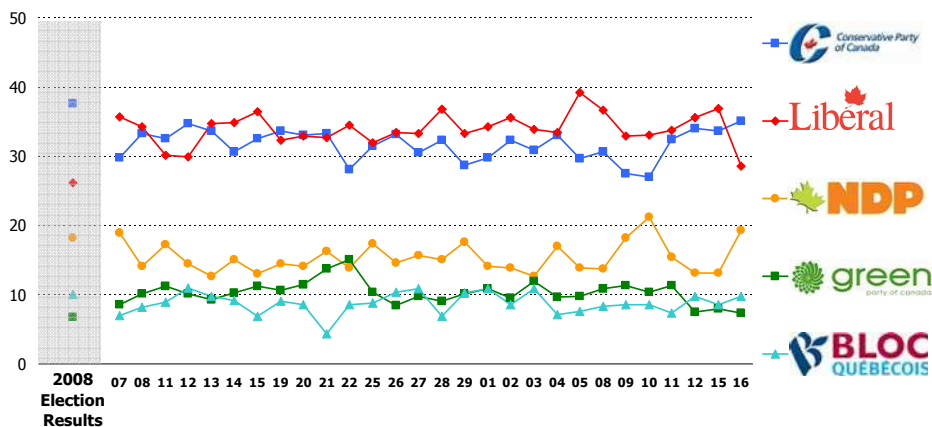
Top Line Results:

Federal vote intention

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

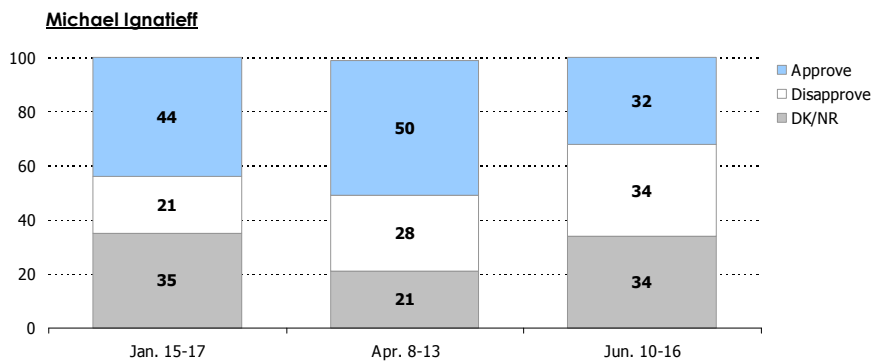
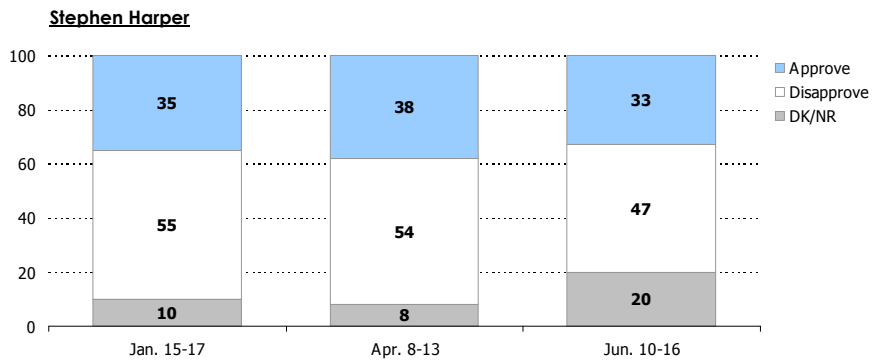


Weekday tracking of federal vote intention (May 7-June 16)



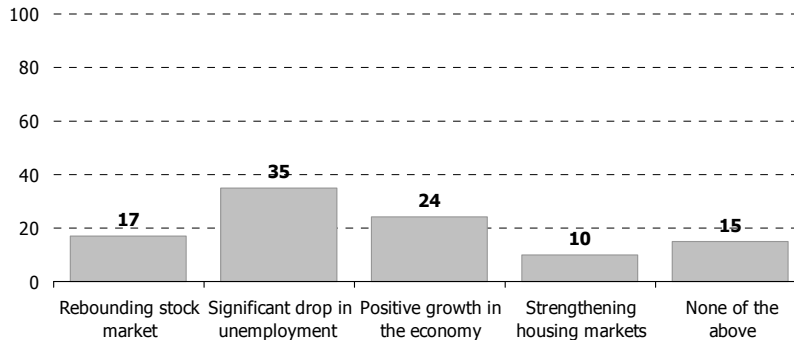
Job approval ratings

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way ... is handling his job?



Signs the economy is coming out of a recession

Q. For you personally, what is the single most important sign that would tell you that the economy is coming out of recession? Would it be ...

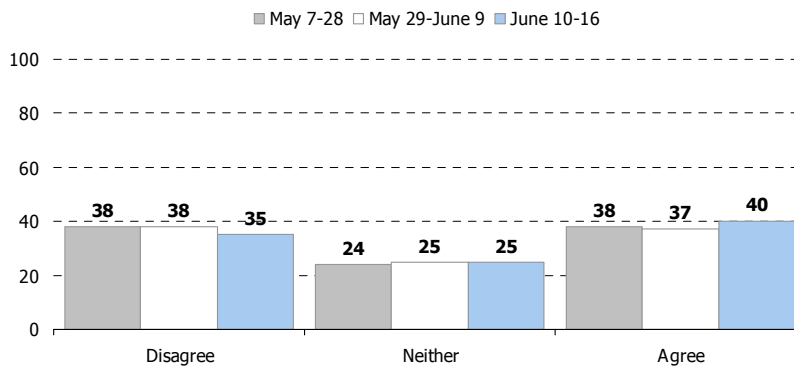


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BASE: Canadians; Jun. 10-16 (n=3422)

Personal feelings about the economy






Q. Personally, I feel better about the economy today than I did three months ago. [Agree/Disagree]



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BASE: Canadians; May 7-28 (n=3935); May 29-Jun. 9 (n=3054); Jun. 10-16 (n=3422)





Detailed Tables:

National Federal Vote Intention¹							
<i>Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?</i>							
						Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	32.4%	33.7%	16.3%	9.0%	8.7%	2863	1.8
REGION							
British Columbia	37.7%	25.7%	26.3%	10.2%	0.0%	322	5.5
Alberta	58.4%	20.4%	11.9%	9.4%	0.0%	299	5.7
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	51.0%	24.3%	18.8%	6.0%	0.0%	159	7.8
Ontario	32.9%	42.3%	15.9%	9.0%	0.0%	1089	3.0
Quebec	14.8%	31.2%	9.6%	8.8%	35.6%	826	3.4
Atlantic Canada	26.0%	39.1%	25.8%	9.1%	0.0%	168	7.6
GENDER							
Male	36.5%	33.7%	14.3%	7.5%	7.9%	1396	2.6
Female	28.4%	33.7%	18.2%	10.4%	9.4%	1467	2.6
AGE							
<25	21.6%	23.8%	22.8%	19.0%	12.8%	289	5.8
25-44	28.8%	33.5%	17.8%	9.7%	10.2%	897	3.3
45-64	35.5%	35.0%	14.0%	7.4%	8.2%	1085	3.0
65+	40.1%	37.7%	13.7%	4.5%	4.0%	592	4.0
EDUCATION							
High school or less	30.7%	28.2%	18.8%	10.6%	11.7%	780	3.5
College or CEGEP	37.8%	28.8%	15.8%	8.8%	8.8%	929	3.2
University or higher	29.1%	41.7%	14.8%	7.9%	6.4%	1154	2.9
METROPOLITAN CANADA							
Vancouver	46.8%	27.4%	19.5%	6.3%	0.0%	146	8.1
Calgary	59.7%	20.9%	9.6%	9.8%	0.0%	114	9.2
Toronto	33.9%	44.8%	14.5%	6.9%	0.0%	413	4.8
Ottawa-Gatineau	38.4%	43.7%	9.6%	8.2%	0.0%	273	5.9
Montreal	11.5%	34.9%	8.9%	8.9%	35.9%	370	5.1

¹ The data presented in this and our other tables on federal vote intention are based on decided voters only. Our survey also finds that 16% of Canadians say they are undecided.





Federal Vote Intention – British Columbia

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	37.7%	25.7%	26.3%	10.2%	322	5.5
GENDER						
Male	43.7%	28.6%	20.6%	7.1%	150	8.0
Female	31.2%	23.3%	32.1%	13.4%	172	7.5
AGE						
<25	20.7%	15.3%	43.5%	20.6%	24	20.0
25-44	30.4%	34.1%	25.7%	9.9%	91	10.3
45-64	45.8%	21.6%	22.7%	9.9%	133	8.5
65+	43.1%	25.5%	25.3%	6.1%	74	11.4
EDUCATION						
High school or less	30.6%	24.0%	32.4%	13.0%	79	11.0
College or CEGEP	44.3%	19.9%	26.3%	9.5%	109	9.4
University or higher	35.4%	31.9%	23.2%	9.5%	134	8.5





Federal Vote Intention – Alberta

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	58.4%	20.4%	11.9%	9.4%	299	5.7
GENDER						
Male	62.6%	19.1%	9.6%	8.7%	143	8.2
Female	55.9%	21.9%	13.0%	9.1%	156	7.9
AGE						
<25	43.7%	15.4%	22.0%	18.9%	38	15.9
25-44	53.5%	23.4%	13.5%	9.6%	103	9.7
45-64	69.1%	14.4%	7.8%	8.6%	105	9.6
65+	61.1%	29.3%	7.3%	2.3%	53	13.5
EDUCATION						
High school or less	56.7%	19.0%	14.9%	9.4%	77	11.2
College or CEGEP	66.6%	15.3%	9.9%	8.1%	120	9.0
University or higher	52.2%	28.3%	10.0%	9.5%	102	9.7





Federal Vote Intention – Saskatchewan/Manitoba

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	51.0%	24.3%	18.8%	6.0%	159	7.8
GENDER						
Male	61.8%	19.7%	14.7%	3.8%	79	11.0
Female	39.7%	26.5%	25.1%	8.7%	80	11.0
AGE						
<25	18.7%	31.6%	37.3%	12.4%	16	24.5
25-44	50.2%	16.7%	23.7%	9.4%	42	15.1
45-64	54.9%	24.9%	17.1%	3.2%	64	12.3
65+	62.4%	26.8%	8.0%	2.9%	37	16.1
EDUCATION						
High school or less	51.7%	22.5%	18.4%	7.4%	59	12.8
College or CEGEP	55.3%	15.6%	21.1%	8.0%	42	15.1
University or higher	47.5%	28.7%	20.1%	3.8%	58	12.9






Federal Vote Intention – Ontario

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	32.9%	42.3%	15.9%	9.0%	1089	3.0
GENDER						
Male	36.8%	41.4%	15.4%	6.4%	546	4.2
Female	28.2%	42.7%	16.7%	12.4%	543	4.2
AGE						
<25	24.5%	35.7%	18.9%	20.9%	84	10.7
25-44	30.0%	41.2%	17.7%	11.1%	303	5.6
45-64	33.4%	45.4%	14.3%	6.8%	434	4.7
65+	39.9%	41.2%	14.6%	4.3%	268	6.0
EDUCATION						
High school or less	31.8%	34.3%	22.8%	11.2%	219	6.6
College or CEGEP	37.7%	36.4%	15.5%	10.3%	336	5.4
University or higher	29.0%	49.6%	13.3%	8.0%	534	4.2





Federal Vote Intention – Quebec

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

						Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	14.8%	31.2%	9.6%	8.8%	35.6%	826	3.4
GENDER							
Male	16.0%	33.5%	8.6%	9.5%	32.5%	397	4.9
Female	14.4%	31.9%	9.3%	7.6%	36.8%	429	4.7
AGE							
<25	11.7%	17.3%	17.5%	14.6%	38.9%	115	9.1
25-44	14.4%	29.6%	11.4%	8.1%	36.5%	311	5.6
45-64	15.5%	33.9%	5.2%	8.1%	37.3%	280	5.9
65+	18.1%	46.2%	6.4%	6.5%	22.8%	120	9.0
EDUCATION							
High school or less	15.9%	28.8%	8.2%	10.7%	36.5%	287	5.8
College or CEGEP	16.9%	31.9%	8.8%	6.7%	35.6%	269	6.0
University or higher	12.6%	37.7%	9.9%	8.1%	31.8%	270	6.0

Federal Vote Intention – Atlantic Canada

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	26.0%	39.1%	25.8%	9.1%	168	7.6
GENDER						
Male	30.4%	36.0%	23.3%	10.3%	81	10.9
Female	20.6%	39.9%	30.2%	9.3%	87	10.5
AGE						
<25	17.8%	20.2%	28.3%	33.7%	12	28.3
25-44	24.0%	34.4%	32.3%	9.3%	47	14.3
45-64	22.5%	46.9%	24.3%	6.3%	69	11.8
65+	40.6%	39.8%	17.4%	2.3%	40	15.5
EDUCATION						
High school or less	28.3%	29.5%	29.3%	12.9%	59	12.8
College or CEGEP	30.8%	32.3%	28.5%	8.4%	53	13.5
University or higher	18.4%	51.1%	22.3%	8.2%	56	13.1

Job Approval Ratings for Stephen Harper

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Stephen Harper, Prime Minister and leader of Conservative Party of Canada is handling his job?

	Approve	Disapprove	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	33%	47%	20%	3422	1.7
REGION					
British Columbia	39%	42%	19%	379	5.0
Alberta	50%	31%	20%	344	5.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	43%	34%	23%	189	7.1
Ontario	33%	49%	18%	1304	2.7
Quebec	21%	56%	23%	1004	3.1
Atlantic Canada	24%	55%	21%	202	6.9
GENDER					
Male	38%	47%	15%	1623	2.4
Female	27%	48%	25%	1799	2.3
AGE					
<25	32%	45%	23%	368	5.1
25-44	31%	48%	21%	1080	3.0
45-64	32%	50%	18%	1288	2.7
65+	36%	43%	21%	686	3.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	32%	41%	27%	991	3.1
College or CEGEP	35%	46%	19%	1127	2.9
University or higher	31%	54%	15%	1304	2.7
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	80%	9%	12%	925	3.2
Liberal Party of Canada	15%	68%	17%	974	3.1
NDP	13%	68%	19%	424	4.8
Green Party	14%	64%	22%	245	6.3
Bloc Québécois	10%	68%	22%	295	5.7
Undecided	16%	46%	38%	418	4.8

Job Approval Ratings for Michael Ignatieff

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Michael Ignatieff, leader of the Official Opposition and leader of the Liberal Party of Canada is handling his job?

	Approve	Disapprove	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	32%	34%	34%	3421	1.7
REGION					
British Columbia	32%	31%	36%	379	5.0
Alberta	21%	52%	27%	343	5.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	25%	43%	32%	189	7.1
Ontario	36%	35%	29%	1304	2.7
Quebec	33%	25%	41%	1004	3.1
Atlantic Canada	34%	28%	38%	202	6.9
GENDER					
Male	38%	37%	25%	1622	2.4
Female	27%	30%	42%	1799	2.3
AGE					
<25	29%	32%	39%	368	5.1
25-44	31%	33%	36%	1079	3.0
45-64	35%	34%	31%	1288	2.7
65+	34%	35%	31%	686	3.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	23%	35%	42%	991	3.1
College or CEGEP	27%	39%	34%	1127	2.9
University or higher	45%	28%	28%	1303	2.7
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	15%	59%	26%	925	3.2
Liberal Party of Canada	64%	11%	25%	973	3.1
NDP	27%	37%	36%	424	4.8
Green Party	26%	32%	42%	245	6.3
Bloc Québécois	24%	33%	43%	295	5.7
Undecided	13%	33%	54%	418	4.8

Signs the Economy is Coming Out of a Recession

Q. For you personally, what is the single most important sign that would tell you that the economy is coming out of recession? Would it be ... 1) A rebounding stock market; 2) A significant drop in the unemployment rate; 3) overall positive growth in the economy; 4) Strengthening housing markets; or 5) None of the above.

	Stock market rebound	Drop in unemployment	Growth in economy	Strengthening housing markets	None	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	17%	35%	24%	10%	15%	3422	1.7
REGION							
British Columbia	17%	35%	23%	13%	13%	379	5.0
Alberta	18%	31%	24%	12%	15%	344	5.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	22%	25%	31%	8%	14%	189	7.1
Ontario	16%	39%	21%	10%	14%	1304	2.7
Quebec	16%	31%	31%	9%	14%	1004	3.1
Atlantic Canada	17%	35%	19%	8%	22%	202	6.9
GENDER							
Male	19%	33%	22%	11%	14%	1623	2.4
Female	14%	36%	26%	9%	15%	1799	2.3
AGE							
<25	15%	39%	23%	9%	15%	368	5.1
25-44	13%	37%	26%	10%	14%	1080	3.0
45-64	19%	33%	25%	10%	13%	1288	2.7
65+	20%	31%	20%	12%	17%	686	3.7
EDUCATION							
High school or less	17%	32%	20%	11%	19%	991	3.1
College or CEGEP	15%	32%	25%	11%	16%	1127	2.9
University or higher	17%	38%	28%	8%	9%	1304	2.7
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Conservative Party of Canada	22%	28%	28%	12%	10%	925	3.2
Liberal Party of Canada	18%	40%	23%	9%	11%	974	3.1
NDP	11%	40%	23%	9%	18%	424	4.8
Green Party	10%	36%	22%	8%	24%	245	6.3
Bloc Québécois	16%	33%	29%	8%	14%	295	5.7
Undecided	12%	34%	22%	11%	21%	418	4.8

Personal Feelings about the Economy

Q. Personally, I feel better about the economy today than I did three months ago. [Agree/Disagree]

	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	35%	25%	40%	3421	1.7
REGION					
British Columbia	36%	18%	46%	379	5.0
Alberta	29%	21%	49%	343	5.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	37%	23%	40%	189	7.1
Ontario	35%	22%	43%	1304	2.7
Quebec	34%	36%	30%	1004	3.1
Atlantic Canada	40%	22%	38%	202	6.9
GENDER					
Male	35%	20%	45%	1622	2.4
Female	35%	30%	35%	1799	2.3
AGE					
<25	40%	24%	36%	368	5.1
25-44	35%	25%	40%	1079	3.0
45-64	34%	25%	41%	1288	2.7
65+	33%	24%	43%	686	3.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	37%	29%	34%	991	3.1
College or CEGEP	35%	24%	41%	1127	2.9
University or higher	33%	23%	44%	1303	2.7
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	25%	18%	57%	925	3.2
Liberal Party of Canada	34%	26%	40%	973	3.1
NDP	49%	21%	29%	424	4.8
Green Party	43%	28%	29%	245	6.3
Bloc Québécois	40%	36%	24%	295	5.7
Undecided	33%	33%	35%	418	4.8

Methodology:

EKOS' weekly tracking polls are conducted using Interactive Voice Recognition (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 land-line only RDD, we created a dual land-line/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able reach those with both a land-line and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and land-line only households. This dual frame yields a near perfect unweighted distribution on age group and gender, something almost never seen with traditional land-line RDD sample or interviewer administered surveys.

The field dates for this survey are June 10-16, 2009. In total, a random sample of 3,422 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 2,863 decided voters). The margin of error associated with total sample is +/- 1.7 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, income). All the data have been statistically weighted to ensure the samples composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.