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AMERICAN HEALTH CARE: NO WAY; U.S TWO-PARTY SYSTEM: MAYBE; U.S. PRESIDENT: YES!

CANADIAN POLITICAL LANDSCAPE CONTINUES TO FLAT LINE

[Ottawa – August 13, 2009] – Although the political landscape in Canada looks significantly different from the election last year, it has more or less flat lined since the spring.

"If our vote intention tracking chart was a national cardiogram, it might be time to pull the plug," said EKOS President Frank Graves. "The only really notable change is that the NDP are up slightly from recent weeks, which may reflect the discussion about a possible name change."

There are some other revealing findings from this poll that may signal future prospects for the different parties.

"Surprisingly, there is considerable receptivity to a proposal to radically reform the parliamentary system into a two-party system akin to the American system," said Graves. "This finding is reflective of several factors: growing fatigue with the gridlocked and fractious multi-party system, declining U.S. antipathy, and loose fealty to the current system of parliamentary democracy."

HIGHLIGHTS

- **National federal vote intention:**
  - **32.7% CPC**
  - **31.0% LPC**
  - **16.5% NDP**
  - **10.1% Green**
  - **9.7% BQ**
- **Job approval ratings:**
  - **73% Barack Obama**
  - **36% Stephen Harper**
  - **34% Jack Layton**
  - **29% Michael Ignatieff**
- **Support for a two-party system in Canada:**
  - **44% yes**
  - **56% no**
- **Better health care:**
  - **87% Canada**
  - **7% the United States**
  - **6% do not know/no response**

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

"There are some interesting splits on this issue along party lines," said Graves. "Liberal supporters are not very receptive to the idea – perhaps because they've enjoyed years of hegemony based on pluralities – whereas Conservative supporters *are* receptive to the idea – perhaps due to their frustration at being unable to secure a majority mandate. Bloc supporters are actually the most in favour of this change, which is somewhat ironic given that it is unlikely that the BQ would be one of the parties in a two-party system."

"There is an alarming trend line emerging for Michael Ignatieff on the job approval front," notes Graves. "When we first asked the question in January his scores amounted to a net positive of over 20 points; he now sits at a net negative of about nine points. Essentially, his negatives have doubled over the past 6 months." Indeed, with an approval rating of just 29%, Ignatieff now trails both Stephen Harper (36% approve) and Jack Layton (34% approve). While Harper still has the highest negatives, his positive ratings have improved modestly over the same timeframe, whereas Ignatieff's have fallen precipitously.

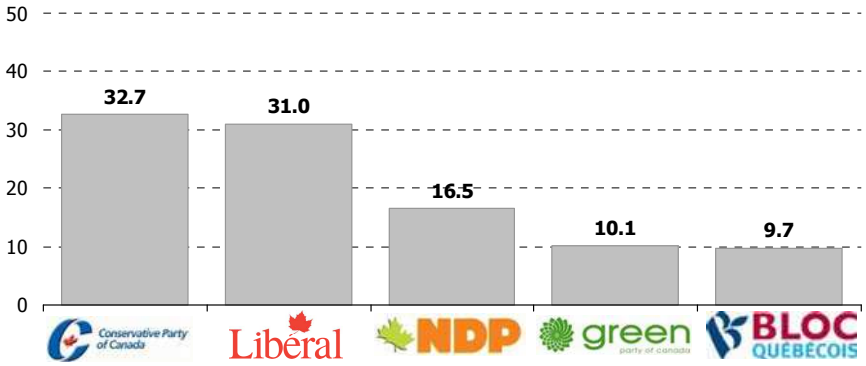
The poll also found, however, that none of the Canadian leaders even comes close to the approval ratings given to U.S. President Obama. "Disapproval of 11 per cent is insignificant, and approval of 73 per cent more than eclipses the other three," said Graves. "It is difficult to imagine another period in Canadian history when the public looked so warmly on the American presidency, while summoning such tepid responses to their own leaders."

While Canadians may envy the U.S. leadership, almost no one covets the American health care system. "Whatever pitfalls of Canada's system, it is seen as dramatically better in serving the needs of its overall citizenry," said Graves.

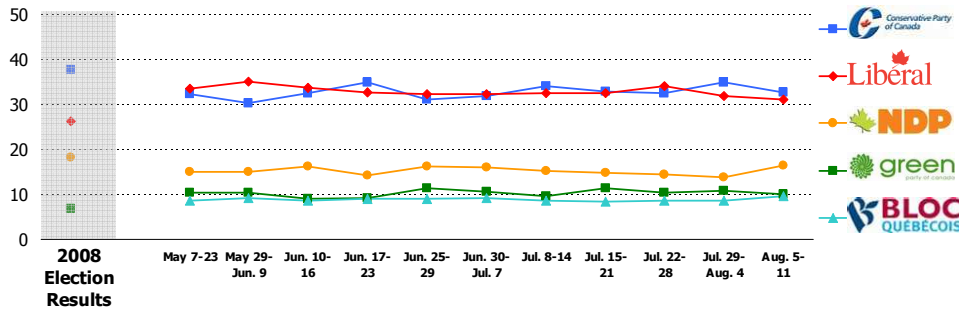
Top Line Results:

Federal vote intention

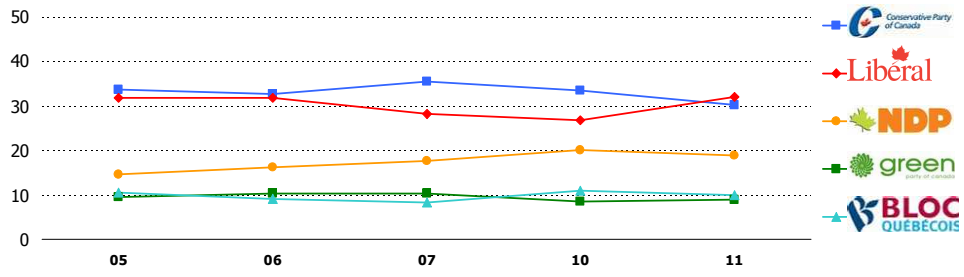
Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?



Weekly tracking of federal vote intention



Weekday tracking of federal vote intention (August 5-11)



Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided voters only. Our survey also finds that 15.4% of Canadians say they are undecided.

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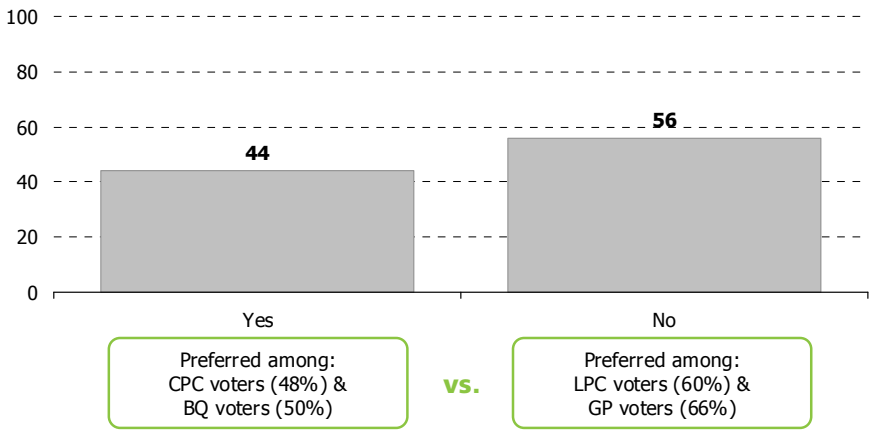
BASE: Decided voters; most recent data points Aug. 5-11 (n=2511)

Preference for a Two-Party System?

Q. Given the current political gridlock in Canada and the recent inability of any party to secure a majority government, do you think Canadians would be better served by a two-party system, similar to the United States?



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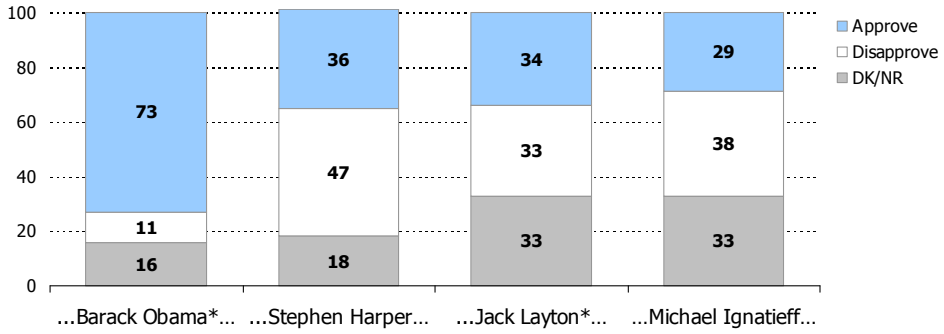
BASE: Canadians; Aug. 5-11 (n=2985)

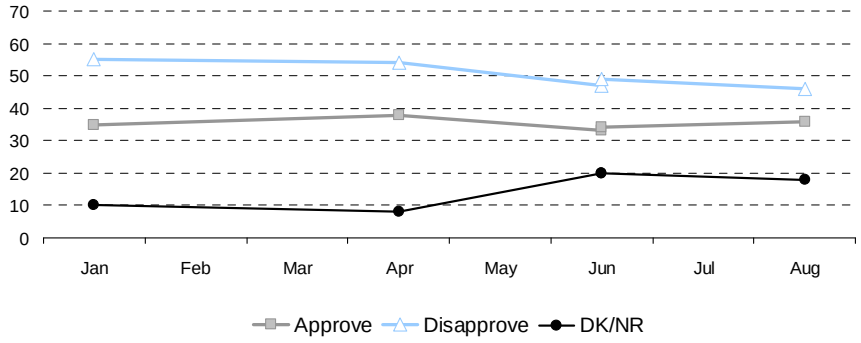
Job approval ratings

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

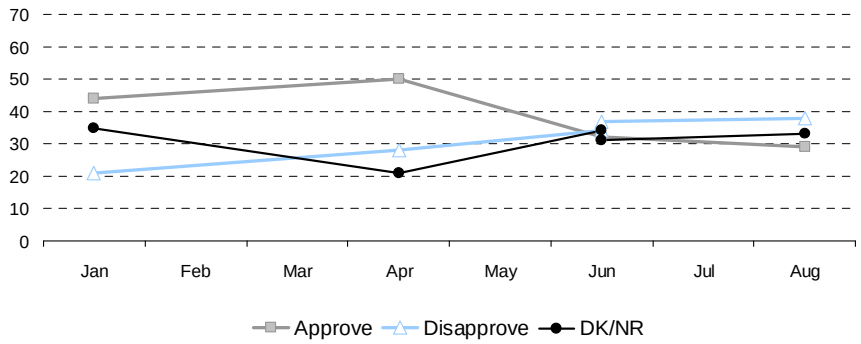


*Field dates are split for these samples: Obama (Aug. 7, 10 & 11; n=1666) and Layton (Aug. 5 & 6; n=1319)

Tracking job approval ratings for Stephen Harper



Tracking job approval ratings for Michael Ignatieff



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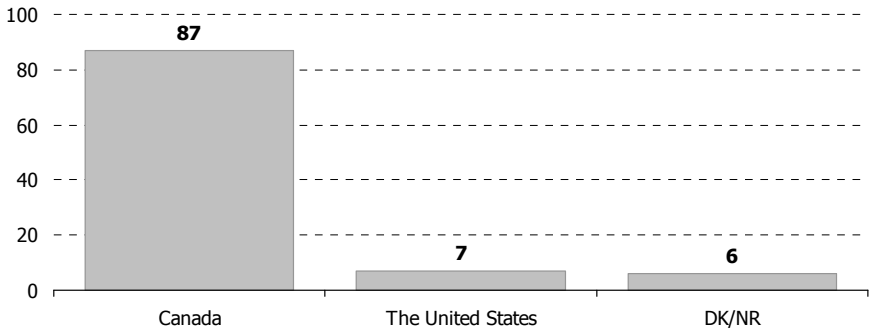
BASE: Canadians; most recent data point Aug. 5-11 (n=2985)

Better Health Care System

Q. Based on the overall needs of its citizens, which country do you think has the better system of health care: Canada or the United States?



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BASE: Canadians; Aug. 5-11 (n=2985)

Detailed Tables:

National Federal Vote Intention

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

	Conservative Party of Canada	Liberal	NDP	green	BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	**32.7%**	**31.0%**	**16.5%**	**10.1%**	**9.7%**	**2511**	**2.0**
REGION							
British Columbia	31.3%	25.8%	26.6%	16.3%	0.0%	353	5.2
Alberta	63.0%	17.4%	11.2%	8.4%	0.0%	215	6.7
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	44.2%	29.7%	20.3%	5.8%	0.0%	158	7.8
Ontario	35.5%	38.8%	14.7%	11.0%	0.0%	1073	3.0
Quebec	16.3%	27.3%	11.1%	6.8%	38.5%	536	4.2
Atlantic Canada	25.6%	32.8%	30.1%	11.5%	0.0%	176	7.4
GENDER							
Male	36.3%	31.3%	14.0%	9.7%	8.6%	1204	2.8
Female	29.2%	30.7%	18.9%	10.4%	10.8%	1307	2.7
AGE							
<25	23.4%	26.9%	18.9%	19.6%	11.2%	262	6.1
25-44	28.6%	29.7%	19.1%	11.4%	11.1%	870	3.3
45-64	34.4%	32.1%	15.6%	8.0%	9.8%	963	3.2
65+	43.1%	33.9%	11.5%	5.7%	5.8%	416	4.8
EDUCATION							
High school or less	35.8%	23.9%	15.2%	10.0%	15.2%	633	3.9
College or CEGEP	35.4%	28.5%	18.6%	8.7%	8.8%	860	3.3
University or higher	28.2%	38.1%	15.4%	11.4%	6.8%	1018	3.1
METROPOLITAN CANADA							
Vancouver	27.8%	28.7%	26.3%	17.2%	0.0%	131	8.6
Calgary	67.0%	14.8%	7.4%	10.7%	0.0%	64	12.3
Toronto	29.5%	47.7%	11.6%	11.2%	0.0%	392	5.0
Ottawa	48.7%	30.8%	14.0%	6.4%	0.0%	153	7.9
Montreal	12.4%	29.7%	10.4%	8.6%	38.8%	288	5.8

Federal Vote Intention – British Columbia

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

	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	**31.3%**	**25.8%**	**26.6%**	**16.3%**	**353**	**5.2**
GENDER						
Male	33.3%	30.7%	23.5%	12.6%	179	7.3
Female	27.9%	20.4%	30.2%	21.5%	174	7.4
AGE						
<25	21.4%	24.8%	23.9%	30.0%	37	16.1
25-44	27.5%	24.1%	30.3%	18.1%	116	9.1
45-64	28.0%	27.9%	25.3%	18.8%	133	8.5
65+	47.5%	24.1%	25.2%	3.3%	67	12.0
EDUCATION						
High school or less	31.7%	19.6%	30.8%	17.9%	86	10.6
College or CEGEP	33.1%	23.4%	25.9%	17.6%	128	8.7
University or higher	27.5%	30.9%	25.4%	16.1%	139	8.3

Federal Vote Intention – Alberta

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

	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	**63.0%**	**17.4%**	**11.2%**	**8.4%**	**215**	**6.7**
GENDER						
Male	62.9%	17.7%	10.4%	9.0%	104	9.6
Female	62.5%	16.8%	12.4%	8.3%	111	9.3
AGE						
<25	51.8%	4.5%	17.1%	26.6%	18	23.1
25-44	57.3%	20.3%	12.3%	10.1%	74	11.4
45-64	63.0%	22.7%	11.9%	2.3%	84	10.7
65+	77.7%	8.5%	5.4%	8.5%	39	15.7
EDUCATION						
High school or less	66.6%	12.0%	10.3%	11.1%	58	12.9
College or CEGEP	75.7%	10.5%	10.6%	3.2%	82	10.8
University or higher	44.8%	29.2%	13.2%	12.8%	75	11.3

Federal Vote Intention – Saskatchewan/Manitoba

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

	Conservative Party of Canada	Liberal	NDP	green	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	**44.2%**	**29.7%**	**20.3%**	**5.8%**	**158**	**7.8**
GENDER						
Male	46.5%	27.8%	19.0%	6.7%	73	11.5
Female	38.8%	31.2%	23.5%	6.4%	85	10.6
AGE						
<25	43.2%	26.8%	12.9%	17.2%	16	24.5
25-44	34.0%	34.6%	22.0%	9.4%	41	15.3
45-64	50.7%	23.1%	22.2%	4.0%	72	11.6
65+	41.3%	35.1%	23.6%	0.0%	29	18.2
EDUCATION						
High school or less	54.5%	21.6%	18.5%	5.5%	52	13.6
College or CEGEP	45.8%	18.8%	29.8%	5.6%	47	14.3
University or higher	30.5%	43.9%	17.5%	8.1%	59	12.8

Federal Vote Intention – Ontario

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

	Conservative Party of Canada	Liberal	NDP	green	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	**35.5%**	**38.8%**	**14.7%**	**11.0%**	**1073**	**3.0**
GENDER						
Male	38.6%	37.5%	11.8%	12.1%	526	4.3
Female	31.8%	39.8%	18.3%	10.1%	547	4.2
AGE						
<25	24.7%	33.5%	22.2%	19.6%	107	9.5
25-44	31.8%	39.0%	17.0%	12.2%	368	5.1
45-64	37.2%	38.3%	15.4%	9.1%	408	4.9
65+	44.2%	41.7%	6.1%	8.0%	190	7.1
EDUCATION						
High school or less	41.5%	30.6%	15.2%	12.7%	221	6.6
College or CEGEP	35.3%	36.2%	19.5%	9.0%	357	5.2
University or higher	32.0%	44.5%	11.6%	11.9%	495	4.4

Federal Vote Intention – Quebec

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

	Conservative Party of Canada	Liberal	NDP	green	BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	**16.3%**	**27.3%**	**11.1%**	**6.8%**	**38.5%**	**536**	**4.2**
GENDER							
Male	21.3%	27.1%	12.3%	4.5%	34.8%	239	6.3
Female	11.9%	29.4%	9.3%	8.0%	41.4%	297	5.7
AGE							
<25	10.7%	27.5%	15.1%	10.7%	36.0%	69	11.8
25-44	17.6%	22.0%	12.8%	9.3%	38.3%	215	6.7
45-64	16.9%	30.2%	8.1%	3.6%	41.2%	191	7.1
65+	17.8%	36.3%	9.6%	2.9%	33.4%	61	12.6
EDUCATION							
High school or less	14.4%	22.9%	7.6%	4.9%	50.2%	166	7.6
College or CEGEP	19.1%	28.8%	13.0%	5.9%	33.1%	184	7.2
University or higher	16.1%	33.1%	11.7%	8.0%	31.1%	186	7.2

Federal Vote Intention – Atlantic Canada

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

	Conservative Party of Canada	Liberal	NDP	green	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	**25.6%**	**32.8%**	**30.1%**	**11.5%**	**176**	**7.4**
GENDER						
Male	30.3%	37.7%	18.7%	13.4%	83	10.8
Female	20.6%	28.5%	42.7%	8.2%	93	10.2
AGE						
<25	25.0%	21.0%	20.8%	33.2%	15	25.3
25-44	15.7%	31.0%	46.0%	7.4%	56	13.1
45-64	28.8%	36.6%	24.5%	10.2%	75	11.3
65+	37.8%	37.5%	18.4%	6.3%	30	17.9
EDUCATION						
High school or less	35.8%	25.4%	27.0%	11.8%	50	13.9
College or CEGEP	24.1%	36.9%	29.2%	9.8%	62	12.5
University or higher	19.6%	35.3%	34.0%	11.1%	64	12.3

Preference for a two-party system

Q. Given the current political gridlock in Canada and the recent inability of any party to secure a majority government, do you think Canadians would be better served by a two-party system, similar to the United States?

	Yes	No	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	**44%**	**56%**	**2985**	**1.8**
REGION				
British Columbia	38%	62%	413	4.8
Alberta	44%	56%	253	6.2
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	41%	59%	191	7.1
Ontario	41%	59%	1273	2.8
Quebec	50%	50%	631	3.9
Atlantic Canada	43%	57%	224	6.6
GENDER				
Male	42%	58%	1392	2.6
Female	45%	55%	1593	2.5
AGE				
<25	45%	55%	333	5.4
25-44	45%	55%	1057	3.0
45-64	41%	59%	1115	2.9
65+	44%	56%	480	4.5
EDUCATION				
High school or less	54%	46%	805	3.5
College or CEGEP	45%	55%	1027	3.1
University or higher	34%	66%	1153	2.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION				
Conservative Party of Canada	48%	52%	817	3.4
Liberal Party of Canada	40%	60%	805	3.5
NDP	41%	59%	421	4.8
Green Party	34%	66%	260	6.1
Bloc Québécois	51%	49%	208	6.8
Undecided	47%	53%	369	5.1

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	**36%**	**47%**	**18%**	**2985**	**1.8**
REGION					
British Columbia	36%	47%	17%	413	4.8
Alberta	60%	27%	13%	253	6.2
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	50%	33%	17%	191	7.1
Ontario	38%	46%	16%	1273	2.8
Quebec	21%	58%	21%	631	3.9
Atlantic Canada	28%	49%	23%	224	6.6
GENDER					
Male	41%	46%	13%	1392	2.6
Female	30%	47%	23%	1593	2.5
AGE					
<25	36%	45%	19%	333	5.4
25-44	34%	47%	19%	1057	3.0
45-64	34%	49%	16%	1115	2.9
65+	41%	41%	18%	480	4.5
EDUCATION					
High school or less	38%	42%	21%	805	3.5
College or CEGEP	38%	44%	18%	1027	3.1
University or higher	32%	53%	15%	1153	2.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	79%	11%	10%	817	3.4
Liberal Party of Canada	17%	67%	15%	805	3.5
NDP	18%	63%	34%	421	4.8
Green Party	17%	63%	20%	260	6.1
Bloc Québécois	10%	77%	13%	208	6.8
Undecided	24%	37%	39%	369	5.1

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	**29%**	**38%**	**33%**	**2985**	**1.8**
REGION					
British Columbia	28%	39%	32%	413	4.8
Alberta	16%	53%	31%	253	6.2
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	26%	47%	26%	191	7.1
Ontario	32%	38%	31%	1273	2.8
Quebec	29%	32%	39%	631	3.9
Atlantic Canada	32%	28%	40%	224	6.6
GENDER					
Male	33%	42%	25%	1392	2.6
Female	25%	34%	41%	1593	2.5
AGE					
<25	25%	37%	39%	333	5.4
25-44	26%	38%	36%	1057	3.0
45-64	31%	40%	29%	1115	2.9
65+	31%	35%	33%	480	4.5
EDUCATION					
High school or less	22%	42%	36%	805	3.5
College or CEGEP	25%	40%	34%	1027	3.1
University or higher	37%	33%	30%	1153	2.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	16%	58%	26%	817	3.4
Liberal Party of Canada	59%	17%	24%	805	3.5
NDP	21%	45%	34%	421	4.8
Green Party	18%	39%	43%	260	6.1
Bloc Québécois	23%	42%	35%	208	6.8
Undecided	14%	28%	58%	369	5.1

Job Approval Ratings for Jack Layton

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada is handling his job?

	Approve	Disapprove	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	**34%**	**33%**	**33%**	**1319**	**2.7**
REGION					
British Columbia	34%	38%	27%	257	6.1
Alberta	28%	43%	29%	114	9.2
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	32%	44%	24%	84	10.7
Ontario	32%	37%	31%	488	4.4
Quebec	40%	20%	40%	254	6.2
Atlantic Canada	29%	32%	39%	122	8.9
GENDER					
Male	36%	40%	24%	614	4.0
Female	32%	27%	41%	705	3.7
AGE					
<25	31%	29%	39%	141	8.3
25-44	40%	30%	29%	436	4.7
45-64	33%	33%	34%	508	4.4
65+	25%	43%	32%	234	6.4
EDUCATION					
High school or less	29%	34%	37%	351	5.2
College or CEGEP	32%	34%	34%	464	4.6
University or higher	39%	32%	28%	504	4.4
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	21%	55%	24%	368	5.1
Liberal Party of Canada	37%	28%	29%	360	5.2
NDP	68%	17%	24%	185	7.2
Green Party	35%	29%	31%	119	9.0
Bloc Québécois	40%	25%	40%	89	10.4
Undecided	18%	22%	39%	154	7.9

Job Approval Ratings for Barack Obama

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama, President of the United States is handling his job?

	Approve	Disapprove	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	**73%**	**11%**	**16%**	**1666**	**2.4**
REGION					
British Columbia	72%	12%	16%	156	7.9
Alberta	63%	14%	22%	139	8.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	67%	18%	15%	107	9.5
Ontario	75%	10%	14%	785	3.5
Quebec	77%	9%	14%	377	5.1
Atlantic Canada	69%	9%	22%	102	9.7
GENDER					
Male	71%	15%	14%	778	3.5
Female	75%	7%	20%	888	3.3
AGE					
<25	74%	14%	19%	192	7.1
25-44	71%	11%	23%	621	3.9
45-64	76%	10%	19%	607	4.0
65+	73%	12%	23%	246	6.3
EDUCATION					
High school or less	73%	13%	22%	454	4.6
College or CEGEP	72%	11%	24%	563	4.1
University or higher	75%	9%	18%	649	3.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	66%	17%	17%	449	4.6
Liberal Party of Canada	86%	7%	8%	445	4.7
NDP	74%	8%	18%	236	6.4
Green Party	70%	10%	19%	141	8.3
Bloc Québécois	76%	11%	13%	119	9.0
Undecided	65%	9%	25%	215	6.7

Better Health Care System

Q. Based on the overall needs of its citizens, which country do you think has the better system of health care: Canada or the United States?

	Canada	The United States	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	**87%**	**7%**	**6%**	**2985**	**1.8**
REGION					
British Columbia	89%	4%	7%	413	4.8
Alberta	91%	6%	4%	253	6.2
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	89%	6%	5%	191	7.1
Ontario	91%	5%	5%	1273	2.8
Quebec	80%	12%	8%	631	3.9
Atlantic Canada	88%	8%	4%	224	6.6
GENDER					
Male	87%	7%	6%	1392	2.6
Female	87%	7%	6%	1593	2.5
AGE					
<25	86%	9%	5%	333	5.4
25-44	85%	9%	6%	1057	3.0
45-64	89%	5%	7%	1115	2.9
65+	91%	5%	4%	480	4.5
EDUCATION					
High school or less	85%	8%	7%	805	3.5
College or CEGEP	88%	6%	6%	1027	3.1
University or higher	89%	6%	5%	1153	2.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	88%	8%	6%	817	3.4
Liberal Party of Canada	93%	3%	4%	805	3.5
NDP	90%	5%	5%	421	4.8
Green Party	87%	8%	4%	260	6.1
Bloc Québécois	79%	11%	9%	208	6.8
Undecided	81%	9%	10%	369	5.1

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 the August 5-11, 2009.[1] In total, a random sample of 2,985 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 2,511 decided voters). The margin of error associated with total sample is +/- 1.8 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.

[1] Please note that these dates are not inclusive of the weekends as we do not survey on Saturday or Sunday.