

TORY LEAD BEGINNING TO "GEL"

ONLY ALBERTANS NOW SUPPORT WAR IN AFGHANISTAN; NEARLY HALF OF CANADIANS WANT COMPULSORY VOTING

[Ottawa – October 1, 2009] – In this week's EKOS tracking poll, Stephen Harper's Conservatives sustained the lead they have built up since the threat of an election first emerged in late August. The Liberals now lead only in the Atlantic provinces, and although they are holding up reasonably well in Quebec, the fallout (if any) from their internal difficulties there this week is probably not yet measurable.

"Perhaps the most interesting results from this week's poll are not the party standings, which have remained relatively stable, but some of the other questions we asked which show the emergence of 'two Canadas,'" said EKOS President Frank Graves.

"Conservative Canada" represents a little over a third of the electorate. For this group, the country and the Harper government are both moving firmly in the right direction," he said. "And then there is the rest of Canada, who are less confident in the direction of the country and don't like the direction of the Harper government."

This week, the EKOS poll, conducted exclusively for the CBC, asked about two key issues facing the country, even if they are not always the most prominent in our day-to-day political discourse: the environment and Afghanistan.

Conservative Canada is "proud" of our national environmental position on the international stage; the rest say they are "embarrassed".

On Afghanistan, Conservative Canada continues to support the military mission whereas among the rest of the country there is clear majority opposition.

These two policy areas are reflective of many other areas of policy where Canadians are polarized.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **National federal vote intention:**
 - ☒ **36.0% CPC**
 - ☒ **29.7% LPC**
 - ☒ **13.9% NDP**
 - ☒ **10.5% Green**
 - ☒ **9.8% BQ**

- **Canada's environmental record:**
 - ☒ **23% "proud"**
 - ☒ **38% "embarrassed"**
 - ☒ **29% "neither"**
 - ☒ **10% don't know/no response**

- **Mission in Afghanistan:**
 - ☒ **33% support**
 - ☒ **52% oppose**
 - ☒ **15% neither**

- **Compulsory voting:**
 - ☒ **49% support**
 - ☒ **36% oppose**
 - ☒ **15% neither**

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

These cleavages also express themselves demographically. Conservative Canada is decidedly older, male, economically comfortable and Western.

"There are some signs that the electorate has now 'gelled' for the moment, with the CPC leading the Liberals by about six percentage points," said Graves. "In other words, the apparent momentum of early September has reached its limit. The Conservatives are not continuing to rise closer to their majority goal; and the Liberals have seemingly stabilized for the moment at a somewhat lower level than they enjoyed in the late winter, spring and summer."

Meanwhile, nearly half of Canadians say they would like to see a system of compulsory voting introduced to Canada.

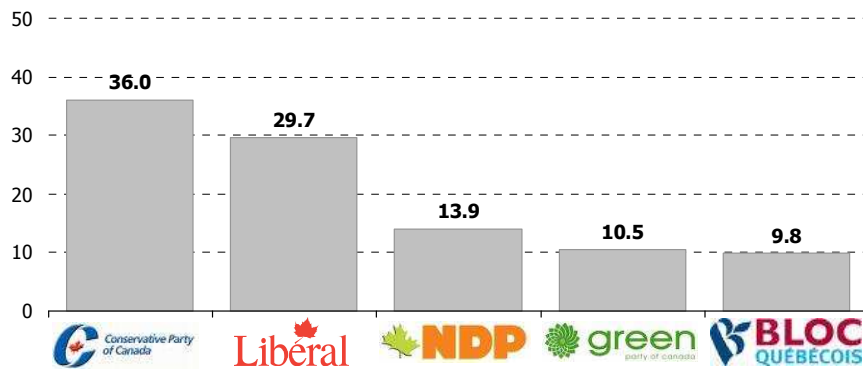
"Canada's rate of voter turn-out has been slipping in recent years, partly as a result of the frequency with which we go to the polls in a string of minority governments," said Graves.

"Interestingly, there is relatively little variation across supporters of different parties for this initiative, even though it would likely have very different effects on the various parties: the Greens, who have trouble getting their supporters to the polls, for example, might well benefit more from compulsory voting than the Conservatives, whose voters tend to be more committed, and have shown more muscle in getting their supporters out to vote than the other parties in the past."

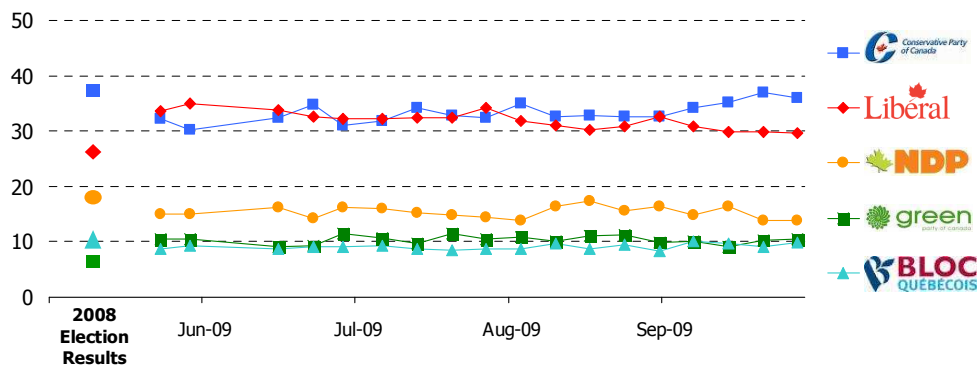
Top Line Results:

Federal vote intention

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



Weekly tracking of federal vote intention



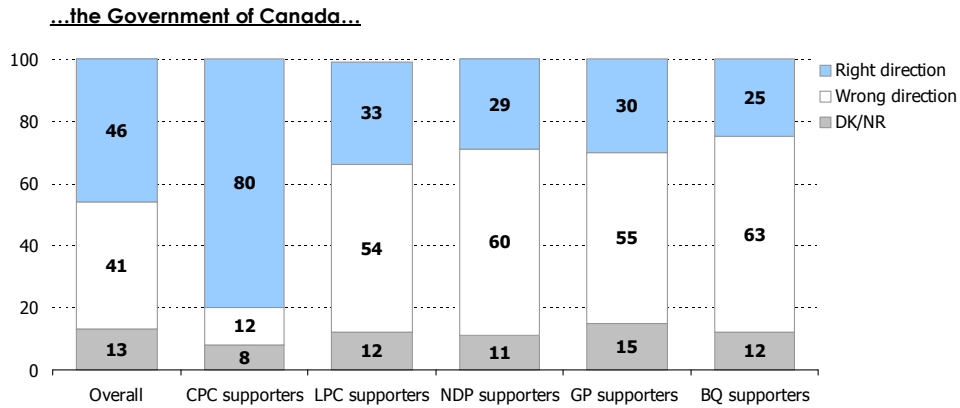
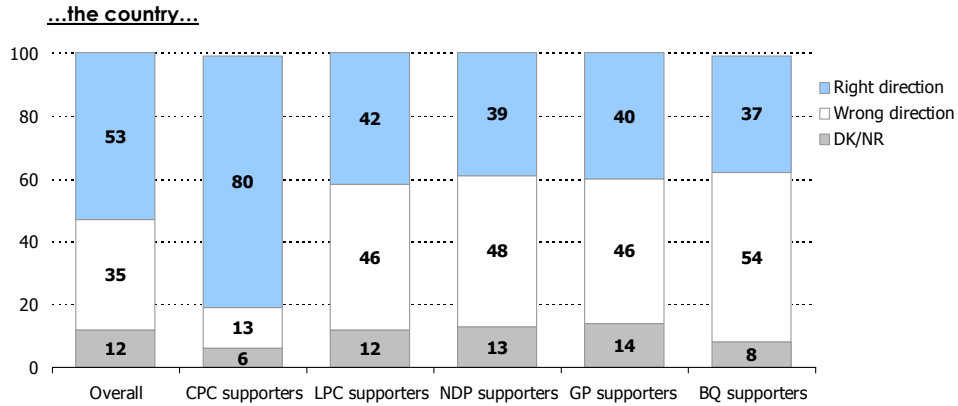
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided voters only. Our survey also finds that 14.3% of Canadians are undecided/ineligible to vote.

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BASE: Decided voters; most recent data point Sep. 23-29 (n=2738)

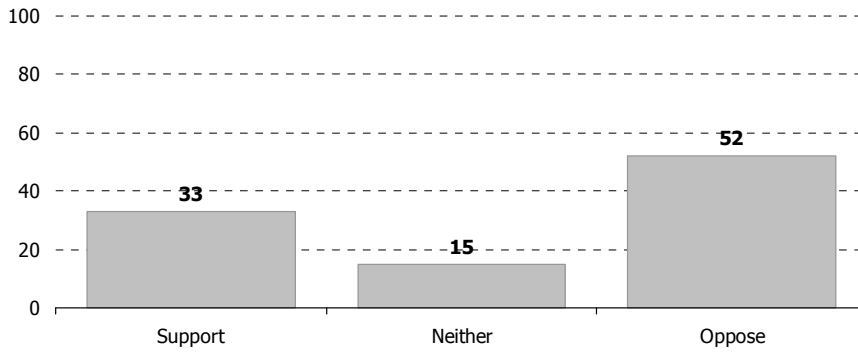
Direction of country / government

Q. All things considered, would you say [the country/the Government of Canada] is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

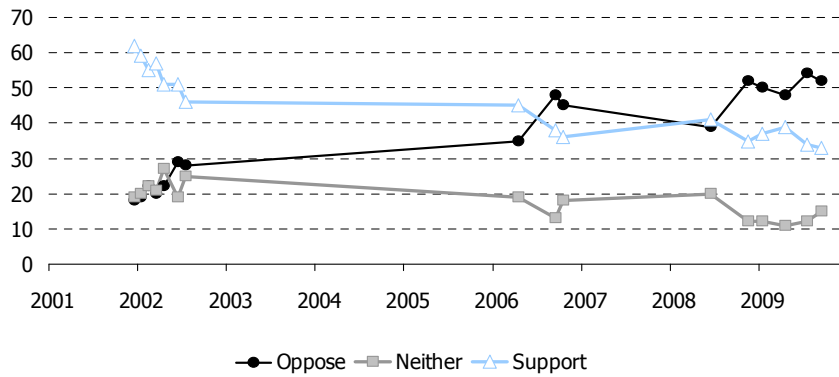


Mission in Afghanistan

Q. Do you support or oppose Canadian military participation in Afghanistan?

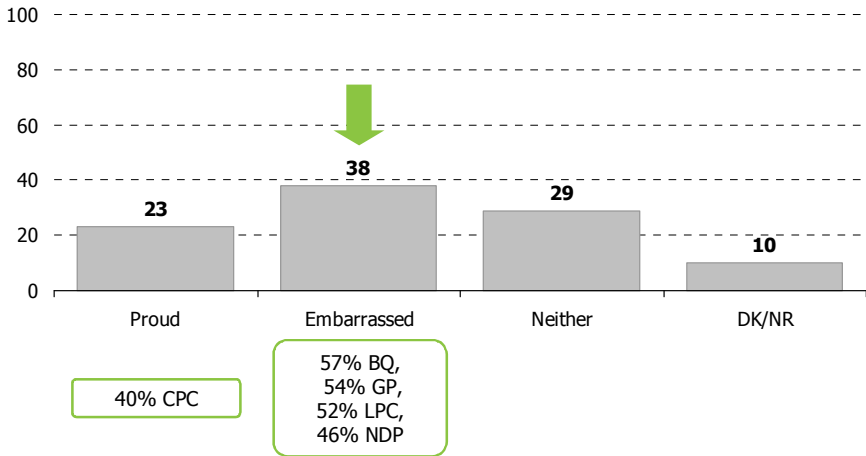


Tracking support for the Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2009)



Attitudes towards Canada's current position on the environment

Q. Recently, world leaders met at the United Nations to discuss environmental issues. Based on what you know, would you say that you are proud or embarrassed of Canada's current position on the environment?

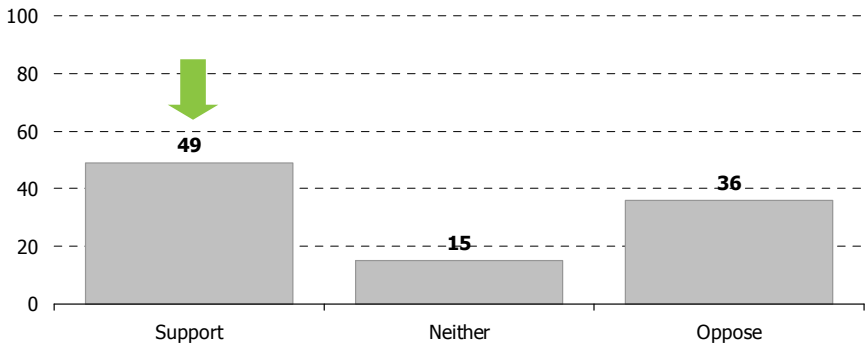


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BASE: Canadians; Sep. 23-29 (n=2645)

Support for compulsory voting






Q. In Australia there is a legal requirement for all citizens to vote. Would you support or oppose Canada introducing similar legislation?



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BASE: Canadians; most recent data point Sep. 23-29 (n=2645)

Detailed Tables:

National Federal Vote Intention							
<i>Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?</i>							
						Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	36.0%	29.7%	13.9%	10.5%	9.8%	2738	1.9
REGION							
British Columbia	37.4%	25.0%	23.3%	14.3%	0.0%	350	5.2
Alberta	63.1%	16.0%	10.1%	10.8%	0.0%	233	6.4
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	48.8%	26.2%	20.0%	5.0%	0.0%	184	7.2
Ontario	40.2%	35.7%	13.4%	10.8%	0.0%	1071	3.0
Quebec	16.6%	26.4%	8.2%	9.2%	39.6%	722	3.7
Atlantic Canada	28.7%	40.7%	18.9%	11.7%	0.0%	178	7.4
GENDER							
Male	40.1%	28.4%	12.4%	9.7%	9.4%	1360	2.7
Female	31.8%	31.1%	15.4%	11.4%	10.3%	1378	2.6
AGE							
<25	22.3%	25.0%	16.9%	22.5%	13.3%	274	5.9
25-44	30.5%	30.6%	14.7%	12.3%	11.9%	966	3.2
45-64	40.9%	29.8%	12.9%	7.6%	8.8%	1049	3.0
65+	45.6%	30.8%	12.7%	5.3%	5.7%	449	4.6
EDUCATION							
High school or less	37.9%	22.3%	15.4%	10.9%	13.5%	752	3.6
College or CEGEP	40.3%	26.9%	12.5%	10.6%	9.7%	877	3.3
University or higher	31.3%	37.1%	14.0%	10.2%	7.4%	1109	2.9
METROPOLITAN CANADA							
Vancouver	40.2%	26.5%	20.7%	12.5%	0.0%	117	9.1
Calgary	62.0%	19.6%	3.3%	15.0%	0.0%	61	12.6
Toronto	38.1%	43.3%	11.2%	7.4%	0.0%	311	5.6
Ottawa	43.4%	39.3%	10.0%	7.2%	0.0%	152	8.0
Montreal	14.2%	31.7%	7.3%	12.3%	34.5%	308	5.6





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	37.4%	25.0%	23.3%	14.3%	350	5.2
GENDER						
Male	42.7%	22.2%	22.9%	12.2%	173	7.5
Female	31.2%	27.7%	24.1%	17.0%	177	7.4
AGE						
<25	22.0%	13.5%	45.5%	19.0%	36	16.3
25-44	31.6%	30.5%	19.2%	18.8%	114	9.2
45-64	40.3%	25.8%	19.6%	14.3%	138	8.3
65+	50.0%	20.1%	25.1%	4.8%	62	12.5
EDUCATION						
High school or less	35.4%	17.2%	29.1%	18.4%	87	10.5
College or CEGEP	42.6%	22.3%	19.7%	15.4%	107	9.5
University or higher	33.9%	31.1%	23.0%	11.9%	156	7.9





Federal Vote Intention – Alberta

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	63.1%	16.0%	10.1%	10.8%	233	6.4
GENDER						
Male	72.5%	12.4%	7.1%	8.0%	116	9.1
Female	53.5%	18.3%	13.4%	14.8%	117	9.1
AGE						
<25	50.6%	0.0%	14.9%	34.5%	14	26.2
25-44	59.3%	18.4%	8.6%	13.7%	96	10.0
45-64	65.8%	12.9%	14.6%	6.8%	87	10.5
65+	72.5%	21.9%	2.8%	2.9%	36	16.3
EDUCATION						
High school or less	70.5%	9.5%	9.7%	10.4%	63	12.4
College or CEGEP	62.5%	15.5%	9.3%	12.7%	90	10.3
University or higher	57.8%	19.8%	11.6%	10.8%	80	11.0





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	48.8%	26.2%	20.0%	5.0%	184	7.2
GENDER						
Male	50.2%	23.8%	18.2%	7.9%	98	9.9
Female	42.5%	29.7%	24.2%	3.6%	86	10.6
AGE						
<25	22.3%	18.8%	30.8%	28.1%	14	26.2
25-44	44.9%	30.2%	22.9%	1.9%	55	13.2
45-64	61.3%	20.2%	14.2%	4.3%	77	11.2
65+	38.5%	34.9%	23.8%	2.8%	38	15.9
EDUCATION						
High school or less	55.3%	20.0%	19.0%	5.8%	55	13.2
College or CEGEP	51.4%	22.7%	18.7%	7.3%	60	12.7
University or higher	35.4%	35.1%	25.0%	4.5%	69	11.8






Federal Vote Intention – Ontario

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	40.2%	35.7%	13.4%	10.8%	1071	3.0
GENDER						
Male	44.3%	33.9%	11.5%	10.4%	546	4.2
Female	35.8%	37.7%	15.4%	11.1%	525	4.3
AGE						
<25	28.9%	34.9%	14.9%	21.3%	105	9.6
25-44	33.4%	37.9%	14.6%	14.1%	368	5.1
45-64	44.1%	36.3%	12.7%	6.9%	416	4.8
65+	51.8%	31.0%	11.5%	5.8%	182	7.3
EDUCATION						
High school or less	45.6%	25.7%	16.9%	11.8%	237	6.4
College or CEGEP	45.8%	32.2%	11.5%	10.6%	342	5.3
University or higher	33.2%	43.4%	13.0%	10.4%	492	4.4





Federal Vote Intention – Quebec

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

						Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	16.6%	26.4%	8.2%	9.2%	39.6%	722	3.7
GENDER							
Male	18.9%	26.4%	8.6%	8.0%	38.2%	347	5.3
Female	15.6%	28.0%	7.2%	9.4%	39.8%	375	5.1
AGE							
<25	12.2%	19.7%	9.1%	18.4%	40.6%	90	10.3
25-44	13.8%	23.9%	11.5%	8.2%	42.7%	280	5.9
45-64	19.5%	27.6%	5.7%	7.3%	39.9%	252	6.2
65+	23.4%	38.1%	4.0%	6.0%	28.5%	100	9.8
EDUCATION							
High school or less	18.8%	21.7%	7.7%	7.9%	43.9%	247	6.2
College or CEGEP	16.8%	27.8%	7.8%	7.9%	39.7%	219	6.6
University or higher	16.2%	32.0%	8.2%	10.1%	33.5%	256	6.1

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	28.7%	40.7%	18.9%	11.7%	178	7.4
GENDER						
Male	28.2%	45.2%	14.5%	12.1%	80	11.0
Female	27.4%	36.2%	23.6%	12.8%	98	9.9
AGE						
<25	11.5%	41.2%	6.9%	40.4%	15	25.3
25-44	20.8%	39.5%	26.0%	13.6%	53	13.5
45-64	36.5%	42.7%	17.2%	3.6%	79	11.0
65+	35.2%	38.6%	17.1%	9.2%	31	17.6
EDUCATION						
High school or less	32.3%	36.1%	19.6%	11.9%	63	12.4
College or CEGEP	30.6%	36.8%	17.3%	15.4%	59	12.8
University or higher	19.8%	49.7%	20.6%	9.9%	56	13.1

Direction of country

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

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	53%	35%	12%	1545	2.5
REGION					
British Columbia	50%	37%	13%	192	7.1
Alberta	59%	31%	9%	135	8.4
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	68%	21%	11%	116	9.1
Ontario	55%	34%	12%	610	4.0
Quebec	45%	45%	10%	407	4.9
Atlantic Canada	47%	31%	23%	85	10.6
GENDER					
Male	56%	34%	10%	763	3.6
Female	50%	36%	14%	782	3.5
AGE					
<25	47%	37%	16%	166	7.6
25-44	52%	40%	8%	571	4.1
45-64	54%	34%	11%	591	4.0
65+	56%	26%	19%	217	6.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	52%	35%	13%	440	4.7
College or CEGEP	55%	35%	10%	509	4.3
University or higher	51%	37%	13%	596	4.0
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	80%	13%	7%	482	4.5
Liberal Party of Canada	42%	46%	12%	369	5.1
NDP	39%	48%	13%	181	7.3
Green Party	40%	46%	14%	134	8.5
Bloc Quebecois	37%	54%	8%	141	8.3
Undecided	37%	40%	23%	189	7.1

Direction of government

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

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	46%	41%	13%	1671	2.4
REGION					
British Columbia	39%	51%	10%	214	6.7
Alberta	60%	33%	7%	140	8.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	53%	33%	15%	97	10.0
Ontario	51%	35%	14%	646	3.9
Quebec	38%	50%	13%	443	4.7
Atlantic Canada	43%	41%	16%	131	8.6
GENDER					
Male	52%	39%	9%	770	3.5
Female	41%	42%	16%	901	3.3
AGE					
<25	45%	43%	12%	170	7.5
25-44	43%	47%	10%	570	4.1
45-64	46%	42%	12%	637	3.9
65+	53%	28%	20%	294	5.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	48%	40%	13%	472	4.5
College or CEGEP	46%	41%	13%	550	4.2
University or higher	46%	42%	13%	649	3.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	80%	12%	8%	488	4.4
Liberal Party of Canada	33%	55%	12%	454	4.6
NDP	29%	60%	11%	192	7.1
Green Party	30%	55%	15%	150	8.0
Bloc Quebecois	25%	63%	12%	147	8.1
Undecided	33%	41%	26%	184	7.2

Attitudes towards Canada's current position on the environment

Q. Recently, world leaders met at the United Nations to discuss environmental issues. Based on what you know, would you say that you are proud or embarrassed of Canada's current position on the environment?

	Proud	Embarrassed	Neither	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	23%	38%	29%	10%	2645	1.9
REGION						
British Columbia	23%	37%	29%	11%	231	6.5
Alberta	31%	29%	31%	9%	207	6.8
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	29%	30%	32%	9%	175	7.4
Ontario	25%	37%	27%	11%	1096	3.0
Quebec	16%	46%	28%	9%	743	3.6
Atlantic Canada	24%	34%	28%	13%	193	7.1
GENDER						
Male	26%	38%	29%	7%	1256	2.8
Female	20%	38%	28%	14%	1389	2.6
AGE						
<25	24%	40%	26%	10%	262	6.1
25-44	24%	40%	29%	8%	951	3.2
45-64	22%	38%	29%	11%	1014	3.1
65+	24%	33%	29%	15%	418	4.8
EDUCATION						
High school or less	25%	32%	30%	13%	759	3.6
College or CEGEP	26%	33%	29%	11%	890	3.3
University or higher	19%	46%	26%	8%	996	3.1
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION						
Conservative Party of Canada	40%	16%	34%	10%	782	3.5
Liberal Party of Canada	16%	52%	25%	7%	679	3.8
NDP	16%	46%	28%	10%	297	5.7
Green Party	13%	54%	24%	9%	229	6.5
Bloc Quebecois	13%	56%	24%	6%	257	6.1
Undecided	16%	30%	31%	23%	315	5.5

Support for compulsory voting

Q. In Australia there is a legal requirement for all citizens to vote. Would you support or oppose Canada introducing similar legislation?

	Support	Neither	Oppose	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	49%	15%	36%	2645	1.9
REGION					
British Columbia	48%	15%	37%	231	6.5
Alberta	53%	16%	31%	207	6.8
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	44%	14%	41%	175	7.4
Ontario	50%	13%	37%	1096	3.0
Quebec	47%	19%	34%	743	3.6
Atlantic Canada	44%	11%	45%	193	7.1
GENDER					
Male	49%	14%	37%	1256	2.8
Female	48%	16%	36%	1389	2.6
AGE					
<25	46%	13%	41%	262	6.1
25-44	49%	13%	37%	951	3.2
45-64	48%	17%	36%	1014	3.1
65+	51%	16%	33%	418	4.8
EDUCATION					
High school or less	44%	20%	36%	759	3.6
College or CEGEP	50%	15%	36%	890	3.3
University or higher	51%	11%	37%	996	3.1
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	51%	15%	34%	782	3.5
Liberal Party of Canada	50%	15%	35%	679	3.8
NDP	51%	13%	36%	297	5.7
Green Party	46%	11%	43%	229	6.5
Bloc Quebecois	52%	15%	33%	257	6.1
Undecided	40%	20%	40%	315	5.5

Support for the Afghanistan mission					
<i>Q. Do you support or oppose Canadian military participation in Afghanistan?</i>					
	Support	Neither	Oppose	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	33%	15%	52%	2645	1.9
REGION					
British Columbia	39%	12%	49%	231	6.5
Alberta	48%	11%	41%	207	6.8
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	40%	15%	45%	175	7.4
Ontario	36%	15%	49%	1096	3.0
Quebec	20%	15%	65%	743	3.6
Atlantic Canada	33%	17%	50%	193	7.1
GENDER					
Male	40%	12%	48%	1256	2.8
Female	26%	17%	57%	1389	2.6
AGE					
<25	27%	12%	61%	262	6.1
25-44	33%	14%	53%	951	3.2
45-64	34%	14%	52%	1014	3.1
65+	34%	20%	46%	418	4.8
EDUCATION					
High school or less	31%	18%	51%	759	3.6
College or CEGEP	33%	16%	51%	890	3.3
University or higher	35%	11%	54%	996	3.1
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	49%	17%	34%	782	3.5
Liberal Party of Canada	31%	14%	55%	679	3.8
NDP	27%	8%	65%	297	5.7
Green Party	26%	10%	64%	229	6.5
Bloc Quebecois	14%	10%	75%	257	6.1
Undecided	24%	24%	52%	315	5.5

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 landline 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 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 the September 23-29, 2009.¹ In total, a random sample of 3,216 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 2,738 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, education). 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.