

## TORIES CONSOLIDATE LEAD

CANADIANS LESS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT ECONOMY/MORE CONSERVATIVE ABOUT GOVERNMENT SPENDING

[Ottawa – October 15, 2009] – Following last week’s movement upward in the polls, Canada’s federal Conservatives have solidified an impressive, potentially majority-producing lead among Canadians, with the Liberals now mired at the same historic lows under Michael Ignatieff that they suffered under former leader Stéphane Dion.

Meanwhile, Canadians are getting more optimistic – or at least less pessimistic – about the economy. They also are showing a decisive preference for smaller over larger government, as Canada appears to be emerging from the recession.

“All of this bodes well for Harper’s Tories and poorly for Ignatieff’s Liberals,” said Frank Graves, President of EKOS Research Associates.

“Canadians are beginning to think the worst is over with the recession, which should play to the government’s favour. They are also opting strongly for a small-c conservative view of government.”

At the moment, the Conservatives are comprehensively ahead of the Liberals nationwide. They not only lead by more than 50 percentage points in Alberta, but by 36 in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, 16 in British Columbia, 13 in Ontario, eight in the Atlantic provinces, and they are in a virtual tie in Quebec (though both well behind the Bloc Québécois there).

“The Liberals are under siege everywhere they turn,” said Graves. “Even New Canadians, under-25 Canadians, and the university-educated appear to be turning against them. Most stunning of all, the Conservatives now have a lead among women of almost 11 percentage points.”

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **National federal vote intention:**
  - ☒ **40.7% CPC**
  - ☒ **25.5% LPC**
  - ☒ **14.3% NDP**
  - ☒ **10.5% Green**
  - ☒ **9.1% BQ**
- **State of Canada’s economy:**
  - ☒ **11% depression**
  - ☒ **22% severe recession**
  - ☒ **47% mild recession**
  - ☒ **17% moderate growth**
  - ☒ **2% strong growth**
- **Short-term economic outlook:**
  - ☒ **25% worse**
  - ☒ **38% about the same**
  - ☒ **37% better**
- **Preferred size of government:**
  - ☒ **21% larger**
  - ☒ **41% smaller**
  - ☒ **39% do not know/no response**

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

---

Traditionally, governments suffer during recessions, and take solace from signs of recovery. At the moment, Canadians are still more cautious than many economists. Nearly half think Canada is still in a "mild recession" – but that is nonetheless down 10 percentage points from January. The number thinking we are in a period of growth has jumped from just 3% in January to nearly 20%.

Some might have imagined that Canadians would emerge from this recession with a taste for government spending and more activist government. Not at all.

At the moment, a chastened Canadian public prefers a low-tax, low-service government over a higher-taxing government with a higher level of services by a margin of nearly two-to-one.

"For the moment, everything seems to be rolling the Conservatives' way," said Graves. "For the Liberals – who were neck-and-neck with the Conservatives less than two months ago, and were edging ahead in the spring – this looks like the harbinger of a potential disaster."

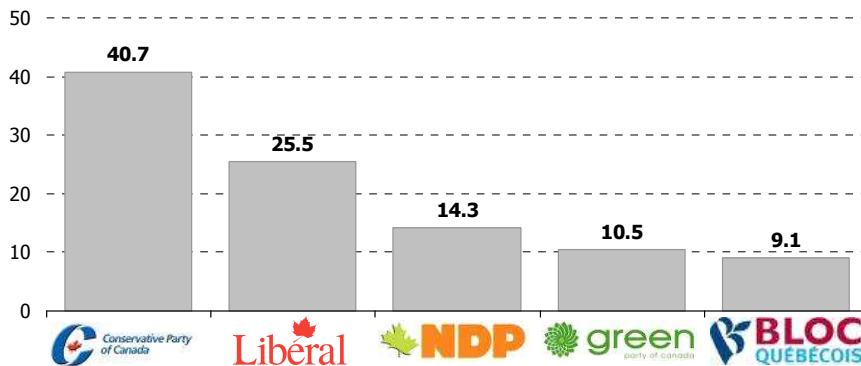
"Of course, in the past, the Conservatives have had trouble maintaining themselves in majority territory for more than a few weeks," said Graves. "Previously, there has usually been a pullback among voters at the idea of a Stephen Harper majority. It is early to say whether Harper's more prime ministerial image lately, combined with the humanizing touch at the piano keyboard, will make a difference this time. But each week that passes at these levels of support suggests a more durable shift may be underway."

"For the Liberals to reverse their fortunes, there may need to be either a dramatic change in their strategy or some major, unexpected setback to the ruling Conservatives. Right now, the Liberals are on a glide-path to losing their status as a potential government-in-waiting."

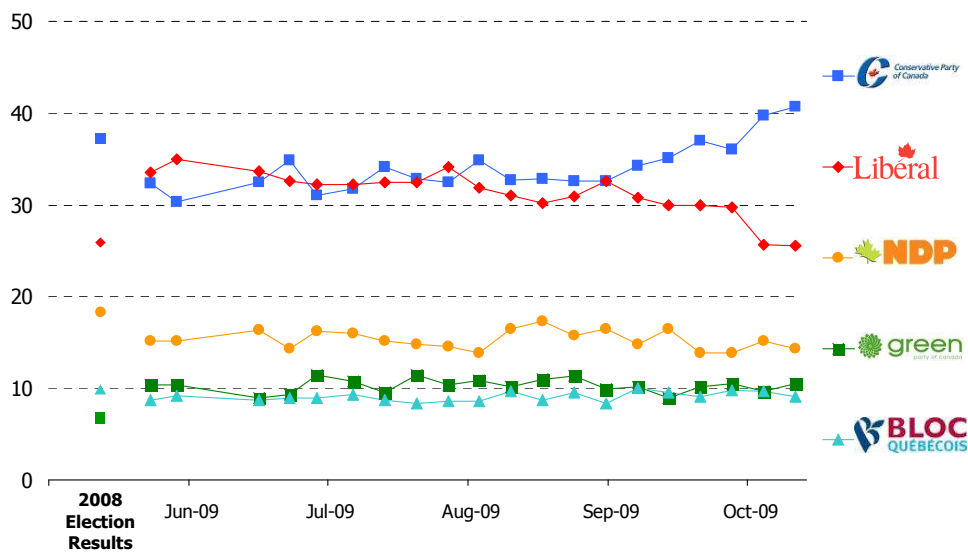
## Top Line Results:

### Federal vote intention

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



### Weekly tracking of federal vote intention



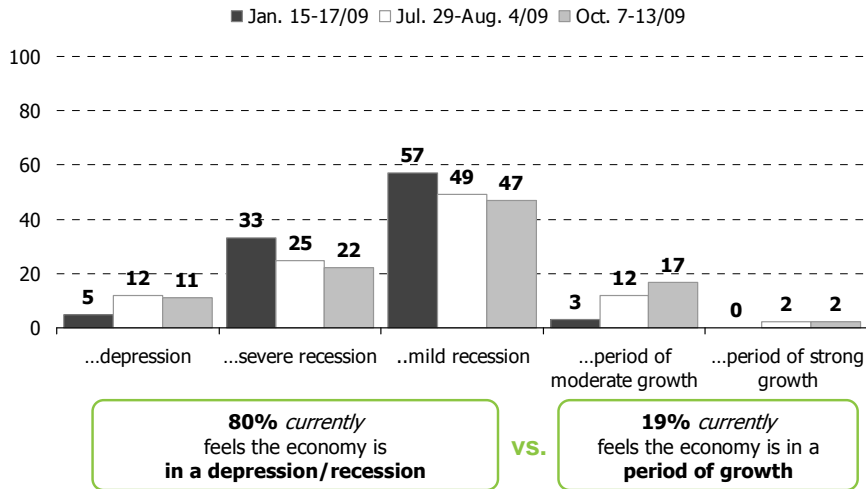
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided voters only. Our survey also finds that 17.9% of Canadians are undecided/ineligible to vote.

Copyright 2009. No reproduction without permission

BASE: Decided voters; most recent data point Oct. 7-13 (n=2224)

## State of Canada's economy

Q. Which of the following best describes how you feel about Canada's economy? Would you say the economy is currently in a ... ?

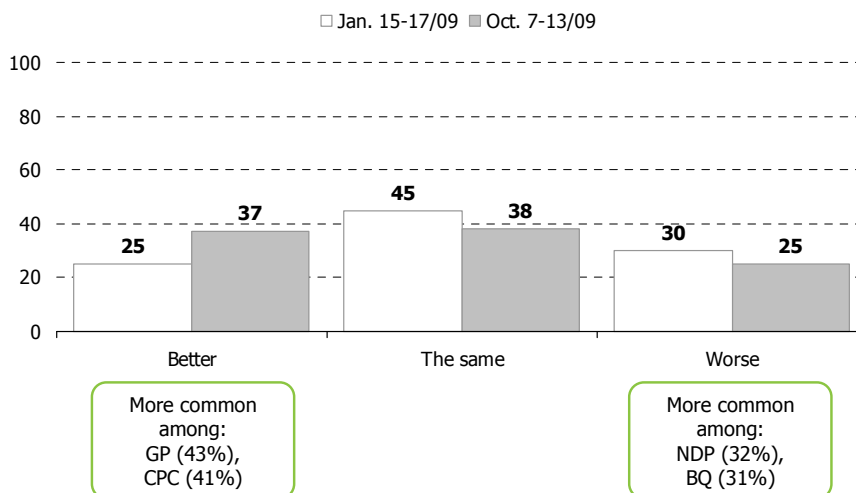


Copyright 2009. No reproduction without permission

BASE: Canadians; most recent data point Oct. 7-13 (n=2729)

## Outlook on personal financial situation

Q. Thinking ahead over the next year or so, do you think your personal financial situation will be better or worse than it is today?

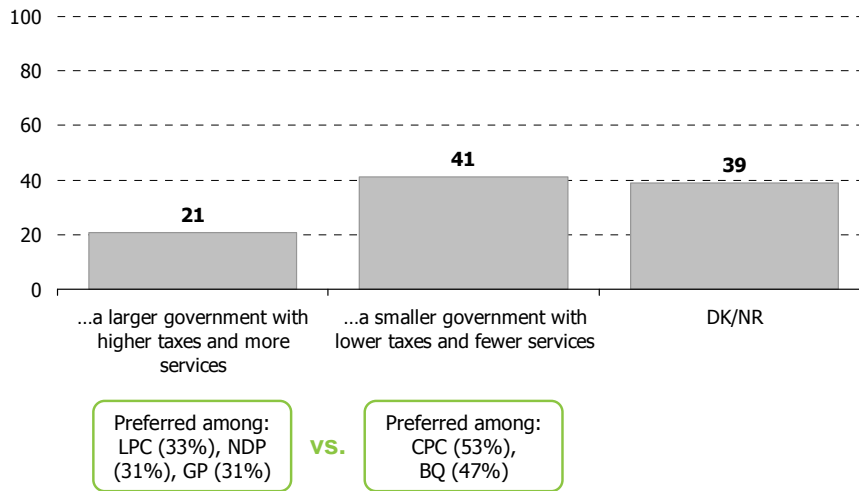


Copyright 2009. No reproduction without permission






BASE: Canadians; most recent data point Oct. 7-13 (n=2729)

## Size of government

Q. Generally speaking, would you say that you favour...







## Detailed Tables:

<b>National Federal Vote Intention</b>							
<i>Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?</i>							
						Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>40.7%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>2224</b>	<b>2.1</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
British Columbia	39.1%	23.2%	20.3%	17.4%	0.0%	323	5.5
Alberta	66.7%	13.9%	12.2%	7.3%	0.0%	230	6.5
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	55.9%	20.0%	19.0%	5.0%	0.0%	169	7.5
Ontario	44.1%	31.0%	14.2%	10.7%	0.0%	759	3.6
Quebec	22.5%	22.6%	8.4%	10.4%	36.1%	577	4.1
Atlantic Canada	39.1%	31.0%	23.6%	6.3%	0.0%	166	7.6
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	44.5%	24.9%	10.9%	10.8%	8.9%	1095	3.0
Female	36.7%	26.0%	17.8%	10.1%	9.3%	1129	2.9
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	26.6%	20.2%	15.0%	21.7%	16.6%	212	6.7
25-44	36.1%	26.3%	15.3%	12.3%	9.9%	698	3.7
45-64	44.5%	25.1%	14.4%	7.4%	8.5%	842	3.4
65+	50.3%	27.7%	11.7%	6.1%	4.3%	472	4.5
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	39.6%	21.4%	14.1%	12.7%	12.1%	624	3.9
College or CEGEP	46.2%	19.1%	15.3%	10.4%	9.0%	708	3.7
University or higher	36.9%	33.4%	13.6%	9.0%	7.1%	892	3.3
<b>METROPOLITAN CANADA</b>							
Vancouver	37.0%	28.4%	23.3%	11.4%	0.0%	115	9.1
Calgary	68.9%	12.8%	6.4%	12.0%	0.0%	61	12.6
Toronto	38.9%	40.8%	10.9%	9.4%	0.0%	212	6.7
Ottawa	52.7%	31.8%	7.5%	8.0%	0.0%	105	9.6
Montreal	16.6%	26.0%	10.5%	9.0%	37.9%	272	5.9





### **Federal Vote Intention – British Columbia**

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>23.2%</b>	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	42.2%	27.6%	15.2%	15.0%	171	7.5
Female	34.4%	18.2%	26.6%	20.8%	152	8.0
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	21.3%	24.9%	16.7%	37.0%	24	20.0
25-44	34.8%	24.5%	23.3%	17.4%	87	10.5
45-64	39.1%	24.8%	22.0%	14.2%	139	8.3
65+	53.7%	15.3%	16.0%	15.0%	73	11.5
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	34.1%	22.3%	21.2%	22.3%	78	11.1
College or CEGEP	44.9%	12.0%	26.4%	16.7%	102	9.7
University or higher	35.9%	31.4%	16.5%	16.2%	143	8.2





### **Federal Vote Intention – Alberta**

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>6.5</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	72.4%	13.0%	8.4%	6.2%	126	8.7
Female	59.6%	15.1%	16.5%	8.9%	104	9.6
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	61.8%	13.2%	12.9%	12.1%	16	24.5
25-44	61.1%	12.9%	18.7%	7.3%	78	11.1
45-64	71.9%	15.7%	6.1%	6.3%	83	10.8
65+	68.6%	13.0%	11.2%	7.3%	53	13.5
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	64.4%	11.1%	15.6%	8.9%	62	12.5
College or CEGEP	76.3%	5.6%	13.0%	5.1%	81	10.9
University or higher	58.6%	24.1%	8.8%	8.5%	87	10.5





### **Federal Vote Intention – Saskatchewan/Manitoba**

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	60.0%	18.9%	17.5%	3.5%	80	11.0
Female	52.1%	19.2%	20.8%	7.8%	89	10.4
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	80.4%	9.4%	0.0%	10.2%	10	31.0
25-44	42.4%	17.4%	25.1%	15.1%	40	15.5
45-64	63.5%	16.8%	19.7%	0.0%	76	11.2
65+	50.3%	30.8%	18.9%	0.0%	43	14.9
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	60.8%	11.4%	19.0%	8.8%	52	13.6
College or CEGEP	55.6%	22.7%	18.9%	2.8%	48	14.1
University or higher	52.1%	22.1%	19.9%	5.9%	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 (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>44.1%</b>	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>759</b>	<b>3.6</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	48.5%	28.9%	10.3%	12.4%	370	5.1
Female	39.4%	32.9%	18.2%	9.5%	389	5.0
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	27.6%	25.6%	17.6%	29.2%	71	11.6
25-44	40.1%	32.6%	15.0%	12.4%	243	6.3
45-64	48.1%	29.7%	15.3%	6.9%	285	5.8
65+	53.0%	33.1%	8.4%	5.5%	160	7.8
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	46.0%	25.0%	13.3%	15.7%	177	7.4
College or CEGEP	50.6%	23.2%	15.6%	10.6%	233	6.4
University or higher	38.2%	39.3%	13.7%	8.7%	349	5.3







### **Federal Vote Intention – Quebec**

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

						Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>22.6%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>36.1%</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	27.2%	20.8%	6.6%	10.4%	35.0%	269	6.0
Female	20.3%	25.9%	9.2%	9.2%	35.4%	308	5.6
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	12.9%	15.0%	13.1%	14.5%	44.4%	77	11.2
25-44	20.4%	22.2%	8.6%	13.3%	35.4%	206	6.8
45-64	24.2%	23.4%	7.4%	6.9%	38.1%	196	7.0
65+	36.3%	31.2%	4.0%	5.7%	22.8%	98	9.9
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	23.8%	20.7%	6.8%	11.2%	37.6%	195	7.0
College or CEGEP	28.3%	19.7%	7.4%	10.9%	33.8%	188	7.2
University or higher	19.3%	29.7%	9.6%	7.4%	34.0%	194	7.0

### **Federal Vote Intention – Atlantic Canada**

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

					Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>23.6%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>7.6</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	32.1%	40.0%	18.1%	9.8%	79	11.0
Female	44.2%	23.8%	27.9%	4.1%	87	10.5
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	25.9%	30.6%	21.1%	22.4%	14	26.2
25-44	35.6%	41.9%	17.9%	4.5%	44	14.8
45-64	42.9%	26.1%	22.7%	8.3%	63	12.4
65+	39.9%	28.8%	31.3%	0.0%	45	14.6
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	37.7%	28.6%	27.9%	5.8%	60	12.7
College or CEGEP	36.4%	31.3%	20.8%	11.5%	56	13.1
University or higher	39.4%	38.0%	18.7%	3.9%	50	13.9

## State of Canada's Economy

*Q. Which of the following best describes how you feel about Canada's economy? Would you say the economy is currently in a depression, a severe recession, a mild recession, a period of moderate growth, or a period of strong growth?*

	Depression	Severe Recession	Mild Recession	Moderate Growth	Strong Growth	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2729</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
British Columbia	7%	26%	49%	16%	2%	402	4.9
Alberta	12%	20%	49%	16%	2%	287	5.8
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	9%	15%	51%	22%	2%	202	6.9
Ontario	9%	21%	49%	18%	2%	924	3.2
Quebec	18%	25%	42%	12%	2%	692	3.7
Atlantic Canada	9%	14%	47%	26%	4%	222	6.6
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	11%	22%	45%	20%	3%	1287	2.7
Female	12%	22%	50%	14%	2%	1442	2.6
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	15%	17%	50%	15%	4%	272	5.9
25-44	11%	25%	47%	15%	2%	891	3.3
45-64	11%	23%	50%	15%	1%	1013	3.1
65+	12%	16%	41%	27%	4%	553	4.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	16%	22%	40%	18%	4%	809	3.5
College or CEGEP	11%	22%	48%	18%	2%	877	3.3
University or higher	9%	22%	52%	16%	2%	1043	3.0
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Conservative Party of Canada	8%	14%	49%	27%	2%	916	3.2
Liberal Party of Canada	11%	28%	49%	11%	2%	559	4.1
NDP	12%	26%	46%	13%	3%	319	5.5
Green Party	14%	24%	49%	12%	2%	222	6.6
Bloc Québécois	21%	28%	40%	10%	1%	208	6.8
Undecided	11%	23%	47%	17%	2%	391	5.0

### **Short-Term Economic Outlook**

*Q. Thinking ahead over the next year or so, do you think your personal financial situation will be worse or better than it is today? Please respond using a 7-point scale where 1 means much worse, 7 means much better and the mid-point 4 means about the same.*

	Worse (1-3)	About the same	Better (5-7)	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>2729</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>REGION</b>					
British Columbia	28%	33%	39%	402	4.9
Alberta	21%	38%	40%	287	5.8
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	18%	44%	38%	202	6.9
Ontario	26%	38%	36%	924	3.2
Quebec	24%	41%	35%	692	3.7
Atlantic Canada	28%	38%	34%	222	6.6
<b>GENDER</b>					
Male	24%	36%	41%	1287	2.7
Female	26%	41%	33%	1442	2.6
<b>AGE</b>					
<25	25%	27%	48%	272	5.9
25-44	25%	31%	45%	891	3.3
45-64	27%	41%	32%	1013	3.1
65+	21%	57%	22%	553	4.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>					
High school or less	28%	38%	35%	809	3.5
College or CEGEP	25%	40%	35%	877	3.3
University or higher	23%	38%	39%	1043	3.0
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>					
Conservative Party of Canada	18%	41%	41%	916	3.2
Liberal Party of Canada	25%	39%	35%	559	4.1
NDP	32%	36%	32%	319	5.5
Green Party	25%	32%	43%	222	6.6
Bloc Quebecois	31%	39%	30%	208	6.8
Undecided	28%	42%	31%	391	5.0

### **Preferred Size of Government**

*Q. Generally speaking, which of the following would you say that you favour: 1) a larger government with higher taxes and more services or 2) a smaller government with lower taxes and fewer services?*

	Larger Government	Smaller Government	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>2729</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>REGION</b>					
British Columbia	21%	43%	36%	402	4.9
Alberta	21%	40%	38%	287	5.8
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	20%	41%	39%	202	6.9
Ontario	24%	39%	36%	924	3.2
Quebec	17%	43%	41%	692	3.7
Atlantic Canada	17%	36%	47%	222	6.6
<b>GENDER</b>					
Male	23%	49%	28%	1287	2.7
Female	19%	33%	48%	1442	2.6
<b>AGE</b>					
<25	31%	34%	36%	272	5.9
25-44	24%	39%	38%	891	3.3
45-64	16%	46%	37%	1013	3.1
65+	17%	38%	45%	553	4.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>					
High school or less	15%	37%	47%	809	3.5
College or CEGEP	17%	43%	41%	877	3.3
University or higher	28%	42%	30%	1043	3.0
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>					
Conservative Party of Canada	13%	53%	34%	916	3.2
Liberal Party of Canada	33%	32%	36%	559	4.1
NDP	31%	29%	40%	319	5.5
Green Party	31%	38%	32%	222	6.6
Bloc Quebecois	16%	47%	37%	208	6.8
Undecided	10%	34%	56%	391	5.0

## 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 October 7 – October 13, 2009.<sup>1</sup> In total, a random sample of 2,729 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 2,224 decided voters). The margin of error associated with total sample is +/-1.9 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note that these dates are not inclusive of the weekends or holidays, as we do not survey on Saturday, Sunday or Thanksgiving Day.