

## ***TO VOTE...CLICK HERE***

*CANADIANS WANT INTERNET VOTING IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS*

[Ottawa – December 17, 2009] – Canadians strongly favour the introduction of voting over the internet according to a major poll of Canadians conducted by EKOS Research Associates for the CBC.

Nearly half of Canadians say they would “very likely” vote online if that option were available to them. Another 15% say they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.

Not surprisingly, young people, who have had lower rates of voting than their elders in recent years, are the most enthusiastic about internet voting.

“Canada’s already anaemic voter turnout hit a historic low in 2008,” said EKOS President Frank Graves. “This lack of participation was particularly pronounced among Canadians under the age of 45. This was in sharp contrast to the significant spike up in voting rates amongst young Americans in the last Presidential election, driven in part by Barack Obama’s candidacy.”

“The clear message in this survey is that Canadians want a secure internet channel to vote online, and that this could increase participation rates most dramatically among young people, where the problem of low turnout is now most severe.”

Interestingly, the percentage of Canadians who want to vote online does not vary much among the supporters of different parties, so there is no obvious reason for any of the parties to resist such a change.

“Canadians increasingly pay their bills, file their taxes, order their entertainment, shop and bank online,” said Graves. “Even on a conservative estimate, we could well double the rate of voting among younger voters in the next election by adopting online voting.”

EKOS also asked respondents to choose between the most obvious remedies for low voter turnout: mandatory voting and public education. We also included internet voting and proportional representation as options.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Popularity of online voting:**
  - ☒ **49% very likely to vote online**
  - ☒ **15% somewhat likely to vote online**
  - ☒ **9% not very likely to vote online**
  - ☒ **18% not at all likely to vote online**
  - ☒ **9% do not use the internet**
- **Best method for improving voter participation:**
  - ☒ **33% online voting**
  - ☒ **29% proportional representation**
  - ☒ **23% mandatory voting**
  - ☒ **16% public education campaigns**

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

The clear winner among these possible reforms was online voting. This choice was the overwhelming favourite of younger voters and, in particular, the no-longer-quite-so-young Generation X. In second place was the idea of proportional representation where parties would receive MPs in proportion to their share of popular vote.

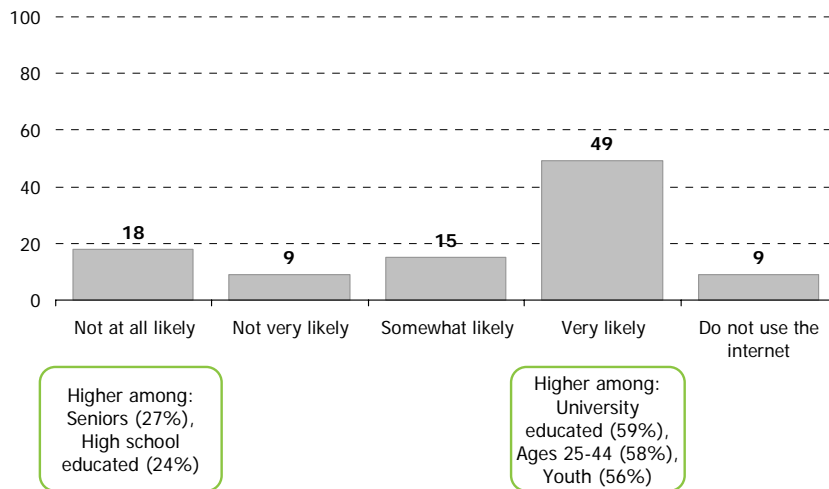
These proposals were in turn more attractive to Canadians than either mandatory voting or increased public education.

“Of course, it would be possible to adopt more than one of these proposals in concert to address low voter turnout,” said Graves. “But clearly many Canadians see internet voting as a simple practical step to getting more Canadians involved, as well as a convenience for voting themselves.”

## Top Line Results:

### Popularity of online voting

Q. If Elections Canada offered a safe way of voting online – that is, on the internet – how likely is it that you would vote online in the next federal election?

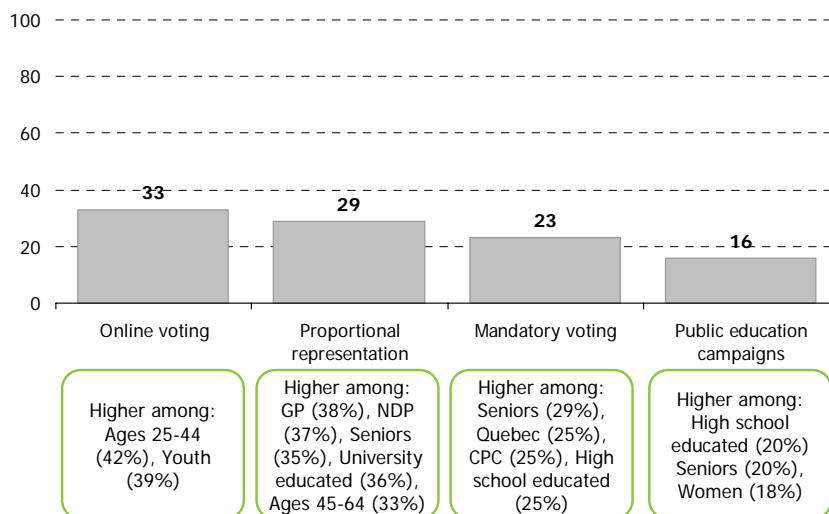


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BASE: Canadians; Dec. 9-15 (n=3300)

### Best method for improving voter participation

Q. Which of the following options do you think would be the best way to improve voter participation in Canada?



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BASE: Canadians; Dec. 9-15 (n=3386)

## Detailed Tables:

<b>Popularity of Online Voting</b>							
<i>Q. If Elections Canada offered a safe way of voting online – that is, on the internet – how likely is it that you would vote online in the next federal election?</i>							
	Not at all likely	Not very likely	Somewhat likely	Very likely	Do not use the internet	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>3300</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
British Columbia	19%	7%	15%	49%	10%	368	5.1
Alberta	17%	9%	16%	50%	7%	338	5.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	19%	9%	14%	44%	14%	226	6.5
Ontario	18%	9%	15%	51%	7%	1223	2.8
Quebec	18%	8%	16%	48%	10%	941	3.2
Atlantic Canada	19%	10%	17%	45%	10%	204	6.9
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	19%	7%	14%	52%	8%	1598	2.5
Female	17%	10%	16%	47%	10%	1702	2.4
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	13%	8%	19%	56%	4%	289	5.8
25-44	13%	7%	17%	58%	4%	1091	3.0
45-64	20%	9%	15%	48%	8%	1304	2.7
65+	27%	12%	11%	29%	22%	616	4.0
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	24%	9%	15%	37%	16%	998	3.1
College or CEGEP	16%	9%	17%	50%	8%	1107	3.0
University or higher	15%	8%	14%	59%	4%	1195	2.8
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Conservative Party of Canada	19%	9%	14%	49%	9%	1051	3.0
Liberal Party of Canada	17%	9%	15%	51%	8%	759	3.6
NDP	20%	8%	15%	50%	7%	468	4.5
Green Party	15%	11%	18%	50%	6%	308	5.6
Bloc Quebecois	17%	8%	16%	53%	6%	308	5.6
Undecided	19%	7%	17%	41%	16%	385	5.0

### **Best Method for Improving Voter Participation**

*Q. Which of the following options do you think would be the best way to improve voter participation in Canada: 1) make it possible to vote on the internet, 2) make voting mandatory, 3) devote more money to public education campaigns promoting the importance of voting, or 4) change the composition of Parliament to more accurately reflect the popular vote, sometimes called proportional representation?*

	Online voting	Mandatory voting	Public education campaigns	Proportional representation	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>3386</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>REGION</b>						
British Columbia	31%	20%	17%	32%	378	5.0
Alberta	34%	23%	14%	30%	345	5.3
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	33%	19%	16%	32%	229	6.5
Ontario	32%	22%	16%	30%	1255	2.8
Quebec	35%	25%	16%	23%	968	3.2
Atlantic Canada	32%	21%	20%	27%	211	6.8
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	33%	23%	14%	30%	1639	2.4
Female	33%	22%	18%	27%	1747	2.3
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	39%	23%	20%	18%	328	5.4
25-44	42%	20%	14%	24%	1119	2.9
45-64	30%	22%	15%	33%	1316	2.7
65+	16%	29%	20%	35%	623	3.9
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	31%	25%	20%	23%	1043	3.0
College or CEGEP	35%	24%	15%	26%	1120	2.9
University or higher	33%	19%	13%	36%	1223	2.8
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## 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 to 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 December 9-15, 2009.<sup>1</sup> In total, a random sample of 3,386 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey. The margin of error associated with the 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.

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