

LIBERALS REBOUND IN QUEBEC AS HARPER'S EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS WITH VOTERS WEAKEN

[Ottawa – April 10, 2015] If only eight percent of voters shifted their current vote intention, we would have a dead heat across the three lead parties. The voter landscape is shifting in ways that do not appear to favour Stephen Harper's Conservatives who now find themselves under 29 points for the first time since the security bounce from last October propelled them into a small but significant lead (which now appears to have evaporated). They now (insignificantly) trail Justin Trudeau's Liberals and see less than a six-point margin over a clearly rejuvenated NDP.

Despite the sliding fortunes for the Conservatives, they may well be encouraged to see that they are roughly in the same position with the Liberals as they were at a similar time before the last election which produced a majority. They do, however, face a number of sharper challenges, including a much stronger NDP than at a similar point in the lead up to the 41st Election. Clearly, there are no certainties evident at this stage, but the latest movements see the Conservatives in a gentle slide which is connected to an eroding outlook on the economy,¹ a worsening emotional connection between Stephen Harper and voters, and a drift downward in support for some of the key security issues which elevated their game in the fall of last year.

The regional patterns look familiar with one important shift which bears monitoring. The Liberals have seen a sharp rise in support in Quebec. Ontario has also resumed the tie we have seen many times and the Conservatives have strong, albeit somewhat weakened hold on the Prairies. British Columbia is a competitive four-way

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Federal vote intention:**
 - ▣ 30.1% Liberal Party
 - ▣ 28.7% Conservative Party
 - ▣ 22.9% NDP
 - ▣ 9.2% Green Party
 - ▣ 4.2% Bloc Québécois
 - ▣ 4.7% Other

- **Emotional response to Stephen Harper:**
 - ▣ 28% Angry
 - ▣ 34% Discouraged
 - ▣ 12% Happy
 - ▣ 17% Hopeful
 - ▣ 9% DK/NR

- **Emotional response to Thomas Mulcair:**
 - ▣ 16% Angry
 - ▣ 23% Discouraged
 - ▣ 6% Happy
 - ▣ 38% Hopeful
 - ▣ 16% DK/NR

- **Emotional response to Justin Trudeau:**
 - ▣ 13% Angry
 - ▣ 28% Discouraged
 - ▣ 10% Happy
 - ▣ 38% Hopeful
 - ▣ 11% DK/NR

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



[twitter.com/EKOS Research](https://twitter.com/EKOS_Research)



[facebook.com/EKOS Research](https://facebook.com/EKOS_Research)

¹ EKOS Research Associates, "Voters Stuck", March 13, 2015. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/ufZiew>

race with the NDP showing newfound strength. The Green Party is holding steady nationally around nine points, but are a real force in British Columbia.

The Conservative continue to do much better with older voters and men (although this advantage has narrowed). Basically, the Conservatives do much worse with women, university educated, and residents of the non-Prairie provinces. Their slide in Quebec considerably dampens what appeared to be stronger than expected gains linked to Niqab position. One must wonder if this force is diminishing as did the secular charter force in the last election and the large disconnect with Quebecers on social values and the extension of the mission in Iraq is now costing them.

Federal vote intention

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

National Results



2011 Election Results



Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only.

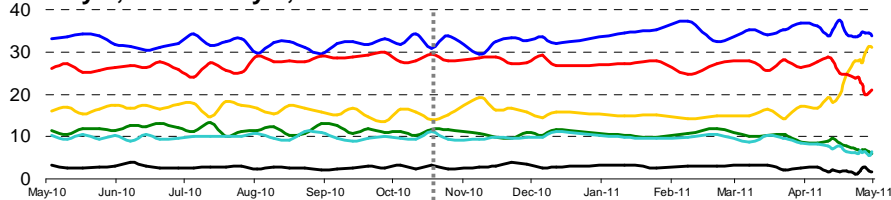
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BASE: Canadians; April 1-7, 2015 (n=3,306), MOE +/- 1.7%, 19 times out of 20

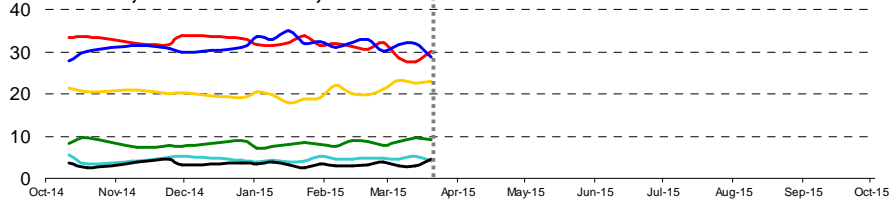
Pre-election campaign – 2015 versus 2011

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

May 2, 2010 – May 1, 2011



Oct. 19, 2014 – Oct. 18, 2015



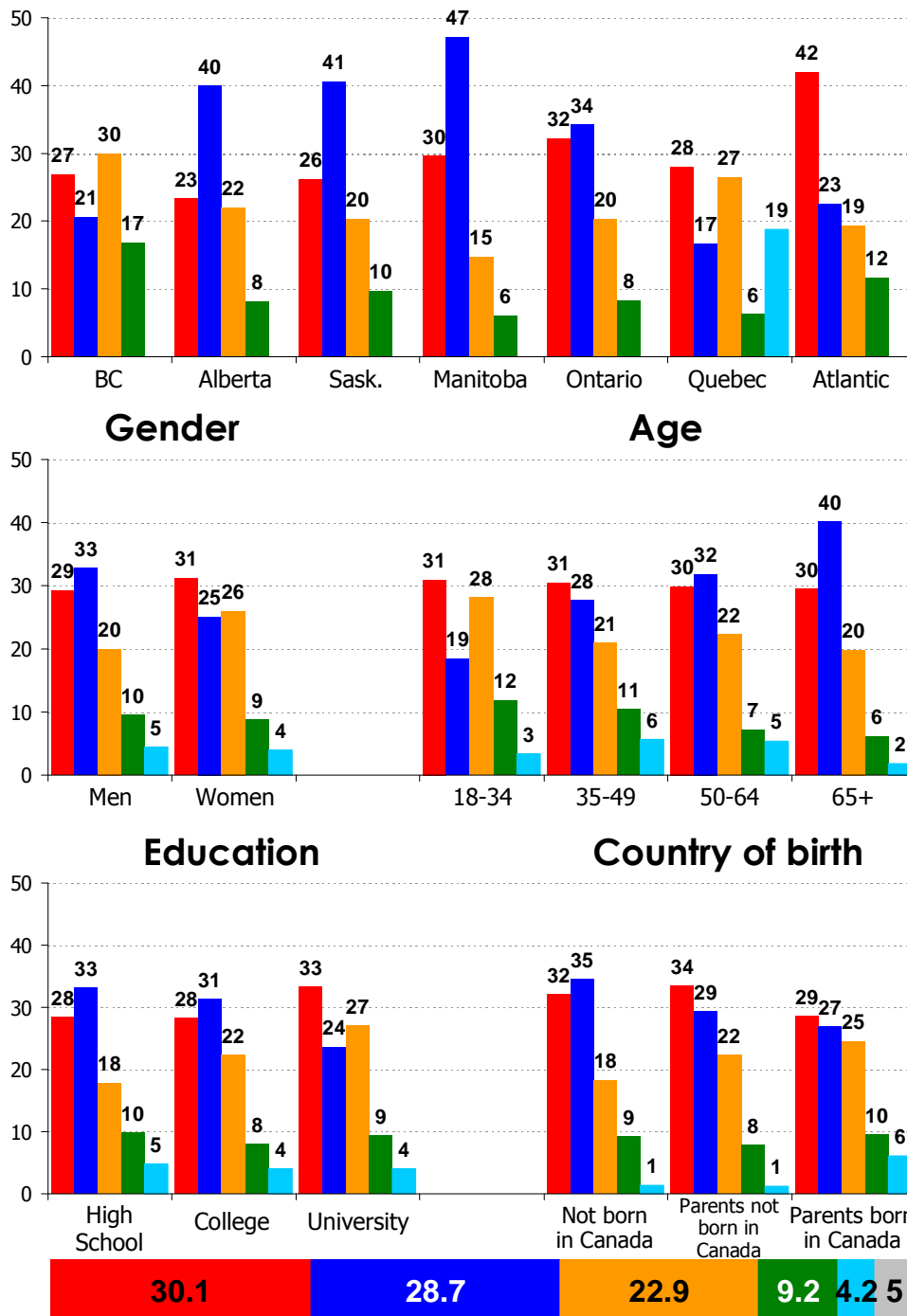
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only.

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BASE: Canadians; April 1-7, 2015 (n=3,306), MOE +/- 1.7%, 19 times out of 20

Vote intention by key demographics

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



■ Liberal
 ■ Conservative
 ■ NDP
 ■ Green
 ■ BLOC
 ■ Other

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BASE: Canadians; April 1-7, 2015 (n=3,306), MOE +/- 1.7%, 19 times out of 20

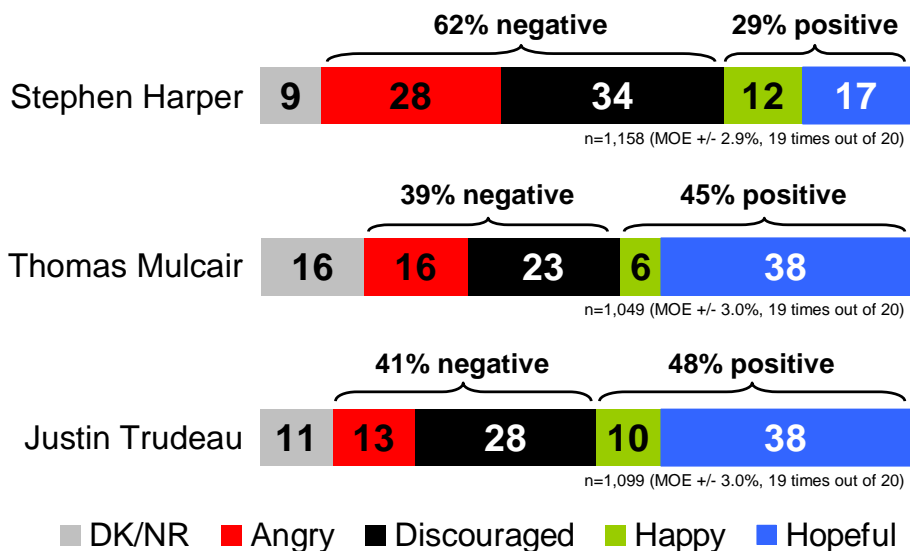
Emotion, emotion, emotion

Given the critical role of emotions in winning elections, it is important to see how the various leaders are connecting and how that is changing. First of all, it is notable how weak the positive emotional connection of Stephen Harper is with all voters (outside of his base) and the trajectory is one of decline here. Only 29 per cent of respondents express positive emotions to Mr. Harper, and tracking reveals a steep drop-off in the percentage who say “hopeful”. This may be at the heart of his recent declining prospects and will be a critical challenge for him.

Both Mr. Mulcair and Mr. Trudeau generate equally high hopeful connections, but Mr. Trudeau has a slight advantage on overall positive position and he is seen as the least infuriating leader, a mantle clearly owned by Harper. We submit that the relative parity and substitutability of the two progressive leaders may render them ultimately bigger challenges to each other and their parties than Mr. Harper. The eroding positive emotional positioning of the Prime Minister is clearly evident in the charts below and, coupled with decline in support for core security issues and a very bleak outlook on the economy, suggests he will have a very difficult time reproducing his track to majority in 2011. The fates of the Liberals and NDP are less clear, but it looks more likely now that the next government will not be a Conservative government, but obviously this is all subject to change.

Emotional response to party leaders

Q. When thinking about Stephen Harper/Thomas Mulcair/Justin Trudeau, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?

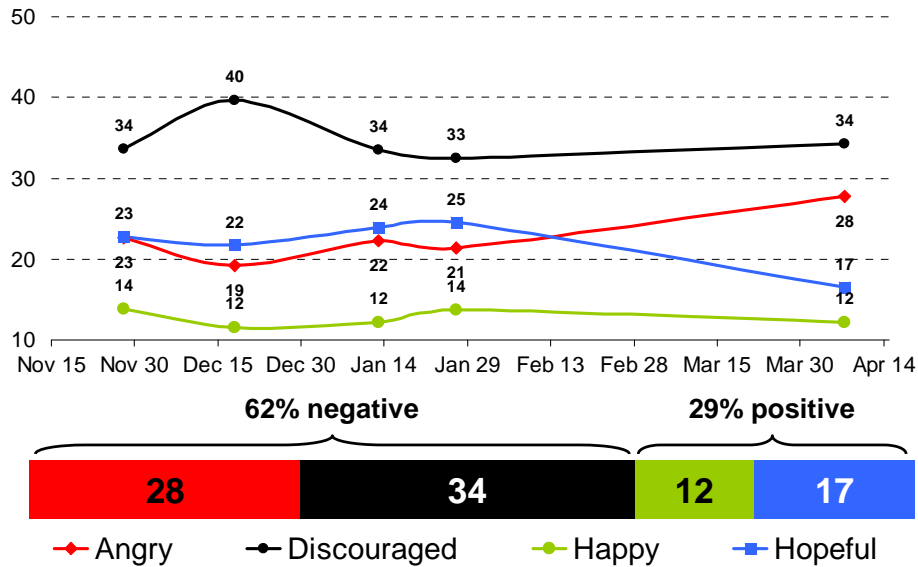


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BASE: Canadians (third-sample each); April 1-7, 2015

Emotional response to Stephen Harper

Q. When thinking about Stephen Harper, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?

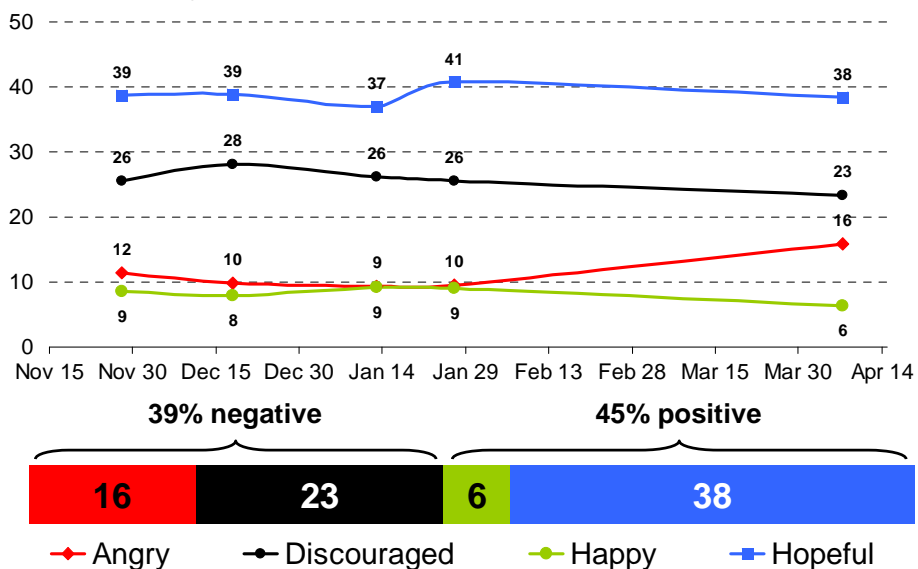


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BASE: Canadians (third-sample); April 1-7, 2015 (n=1,158), MOE +/- 2.9%, 19 times out of 20

Emotional response to Thomas Mulcair

Q. When thinking about Thomas Mulcair, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?

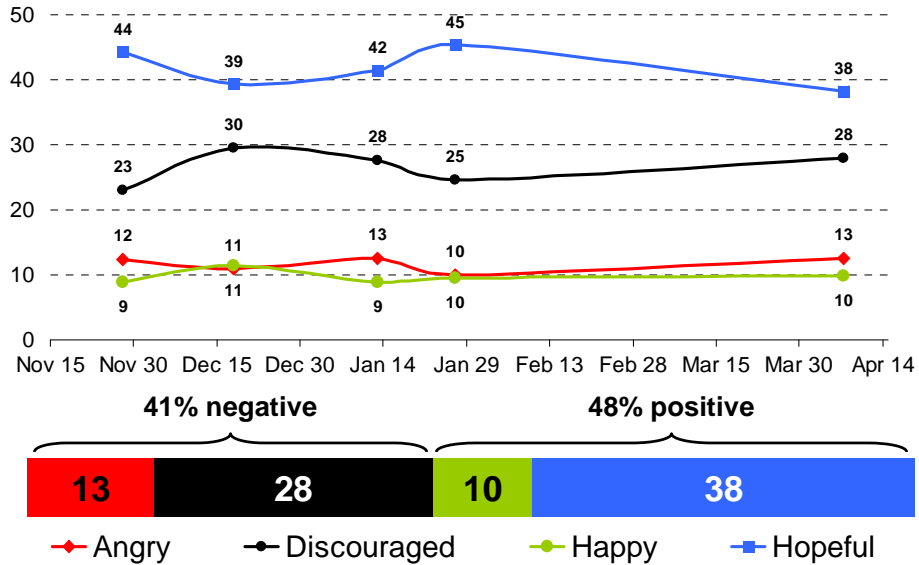


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BASE: Canadians (third-sample); April 1-7, 2015 (n=1,049), MOE +/- 3.0%, 19 times out of 20

Emotional response to Justin Trudeau

Q. When thinking about Justin Trudeau, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?



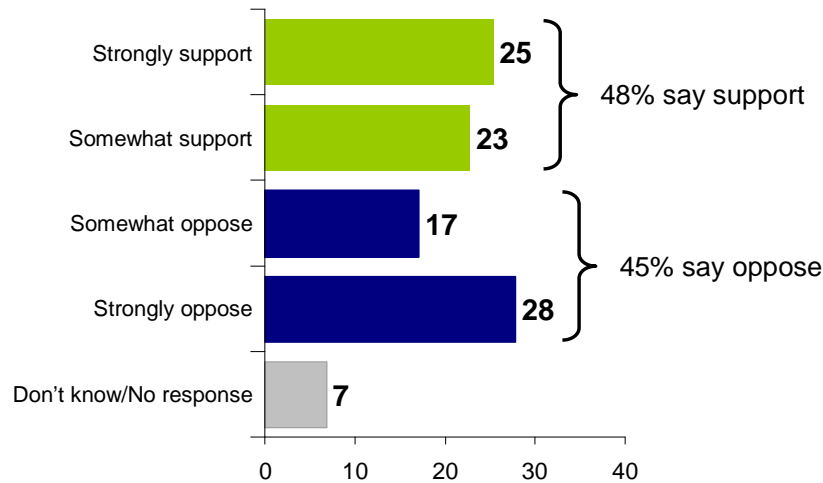
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BASE: Canadians (third-sample); April 1-7, 2015 (n=1,099), MOE +/- 3.0%, 19 times out of 20

Support for ISIS mission

Support for ISIS mission

Q. As you may have heard, Canada has sent aircraft and personnel to Iraq to join in coalition airstrikes against the Islamic State, or ISIS, but they will not be involved in ground combat. To what extent do you oppose or support this mission?

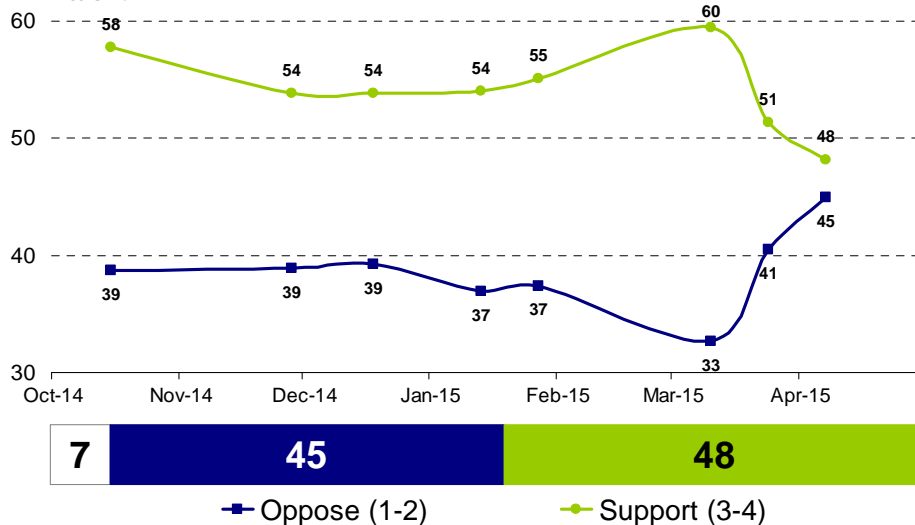


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BASE: Canadians; April 1-7, 2015 (n=1,699), MOE +/- 2.4%, 19 times out of 20

Support for ISIS mission

Q. As you may have heard, Canada has sent aircraft and personnel to Iraq to join in coalition airstrikes against the Islamic State, or ISIS, but they will not be involved in ground combat. To what extent do you oppose or support this mission?



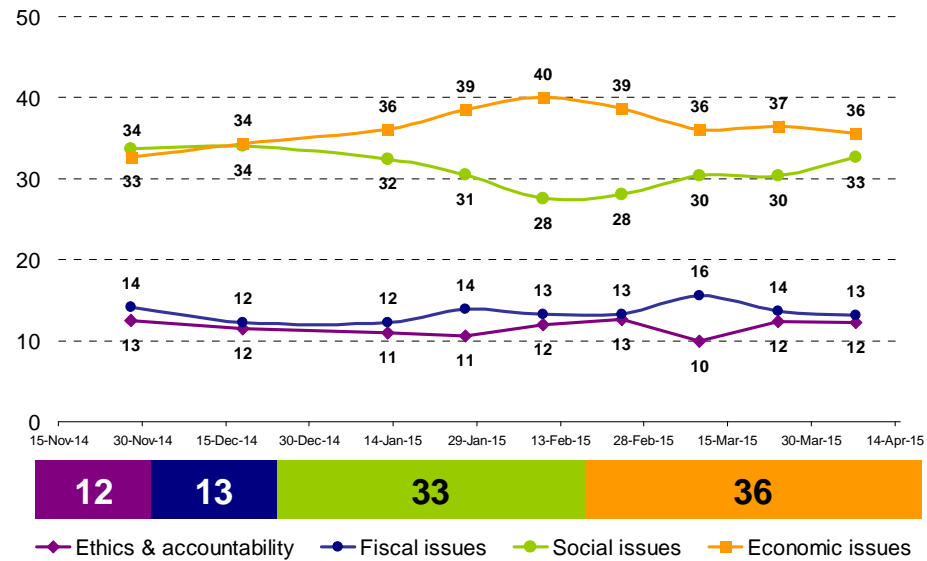
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BASE: Canadians; April 1-7, 2015 (n=1,699), MOE +/- 2.4%, 19 times out of 20

Most important election issue

Most important issue

Q. Of the following issues, which one do you think should be the most important issue for the next federal election?



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BASE: Canadians (half-sample); April 1-7, 2015 (n=1,696), MOE +/- 2.4%, 19 times out of 20

Detailed tables:

National Federal Vote Intention (decided and leaning voters only)								
<i>Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for? [If undecided] Even if you do not have a firm idea, are you leaning towards a party? [If yes] As it stands, towards which party are you leaning?</i>								
	Liberal Party	Conser- vative Party	NDP	Green Party	Bloc Québécois	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	30.1%	28.7%	22.9%	9.2%	4.2%	4.7%	2700	1.9
REGION								
British Columbia	26.9%	20.7%	30.0%	16.9%	–	5.6%	373	5.1
Alberta	23.3%	40.0%	22.1%	8.1%	–	6.6%	320	5.5
Saskatchewan	26.2%	40.5%	20.4%	9.7%	–	3.1%	129	8.6
Manitoba	29.7%	47.2%	14.8%	6.1%	–	2.2%	142	8.2
Ontario	32.2%	34.2%	20.3%	8.3%	–	5.0%	1035	3.1
Quebec	28.1%	16.8%	26.5%	6.3%	18.7%	3.6%	424	4.8
Atlantic Canada	42.0%	22.7%	19.4%	11.7%	–	4.1%	265	6.0
GENDER								
Male	29.2%	32.7%	20.0%	9.5%	4.5%	4.1%	1284	2.7
Female	31.2%	25.1%	26.0%	8.7%	4.0%	5.0%	1385	2.6
AGE								
<35	31.0%	18.5%	28.1%	11.8%	3.4%	7.2%	221	6.6
35-49	30.5%	27.7%	20.9%	10.5%	5.7%	4.7%	449	4.6
50-64	29.9%	31.9%	22.3%	7.2%	5.4%	3.4%	947	3.2
65+	29.5%	40.1%	19.8%	6.1%	1.8%	2.6%	1055	3.0
EDUCATION								
High school or less	28.4%	33.2%	17.8%	9.9%	4.9%	5.8%	696	3.7
College or CEGEP	28.3%	31.3%	22.3%	8.0%	4.1%	6.1%	911	3.3
University or higher	33.3%	23.6%	27.1%	9.4%	4.0%	2.5%	1050	3.0
COUNTRY OF BIRTH								
Not born in Canada	32.1%	34.6%	18.3%	9.2%	1.4%	4.4%	456	4.6
Parents not born in Canada	33.5%	29.4%	22.4%	7.8%	1.2%	5.7%	670	3.8
Both parents born in Canada	28.6%	26.9%	24.5%	9.6%	6.1%	4.3%	1544	2.5

Emotional Response to Stephen Harper

Q. [THIRD-SAMPLE ONLY] When thinking about Stephen Harper, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?

	Angry	Discouraged	Happy	Hopeful	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	27.8%	34.3%	12.2%	16.5%	9.3%	1158	2.9
REGION							
British Columbia	33.4%	34.8%	12.7%	12.5%	6.5%	154	7.9
Alberta	20.6%	30.3%	13.1%	27.7%	8.2%	142	8.2
Saskatchewan	18.2%	29.8%	15.6%	22.4%	14.0%	87	10.5
Manitoba	9.0%	29.3%	24.3%	17.1%	20.2%	49	14.0
Ontario	28.2%	33.3%	13.2%	15.4%	9.9%	431	4.7
Quebec	31.6%	38.9%	7.3%	14.8%	7.3%	165	7.6
Atlantic Canada	32.1%	38.3%	7.7%	11.5%	10.5%	125	8.8
GENDER							
Male	28.6%	33.2%	16.2%	16.5%	5.5%	550	4.2
Female	29.5%	38.5%	8.9%	18.2%	5.0%	552	4.2
AGE							
<35	39.4%	32.9%	13.7%	8.1%	5.9%	100	9.8
35-49	27.8%	39.6%	9.7%	17.4%	5.5%	184	7.2
50-64	23.4%	39.8%	10.9%	20.8%	5.2%	387	5.0
65+	23.4%	28.7%	17.4%	25.0%	5.4%	431	4.7
EDUCATION							
High school or less	23.0%	37.6%	14.1%	20.6%	4.7%	307	5.6
College or CEGEP	26.7%	37.7%	12.4%	19.9%	3.3%	357	5.2
University or higher	36.3%	33.4%	11.7%	12.8%	5.8%	422	4.8
COUNTRY OF BIRTH							
Not born in Canada	26.9%	29.8%	15.4%	18.6%	9.3%	186	7.2
Parents not born in Canada	28.9%	40.6%	11.9%	16.6%	1.9%	291	5.7
Both parents born in Canada	29.7%	35.7%	12.1%	16.8%	5.6%	622	3.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	37.0%	43.1%	4.6%	10.3%	5.0%	303	5.6
Conservative Party	4.3%	11.1%	36.9%	44.1%	3.6%	290	5.8
NDP	46.7%	42.0%	4.9%	4.3%	2.1%	197	7.0
Green Party	46.8%	31.1%	10.4%	6.7%	4.9%	87	10.5
Bloc Québécois	51.0%	43.7%	1.9%	1.2%	2.4%	31	17.6

Emotional Response to Thomas Mulcair

Q. [THIRD-SAMPLE ONLY] When thinking about Thomas Mulcair, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?

	Angry	Discouraged	Happy	Hopeful	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	15.9%	23.4%	6.3%	38.4%	16.0%	1049	3.0
REGION							
British Columbia	11.2%	25.6%	8.9%	39.1%	15.2%	147	8.1
Alberta	20.4%	26.4%	5.3%	30.0%	17.9%	106	9.5
Saskatchewan	19.1%	22.1%	6.5%	20.1%	32.2%	46	14.5
Manitoba	21.0%	27.4%	1.0%	27.6%	23.0%	52	13.6
Ontario	19.1%	24.4%	5.6%	37.2%	13.6%	428	4.7
Quebec	12.7%	21.6%	5.8%	44.7%	15.2%	167	7.6
Atlantic Canada	6.5%	15.0%	12.4%	42.8%	23.4%	100	9.8
GENDER							
Male	21.6%	24.3%	7.2%	39.0%	7.8%	433	4.7
Female	12.6%	24.0%	6.1%	41.2%	16.1%	563	4.1
AGE							
<35	18.9%	23.4%	6.6%	34.8%	16.2%	82	10.8
35-49	14.9%	25.7%	5.2%	41.1%	13.1%	189	7.1
50-64	14.0%	24.3%	6.9%	44.1%	10.7%	336	5.4
65+	18.5%	24.5%	8.3%	41.2%	7.5%	391	5.0
EDUCATION							
High school or less	20.7%	22.5%	10.0%	33.1%	13.6%	270	6.0
College or CEGEP	15.3%	27.4%	6.0%	39.6%	11.8%	353	5.2
University or higher	14.2%	23.7%	4.4%	46.5%	11.2%	369	5.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH							
Not born in Canada	20.2%	20.6%	6.9%	33.8%	18.4%	160	7.8
Parents not born in Canada	19.2%	24.4%	6.2%	37.8%	12.4%	249	6.2
Both parents born in Canada	14.6%	25.2%	6.7%	42.4%	11.1%	588	4.0
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	13.1%	25.4%	6.4%	44.8%	10.3%	250	6.2
Conservative Party	31.4%	33.0%	5.2%	19.1%	11.3%	299	5.7
NDP	5.6%	8.9%	10.1%	70.7%	4.7%	188	7.2
Green Party	4.1%	29.4%	8.2%	52.1%	6.3%	64	12.3
Bloc Québécois	24.6%	25.3%	3.1%	33.9%	13.1%	27	18.9

Emotional Response to Justin Trudeau

Q. [THIRD-SAMPLE ONLY] When thinking about Justin Trudeau, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?

	Angry	Discouraged	Happy	Hopeful	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	12.6%	28.0%	9.9%	38.3%	11.2%	1099	3.0
REGION							
British Columbia	7.8%	24.0%	6.2%	46.0%	16.0%	146	8.1
Alberta	26.5%	38.3%	6.5%	23.0%	5.7%	128	8.7
Saskatchewan	13.5%	29.6%	2.5%	41.1%	13.4%	46	14.5
Manitoba	14.9%	16.5%	17.8%	39.3%	11.5%	65	12.2
Ontario	14.2%	25.5%	8.2%	41.4%	10.6%	413	4.8
Quebec	8.6%	32.4%	14.2%	34.3%	10.5%	188	7.2
Atlantic Canada	7.6%	23.8%	13.2%	41.0%	14.4%	108	9.4
GENDER							
Male	17.3%	30.1%	9.2%	37.4%	5.9%	497	4.4
Female	9.2%	28.1%	11.3%	41.8%	9.6%	552	4.2
AGE							
<35	9.4%	30.5%	13.0%	36.3%	10.8%	94	10.1
35-49	14.4%	31.3%	8.6%	39.5%	6.3%	184	7.2
50-64	14.9%	28.0%	8.6%	42.1%	6.3%	383	5.0
65+	13.5%	25.5%	10.8%	41.8%	8.4%	390	5.0
EDUCATION							
High school or less	15.5%	33.4%	11.0%	33.8%	6.3%	281	5.9
College or CEGEP	11.8%	30.7%	10.9%	37.8%	8.8%	375	5.1
University or higher	12.3%	24.8%	8.5%	45.9%	8.5%	387	5.0
COUNTRY OF BIRTH							
Not born in Canada	16.3%	23.7%	10.4%	46.3%	3.2%	186	7.2
Parents not born in Canada	13.0%	27.8%	9.9%	40.7%	8.5%	247	6.2
Both parents born in Canada	11.8%	31.2%	10.4%	37.5%	9.0%	617	4.0
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	3.9%	9.0%	21.1%	63.8%	2.2%	262	6.1
Conservative Party	29.0%	46.7%	3.6%	17.0%	3.6%	320	5.5
NDP	4.7%	39.4%	10.8%	38.8%	6.2%	195	7.0
Green Party	9.7%	26.9%	5.5%	43.7%	14.2%	57	13.0
Bloc Québécois	7.3%	43.6%	0.0%	45.4%	3.7%	26	19.2

Support for Extending ISIS Mission

Q. As you may have heard, Canada has sent aircraft and personnel to Iraq to join in coalition airstrikes against the Islamic State, or ISIS. The mission is scheduled to end in April. To what extent would you oppose or support extending this mission by six months?

	Strongly oppose	Somewhat oppose	Somewhat support	Strongly support	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	27.8%	17.1%	22.8%	25.4%	6.9%	1699	2.4
REGION							
British Columbia	34.9%	18.0%	24.6%	17.3%	5.3%	218	6.6
Alberta	15.9%	13.4%	25.8%	37.6%	7.3%	180	7.3
Saskatchewan	10.5%	7.3%	24.2%	38.5%	19.5%	108	9.4
Manitoba	15.9%	15.0%	15.9%	43.1%	10.1%	93	10.2
Ontario	23.6%	16.9%	25.4%	27.2%	6.9%	694	3.7
Quebec	41.2%	20.2%	16.5%	18.7%	3.4%	264	6.0
Atlantic Canada	32.9%	18.4%	20.1%	16.8%	11.8%	136	8.4
GENDER							
Male	30.0%	13.7%	20.4%	34.5%	1.5%	748	3.6
Female	27.8%	21.7%	26.8%	19.4%	4.3%	869	3.3
AGE							
<35	33.7%	19.7%	24.9%	19.3%	2.3%	144	8.2
35-49	25.4%	20.5%	23.8%	27.5%	2.9%	300	5.7
50-64	29.1%	14.4%	23.3%	29.7%	3.5%	550	4.2
65+	26.8%	16.2%	23.5%	30.6%	3.0%	623	3.9
EDUCATION							
High school or less	32.2%	16.2%	23.4%	26.0%	2.3%	405	4.9
College or CEGEP	26.8%	16.6%	24.4%	29.6%	2.6%	557	4.2
University or higher	29.1%	20.1%	23.8%	24.4%	2.6%	637	3.9
COUNTRY OF BIRTH							
Not born in Canada	27.4%	24.2%	15.7%	29.6%	3.1%	266	6.0
Parents not born in Canada	31.9%	13.4%	24.5%	27.9%	2.3%	422	4.8
Both parents born in Canada	28.2%	18.2%	25.9%	24.9%	2.8%	923	3.2
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	31.9%	25.0%	24.0%	17.0%	2.1%	416	4.8
Conservative Party	10.9%	7.8%	24.6%	54.2%	2.5%	462	4.6
NDP	37.4%	21.7%	26.1%	12.7%	2.1%	304	5.6
Green Party	39.9%	16.4%	19.5%	21.8%	2.4%	114	9.2
Bloc Québécois	41.5%	7.9%	16.9%	27.7%	6.0%	39	15.7

Most Important Issue

Q. Of the following issues, which one do you think should be the most important issue for the next federal election? 1) Restoring middle class progress; 2) Issues related to the environment and climate change; 3) Issues related to security and terrorism; or 4) Democratic renewal.

	Restoring middle class progress	The environment	Security and terrorism	Democratic renewal	DK/ NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	41.2%	19.6%	17.3%	13.2%	8.7%	1610	2.4
REGION							
British Columbia	23.6%	36.2%	16.1%	17.1%	7.0%	213	6.7
Alberta	47.1%	12.0%	21.1%	14.2%	5.6%	181	7.3
Saskatchewan	32.2%	12.0%	24.3%	12.9%	18.5%	94	10.1
Manitoba	31.7%	22.9%	16.5%	17.1%	11.8%	86	10.6
Ontario	44.1%	17.4%	18.3%	10.2%	10.1%	628	3.9
Quebec	47.6%	18.9%	12.9%	14.5%	6.0%	236	6.4
Atlantic Canada	40.2%	17.9%	18.0%	15.3%	8.6%	165	7.6
GENDER							
Male	46.5%	18.4%	16.0%	13.1%	6.0%	719	3.7
Female	39.8%	22.2%	20.0%	13.7%	4.2%	816	3.4
AGE							
<35	38.9%	24.4%	12.8%	15.2%	8.7%	124	8.8
35-49	52.2%	16.8%	18.7%	9.2%	3.0%	267	6.0
50-64	44.0%	20.5%	16.5%	14.0%	5.0%	559	4.1
65+	33.8%	19.2%	25.8%	16.7%	4.3%	591	4.0
EDUCATION							
High school or less	38.1%	20.2%	25.5%	11.8%	4.5%	418	4.8
College or CEGEP	46.4%	18.6%	17.0%	12.0%	5.9%	512	4.3
University or higher	44.1%	21.7%	13.6%	16.2%	4.4%	591	4.0
COUNTRY OF BIRTH							
Not born in Canada	45.3%	18.8%	17.3%	14.8%	3.9%	249	6.2
Parents not born in Canada	46.3%	20.0%	19.9%	11.8%	2.0%	396	4.9
Both parents born in Canada	41.2%	20.7%	17.2%	14.0%	6.8%	888	3.3
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	45.6%	19.3%	14.7%	14.8%	5.7%	407	4.9
Conservative Party	44.8%	11.1%	30.4%	8.6%	5.1%	428	4.7
NDP	38.7%	26.3%	7.8%	23.7%	3.6%	297	5.7
Green Party	26.7%	45.4%	15.4%	10.0%	2.5%	103	9.7
Bloc Québécois	70.4%	15.2%	6.8%	2.4%	5.4%	34	16.8

Methodology:

This study was conducted using High Definition Interactive Voice Response (HD-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 landline/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able to reach those with a landline and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and landline only households.

The field dates for this survey are April 1-7, 2015. In total, a random sample of 3,306 Canadian adults 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 by **age, gender, region, and educational attainment** to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.