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CLOSER RACE AS PARLIAMENT BEGINS

ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY COULD BE PIVOTAL ISSUE IN NEXT ELECTION

[Ottawa – January 30, 2014] In our latest poll, the Liberals and the Conservatives are in a near tie. At just under 30 points, the Conservative Party is nipping at the heels of the gently sliding Liberals, who hold a narrow three-point lead which disappears when we turn to our likely voter model. The NDP remains in third place, but they are holding steady at 24 and they are within striking distance of both parties

There is some evidence that the Conservative constituency is “returning to normal”, as it were. They are recovering their lead with men and seniors, both groups that have traditionally voted Conservative but had been turning to the Liberals in recent months. They have also recovering their standing with non-Canadian born voters.

Regionally, the Conservatives utterly dominate Alberta and Saskatchewan. Indeed, the party’s national standing is arguably exaggerated by the fact that they would win many of the ridings in these provinces by large margins (these excess votes are essentially overkill, since they do translate to extra seats). The Liberals do extremely well in Atlantic Canada and, interestingly, Manitoba where, despite the small sample size, the consistent pattern of Liberal fortunes that we have seen poll after poll suggests that the province may very well be switching from blue to red. The NDP continues to do very well in Quebec, where nearly a third of their supporters are found. The most interesting findings, however, come from the key battleground province of Ontario, where both the Liberals and the Conservatives are in a statistical dead heat.

In order to better understand the constituencies of each party, we also asked respondents about the size of their household and the frequency with which they attend religious services. Results reveal that the Conservative Party does best with large families, while the Liberals and NDP lead among singles. The Conservative Party leads handily among regular Church-goers, which may have been reinforced by the strong presence of religious leaders among Stephen Harper’s Israel

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Federal vote intention:**
 - ▣ **33.2% Liberal Party**
 - ▣ **29.7% Conservative Party**
 - ▣ **24.3% NDP**
 - ▣ **6.2% Green Party**
 - ▣ **4.5% Bloc Québécois**
 - ▣ **2.1% Other**

- **“Likely voter” model*:**
 - ▣ **33.4% Conservative Party**
 - ▣ **30.1% Liberal Party**
 - ▣ **25.6% NDP**
 - ▣ **4.9% Green Party**
 - ▣ **4.9% Bloc Québécois**
 - ▣ **1.1% Other**

- **Most important election issue:**
 - ▣ **34.2% Economic issues**
 - ▣ **25.9% Social issues**
 - ▣ **20.3% Ethics and accountability**
 - ▣ **12.5% Fiscal issues**
 - ▣ **4.7% None of these**
 - ▣ **2.5% Don’t know/No response**

** Our likely voter model involves dropping those who did not vote in 2011 and weighting the remaining cases by how they voted in 2011.*

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

delegation. Indeed, of all the demographic indicators, religious service attendance is by far the best predictor of whether someone will vote Conservative.

Most Important Election Issue

As the race tightens, our new poll shows a real shift in the key issues which will define success or failure in the next election. We asked respondents to select what they consider to be their most important election issue – social issues, economic issues, fiscal issues, or ethics and accountability. A plurality of Canadians – 34 per cent – selected economic issues, which may explain the current government’s fixation on touting its economic record. In any case, this strategy appears to be paying off. Indeed, the groups that prioritize economic issues – seniors, men, and Ontarians – are all groups with which the Conservative Party has been making impressive gains over the last month.

What is perhaps most interesting, however, is the recent resurgence of ethics and accountability as an election issue. A decade ago, at the height of the Sponsorship Scandal, one-fifth of the Canadians rated ethics and accountability as their top concern. As the economy cooled and with Stephen Harper taking office on a pledge of restoring accountability to government, this issue gradually faded from the minds of Canadians. With the recent wave of scandals that have dominated the news – namely the Robocalls Scandal and, more recently, the Senate Scandal – ethics and accountability have once again surged in importance and now rival the erstwhile dominant social issues such as health care and education. Ironically, this issue – which propelled the Conservatives to power in 2006 – has now turned full circle on them. It is no longer the Conservative supporters who rate this issue as salient; it is opposition supporters and the issue has risen significantly to the point that it can be a pivotal issue again.

Top Line Results:

Federal vote intention

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

National Results



National Results – “Likely voter” model*



2011 Election Results



Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only. Our survey also finds that 9.5% of respondents are undecided and 2.4% are ineligible to vote.

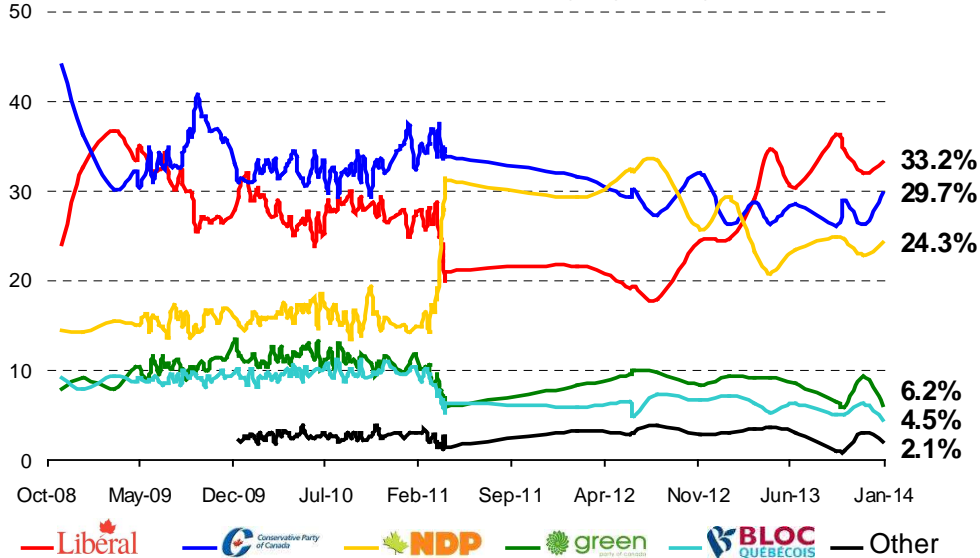
*Our “likely voters” model involves dropping those respondents who did not vote in the 2011 Federal Election and then weighting the remaining cases by how they voted in 2011.

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BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

Tracking federal vote intention

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



Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only. Our survey also finds that 12.4% of respondents are undecided and 0.5% are ineligible to vote.

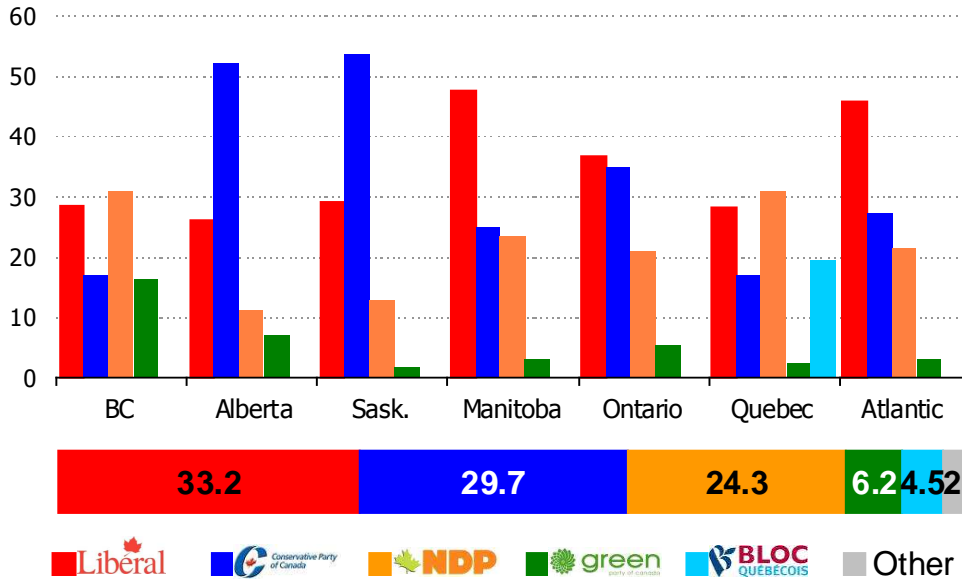
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BASE: Canadians; most recent data point January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)



Vote intention by region

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

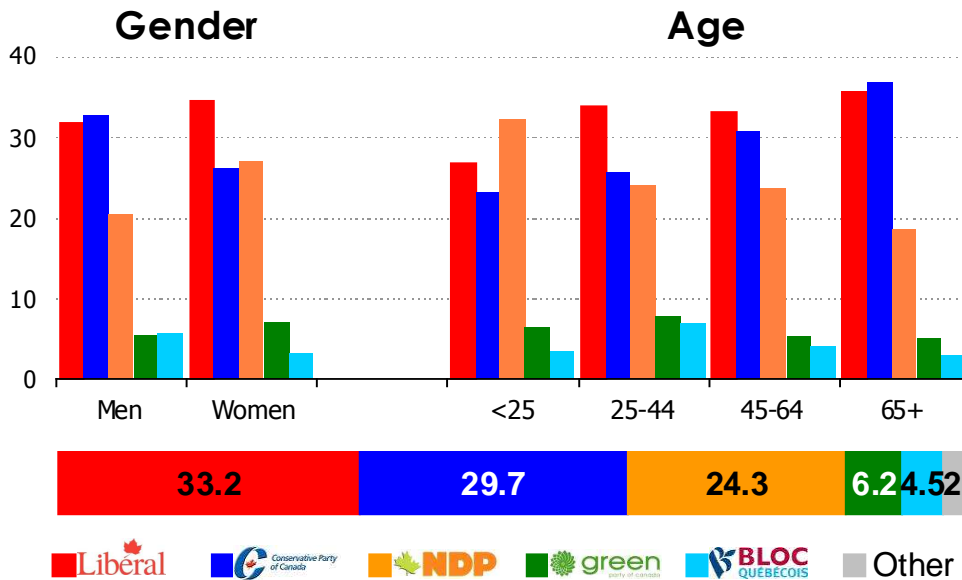


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BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2013 (n=1,501)

Vote intention by gender and age

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



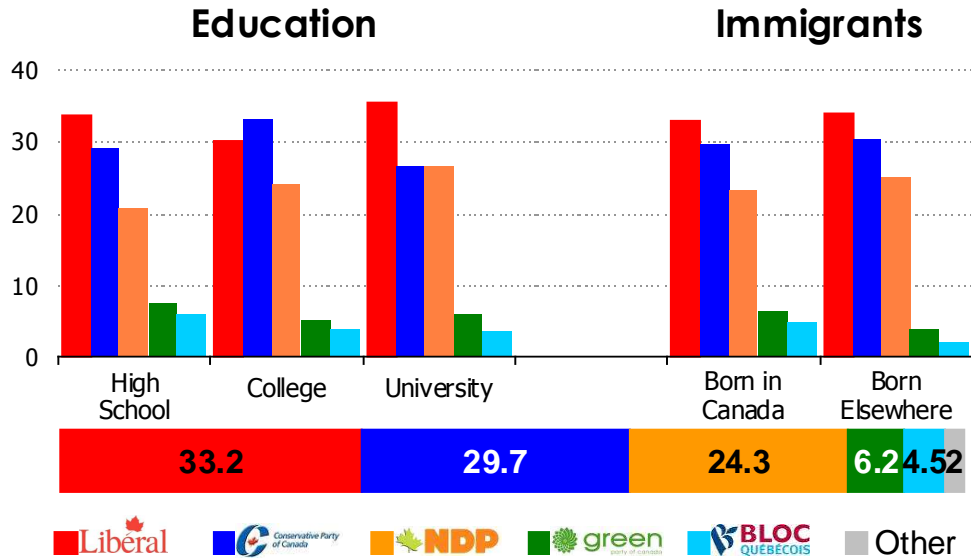
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BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)



Vote intention by education/country of birth

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

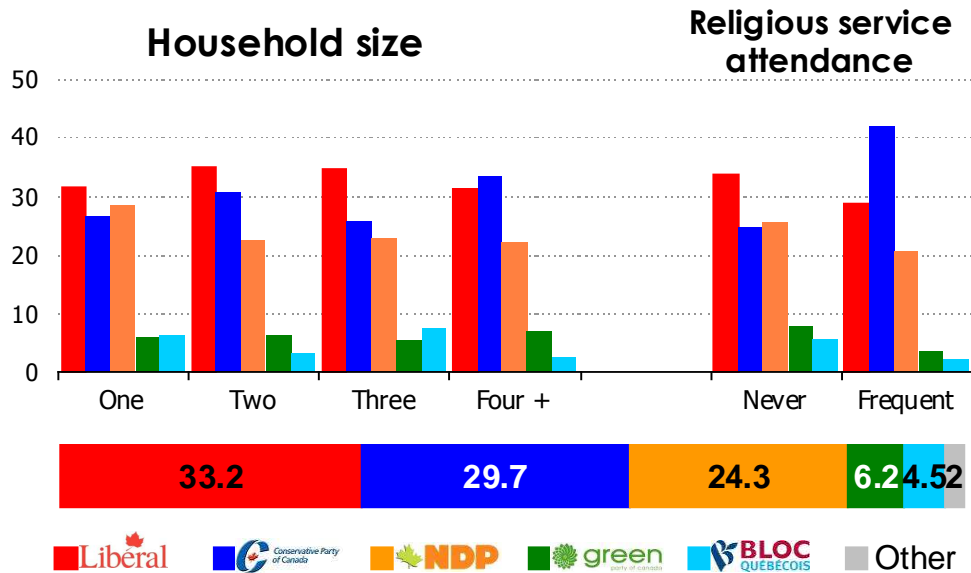


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BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

Vote intention by household size/religiosity

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



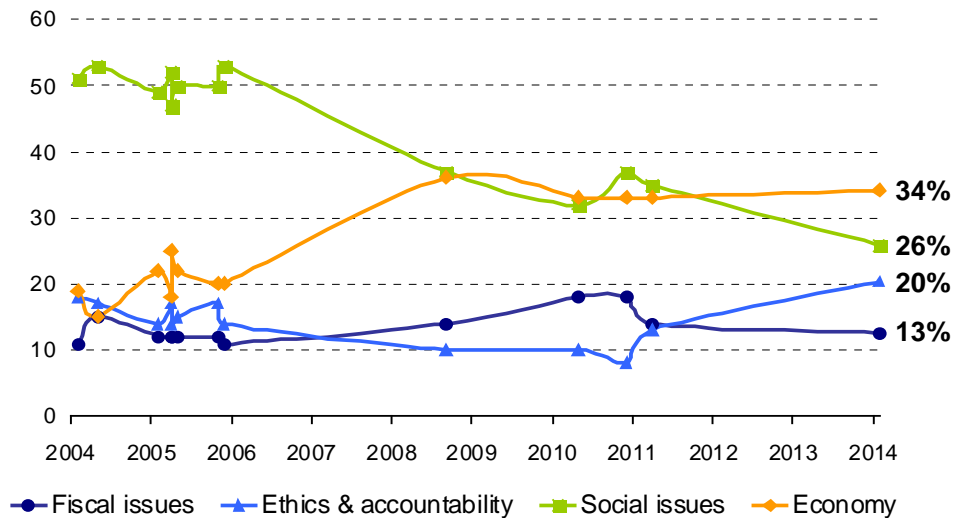
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BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)



Most important election issue

Q. Which of the following do you think should be the most important issue for the next federal election?

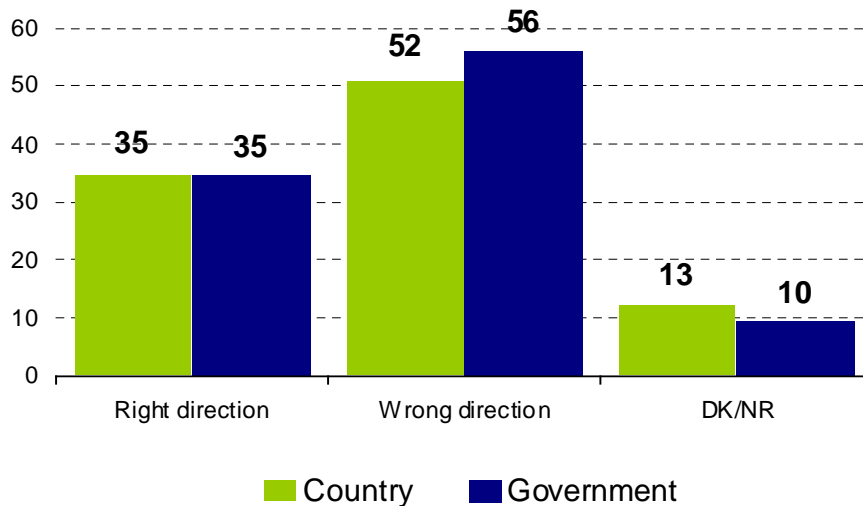


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BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

Direction of country/government

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



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BASE: Canadians (half-sample each); January 22-27, 2014 (n=752/749)



Direction of country

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

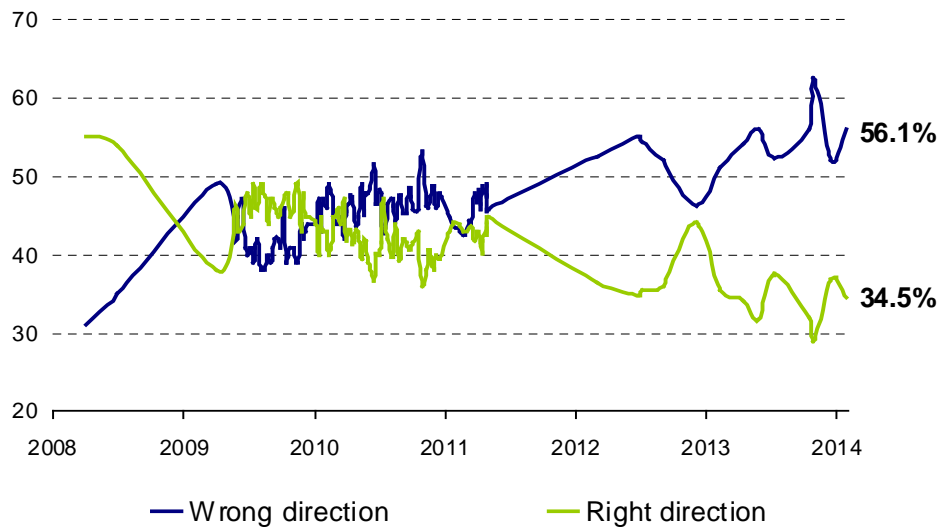


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BASE: Canadians (half-sample); January 22-27, 2014 (n=752)

Direction of government






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



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BASE: Canadians (half-sample); January 22-27, 2014 (n=749)






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	 Conservative Party of Canada	 NDP	 green	 BLOC QUEBÉCOIS	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	33.2%	29.7%	24.3%	6.2%	4.5%	2.1%	1317	2.7
REGION								
British Columbia	28.4%	16.9%	31.7%	16.4%	0.0%	6.6%	179	7.3
Alberta	26.0%	52.3%	11.7%	7.1%	0.0%	2.9%	137	8.4
Saskatchewan	29.2%	53.8%	13.2%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%	38	15.9
Manitoba	47.7%	25.0%	24.1%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	51	13.7
Ontario	36.6%	35.0%	21.7%	5.4%	0.0%	1.3%	514	4.3
Quebec	28.3%	17.1%	31.7%	2.6%	19.4%	0.8%	304	5.6
Atlantic Canada	45.8%	27.2%	22.3%	3.1%	0.0%	1.5%	91	10.3
GENDER								
Male	32.0%	32.8%	21.1%	5.5%	5.7%	3.0%	721	3.7
Female	34.5%	26.3%	27.8%	7.0%	3.2%	1.1%	596	4.0
AGE								
<25	26.9%	23.2%	33.3%	6.3%	3.6%	6.7%	39	15.7
25-44	34.0%	25.6%	25.0%	7.9%	6.9%	0.7%	456	4.6
45-64	33.1%	30.7%	24.5%	5.3%	4.0%	2.5%	508	4.4
65+	35.7%	36.9%	19.2%	4.9%	3.0%	0.3%	268	6.0
EDUCATION								
High school or less	33.8%	29.1%	21.2%	7.6%	5.8%	2.6%	327	5.4
College or CEGEP	30.1%	33.3%	24.8%	5.1%	4.0%	2.7%	476	4.5
University or higher	35.6%	26.6%	27.5%	5.8%	3.7%	0.8%	509	4.3
COUNTRY OF BIRTH								
Canada	33.0%	29.6%	24.1%	6.6%	4.9%	1.8%	1152	2.9
Other	34.0%	30.5%	25.6%	4.0%	2.0%	3.8%	152	8.0



National Federal Vote Intention (continued)

*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?*

	 Liberal	 Conservative Party of Canada	 NDP	 green Party of Canada	 BLOC QUEBÉCOIS	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	33.2%	29.7%	24.3%	6.2%	4.5%	2.1%	1317	2.7
VOTE IN 2011 ELECTION								
Did not vote	29.6%	31.8%	13.9%	5.6%	0.0%	19.1%	41	15.3
Conservative Party	13.0%	80.0%	4.6%	1.8%	0.2%	0.5%	442	4.7
NDP	25.2%	3.0%	64.9%	4.7%	1.8%	0.4%	370	5.1
Liberal Party	83.4%	4.3%	11.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	297	5.7
Green Party	24.9%	2.3%	7.6%	62.2%	0.0%	3.0%	75	11.3
Bloc Québécois	3.5%	1.2%	15.4%	0.0%	79.8%	0.0%	64	12.3

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	35.4%	52.1%	12.5%	752	3.6
REGION					
British Columbia	29.7%	53.8%	16.5%	97	10.0
Alberta	49.4%	40.6%	10.0%	92	10.2
Saskatchewan	35.0%	57.8%	7.2%	18	23.1
Manitoba	25.3%	67.1%	7.6%	28	18.5
Ontario	33.6%	55.9%	10.5%	280	5.9
Quebec	39.0%	47.1%	13.8%	179	7.3
Atlantic Canada	27.5%	54.8%	17.7%	56	13.1
GENDER					
Male	38.2%	53.8%	8.0%	385	5.0
Female	32.9%	50.5%	16.6%	367	5.1
AGE					
<25	21.7%	58.1%	20.2%	16	24.5
25-44	39.0%	51.4%	9.5%	251	6.2
45-64	37.7%	48.8%	13.5%	314	5.5
65+	32.5%	54.5%	13.0%	140	8.3
EDUCATION					
High school or less	34.6%	50.9%	14.6%	203	6.9
College or CEGEP	35.2%	51.6%	13.2%	293	5.7
University or higher	37.4%	54.2%	8.3%	251	6.2
COUNTRY OF BIRTH					
Canada	35.0%	52.7%	12.3%	659	3.8
Other	39.5%	45.8%	14.6%	87	10.5
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Liberal Party	26.0%	63.3%	10.7%	234	6.4
Conservative Party	76.8%	14.3%	8.9%	188	7.2
NDP	12.7%	77.9%	9.4%	158	7.8
Green Party	13.8%	78.7%	7.6%	44	14.8
Bloc Quebecois	45.7%	41.1%	13.2%	25	19.6



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	34.5%	56.1%	9.5%	749	3.6
REGION					
British Columbia	25.9%	66.2%	7.8%	105	9.6
Alberta	57.8%	33.7%	8.4%	66	12.1
Saskatchewan	55.4%	36.9%	7.7%	27	18.9
Manitoba	21.7%	68.5%	9.8%	26	19.2
Ontario	40.2%	53.1%	6.8%	296	5.7
Quebec	19.0%	64.9%	16.1%	170	7.5
Atlantic Canada	33.3%	57.8%	8.8%	56	13.1
GENDER					
Male	38.1%	54.2%	7.8%	397	4.9
Female	30.9%	58.0%	11.1%	352	5.2
AGE					
<25	41.5%	56.1%	2.3%	26	19.2
25-44	31.0%	59.8%	9.1%	267	6.0
45-64	32.2%	55.7%	12.1%	272	5.9
65+	41.3%	49.1%	9.6%	156	7.9
EDUCATION					
High school or less	34.5%	54.1%	11.4%	174	7.4
College or CEGEP	37.9%	51.0%	11.1%	261	6.1
University or higher	31.6%	62.4%	6.0%	312	5.6
COUNTRY OF BIRTH					
Canada	34.3%	55.6%	10.1%	662	3.8
Other	37.7%	59.4%	2.9%	79	11.0
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Liberal Party	12.7%	77.6%	9.7%	216	6.7
Conservative Party	88.5%	8.1%	3.4%	206	6.8
NDP	12.5%	77.8%	9.6%	157	7.8
Green Party	2.3%	93.7%	4.0%	36	16.3
Bloc Quebecois	3.3%	73.0%	23.7%	32	17.3



Most Important Election Issue

Q. Which of the following do you think should be the most important issue for the next federal election?

- 1.) Issues like ethics and accountability*
- 2.) The economy, jobs, and growth*
- 3.) Fiscal issues like taxes and debt*
- 4.) Social issues like health and education*

	Ethics and accountability	Economic issues	Fiscal issues	Social issues	None of these	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	20.3%	34.2%	12.5%	25.9%	4.7%	2.5%	1501	2.5
REGION								
British Columbia	19.9%	24.9%	9.2%	38.0%	5.4%	2.7%	202	6.9
Alberta	22.8%	27.9%	13.2%	27.7%	3.8%	4.5%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	37.3%	31.0%	15.8%	9.1%	5.4%	1.5%	45	14.6
Manitoba	21.7%	18.3%	12.7%	41.3%	1.3%	4.6%	54	13.3
Ontario	17.3%	38.4%	13.5%	24.2%	5.1%	1.5%	576	4.1
Quebec	17.1%	38.5%	13.7%	23.6%	4.1%	2.8%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	36.7%	34.5%	7.2%	15.5%	3.6%	2.6%	112	9.3
GENDER								
Male	20.2%	38.9%	13.7%	20.8%	4.9%	1.6%	782	3.5
Female	20.4%	29.7%	11.3%	30.8%	4.5%	3.3%	719	3.7
AGE								
<25	20.8%	24.4%	8.1%	42.3%	0.0%	4.4%	42	15.1
25-44	17.8%	32.3%	12.7%	27.9%	6.3%	3.1%	518	4.3
45-64	20.9%	36.9%	13.5%	21.7%	5.2%	1.7%	586	4.1
65+	22.1%	39.7%	14.1%	20.5%	2.3%	1.3%	296	5.7
EDUCATION								
High school or less	15.8%	35.0%	14.7%	28.3%	2.6%	3.7%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	21.1%	34.3%	13.1%	24.2%	5.1%	2.2%	554	4.2
University or higher	24.5%	33.6%	9.3%	24.3%	6.8%	1.4%	563	4.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH								
Canada	21.1%	34.0%	12.7%	25.0%	4.8%	2.4%	1321	2.7
Other	13.3%	36.0%	11.4%	33.2%	2.7%	3.4%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION								
Liberal Party	26.3%	31.4%	8.9%	27.7%	3.8%	1.9%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	6.5%	58.0%	22.1%	11.0%	1.3%	1.0%	394	4.9
NDP	27.4%	17.0%	6.6%	39.7%	7.5%	1.8%	315	5.5
Green Party	31.5%	12.8%	7.1%	37.4%	11.1%	0.0%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	16.2%	30.4%	24.2%	21.9%	3.6%	3.8%	57	13.0

Methodology:

This study was conducted using EKOS' unique, hybrid online/telephone research panel, *Prob/t*. Our panel offers exhaustive coverage of the Canadian population (i.e., Internet, phone, cell phone), random recruitment (in other words, participants are recruited randomly, they do not opt themselves into our panel), and equal probability sampling. All respondents to our panel are recruited by telephone using random digit dialling and are confirmed by live interviewers. Unlike opt-in online panels, *Prob/t* supports margin of error estimates. We believe this to be the only probability-based online panel in Canada.

The field dates for this survey are January 22-27, 2014. In total, 1,501 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey. Of these cases, 1,277 were collected online, while 224 were collected by computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI). The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-2.5 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.