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## *THE NEW REALLY BIG QUESTION*

[Ottawa – April 27, 2011] – We update our seat projections based on our new three-day sample of nearly 3,000 potential voters. It continues to show a breathtakingly different Parliament in which the Conservative government is reduced to 131 seats but the muscular new NDP have 92 and the Liberals have 63. This new political math would produce a Parliament where the non-Bloc opposition would have 155 seats, a bare majority and 24 more seats than the Conservatives. With a clear advantage on popular vote and seats, what would happen? Conservative Leader Stephen Harper has stated that he requires a majority to withstand this threat and it appears that he is going to be denied that option. We have heard about the constitutional legalities of this situation but most agree that public opinion would be a crucial – if not *the* crucial – arbiter of this situation.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Preferred response if the winning party is defeated in a confidence motion:**
  - ▣ **43% ask the opposition leader to form the government**
  - ▣ **19% call another election**
  - ▣ **38% DK/NR**
  
- **Seat projection:**
  - ▣ **CPC: 131 seats**
  - ▣ **NDP: 92 seats**
  - ▣ **LPC: 63 seats**
  - ▣ **BQ: 21 seats**
  - ▣ **GP: 0 seats**
  - ▣ **other: 1 seat**

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

We have therefore asked the public how they would like the Governor General to respond if he were to confront this increasingly likely outcome. We asked respondents how they would like the Governor General to react should the new government be defeated in a confidence motion immediately following the May 2<sup>nd</sup> election. The two choices were to either call another election or ask the leader of the opposition to form a government. The results are very suggestive.

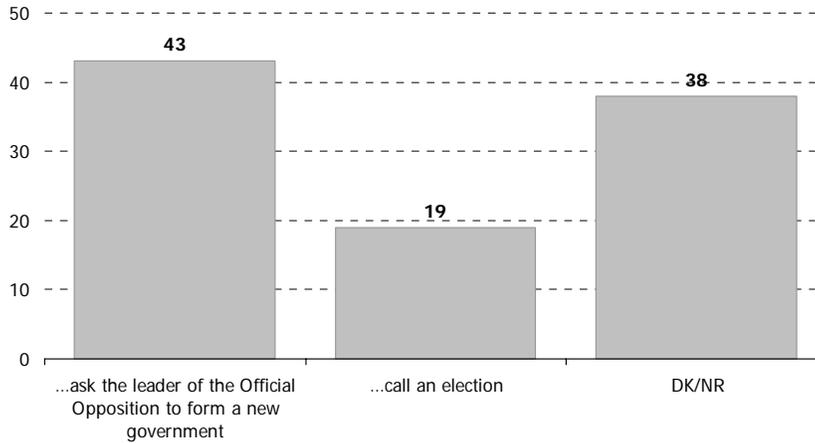
First of all, there are large numbers of the public (38%) who either don't know or couldn't decide. Obviously, this reflects the difficulty and gravity of the choice. Of the 62% who do offer a choice, the choice is pretty clear. By a margin of more than two-to-one (43% to 19%), the public opt for asking the leader of the opposition to form a new government. There are important variations on these answers depending on region, demographics, and political preference. It is, however, quite clear that if the present patterns were to continue, and the opposition were to decide to defeat the Conservative government's budget, we could be looking at the astonishing prospect of a fresh new government in Ottawa led by Jack Layton. If anyone had trotted this scenario out as a likely outcome at the outset of this campaign, they would have been dismissed as a lunatic. Yet this unimaginable outcome is arguably the most likely outcome of the current political landscape.



## Top Line Results:

### Preferred response to a confidence motion

Q. After the election on May 2nd, if the winning party is immediately defeated in a non-confidence motion, how should the Governor General respond? Should he...



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BASE: Canadians; April 25-26, 2011 (n=1,922)

### Seat projection: April 24-26, 2011

|                   |  |  |  |  |  | Other    | Total      |
|-------------------|---|---|---|--|---|----------|------------|
| <b>CANADA</b>     | <b>131</b>  | <b>63</b>   | <b>92</b>   | <b>0</b>   | <b>21</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>308</b> |
| Atlantic Canada   | 6   | 19  | 7   | 0  | 0   | 0        | 32         |
| Quebec            | 5   | 4   | 44  | 0  | 21  | 1        | 75         |
| Ontario           | 56  | 29  | 21  | 0  | 0   | 0        | 106        |
| Manitoba          | 9   | 1   | 4   | 0  | 0   | 0        | 14         |
| Saskatchewan      | 12  | 1   | 1   | 0  | 0   | 0        | 14         |
| Alberta           | 26  | 0   | 2   | 0  | 0   | 0        | 28         |
| British Columbia  | 17  | 7   | 12  | 0  | 0   | 0        | 36         |
| Yukon/NWT/Nunavut | 0   | 2   | 1   | 0  | 0   | 0        | 3          |



## Detailed Tables:

| <b><u>Preferred response to a confidence motion</u></b>   |                     |   |            |             |                       |
|---|---------------------|---|------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Q. After the election on May 2nd, if the winning party is immediately defeated in a non-confidence motion, how should the Governor General respond? Should he...</i> |                     |   |            |             |                       |
|   | ...call an election | ...ask the Official Opposition to form a new government | DK/NR      | Sample Size | Margin of Error (+/-) |
| <b>NATIONALLY</b>   | <b>19%</b>          | <b>43%</b>  | <b>38%</b> | <b>1922</b> | <b>2.2</b>            |
| <b>REGION</b>   |                     |   |            |             |                       |
| British Columbia  | 22%                 | 44%   | 34%        | 239         | 6.3                   |
| Alberta   | 29%                 | 28%   | 43%        | 240         | 6.3                   |
| Saskatchewan/Manitoba   | 21%                 | 32%   | 47%        | 146         | 8.1                   |
| Ontario   | 19%                 | 46%   | 35%        | 619         | 3.9                   |
| Quebec  | 14%                 | 46%   | 40%        | 547         | 4.2                   |
| Atlantic Canada   | 12%                 | 47%   | 41%        | 131         | 8.6                   |
| <b>GENDER</b>   |                     |   |            |             |                       |
| Male  | 25%                 | 48%   | 27%        | 1005        | 3.1                   |
| Female  | 14%                 | 38%   | 48%        | 917         | 3.2                   |
| <b>AGE</b>  |                     |   |            |             |                       |
| <25   | 21%                 | 40%   | 39%        | 126         | 8.7                   |
| 25-44   | 20%                 | 43%   | 36%        | 512         | 4.3                   |
| 45-64   | 19%                 | 41%   | 40%        | 817         | 3.4                   |
| 65+   | 16%                 | 46%   | 38%        | 467         | 4.5                   |
| <b>EDUCATION</b>  |                     |   |            |             |                       |
| High school or less   | 22%                 | 27%   | 51%        | 495         | 4.4                   |
| College or CEGEP  | 19%                 | 39%   | 42%        | 588         | 4.0                   |
| University or higher  | 18%                 | 53%   | 29%        | 839         | 3.4                   |
| <b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>   |                     |   |            |             |                       |
| Conservative Party of Canada  | 36%                 | 15%   | 49%        | 680         | 3.8                   |
| Liberal Party of Canada   | 8%                  | 71%   | 21%        | 371         | 5.1                   |
| NDP   | 10%                 | 60%   | 30%        | 486         | 4.5                   |
| Green Party   | 18%                 | 47%   | 34%        | 99          | 9.9                   |
| Bloc Quebecois  | 11%                 | 49%   | 40%        | 132         | 8.5                   |
| Undecided   | 21%                 | 26%   | 53%        | 35          | 16.6                  |

## Methodology:

EKOS' weekly tracking polls are conducted using Interactive Voice Response (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. 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.

This report contains data collected over two different time periods. The field dates for the question regarding the preferred response to a confidence motion are April 25-26, 2011. In total, a random sample of 1,922 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey. The margin of error associated with a sample of this size is +/-2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

The seat projections provided in this report are based on data collected over a longer period (April 24-26, 2011). The results are based on responses from 2,792 Canadians aged 18 and over. The associated margin of error 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.