

## **TORIES OPEN UP SMALL LEAD ON LIBERAL ELECTION TALK**

CANADIANS SAY "NO" TO FALL ELECTION BY MARGIN OF MORE THAN 2-1

[Ottawa – September 10, 2009] – After a summer in which the two major parties have been in a virtual tie more often than not, Stephen Harper's Conservatives have now opened up a small but statistically significant lead in the wake of the Liberal Party's threat to force a federal election this fall.

The most significant changes took place in Ontario, where the Liberals have surrendered their previous lead to the Conservatives, and in Quebec, where the Liberals had been closing in on the Bloc Québécois but have now fallen decisively behind. These shifts became visible in EKOS's daily tracking from the moment the Liberal leader, Michael Ignatieff, declared his intention to withdraw support from the government in the Parliamentary session that starts Monday.

"The Liberals have suffered setbacks in public opinion each time they have threatened the Harper government since the election last October: first, during the talk of a coalition soon after the election; second, when Michael Ignatieff seemed to threaten an election in June; and again now," said EKOS President Frank Graves.

"Quite simply, voters are genuinely annoyed at the prospect of yet another election, likely to produce, once again, a minority government," he said. "On the other hand, this annoyance will probably not influence the final outcome of the election since voters eventually turn their focus to the big issues that matter in their lives, rather than on who forced an unnecessary election."

There is no doubt where Canadians stand on a fall election: they don't want one, by a margin of more than two-to-one. In fact, even a significant majority of the supporters of the Liberals, NDP, BQ and Greens, say they would prefer an election to be held some other time.

"Interestingly, there is nonetheless a substantial number of Canadians – perhaps in the order of 10 million of them – who favour an early election, notwithstanding the fact that it may not change much," said Graves. "Not surprisingly, most of them support one of the opposition parties."

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- **National federal vote intention:**
  - ☒ **34.2% CPC**
  - ☒ **30.8% LPC**
  - ☒ **14.8% NDP**
  - ☒ **10.1% Green**
  - ☒ **10.0% BQ**
- **Timing of next federal election:**
  - ☒ **28% prefers this fall**
  - ☒ **72% prefers sometime later**

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

Besides region, perhaps the most important overall predictor of Conservative support is now age. The Conservatives are essentially tied with the Liberals for first place among voters under the age of 25, and lag behind them among voters 26-44.

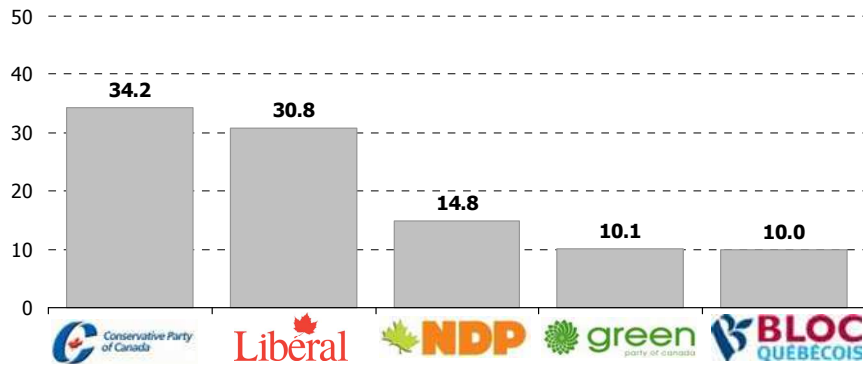
However, as you move up to older age groups, Conservative fortunes rise dramatically. If an election were held today the percentage of seniors voting Tory would be more than twice the percentage of under-25s doing so.

There is further evidence of generational differences on the question of whether a fall election is desirable. Among young voters, 44% would welcome a fall election. Among seniors? Seventeen per cent.

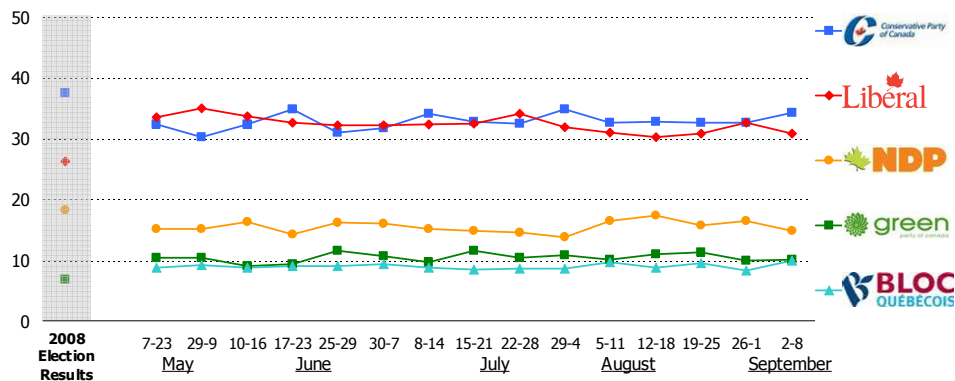
## Top Line Results:

### Federal vote intention

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



### Weekly tracking of federal vote intention



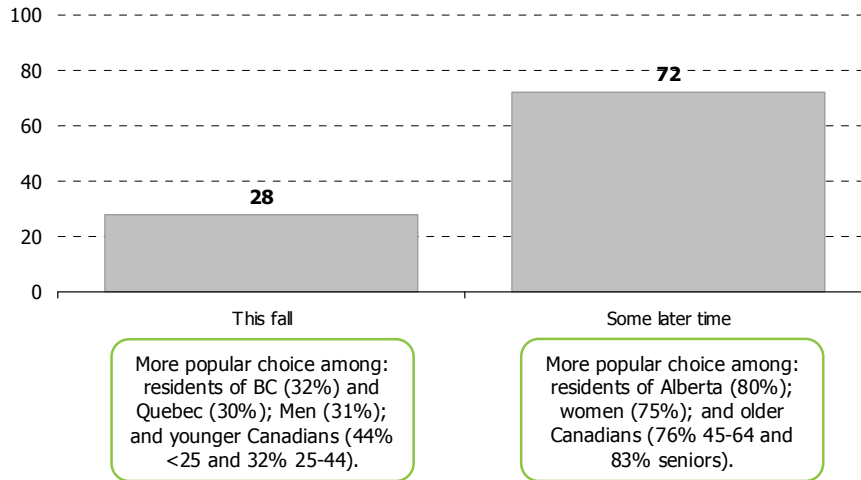
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided voters only. Our survey also finds that 14.9% of Canadians are undecided/ineligible to vote.

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BASE: Decided voters; most recent data points Sep. 2-8 (n=2381)

## Preferred timing of next election






*Q. Do you believe a federal election should be held this fall, or should it be held at some later time?*



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**BASE:** Canadians; Sep. 2-8 (n=2825)

## 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>34.2%</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>2381</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
British Columbia	34.9%	31.3%	20.9%	12.9%	0.0%	292	5.7
Alberta	56.8%	18.4%	14.8%	10.0%	0.0%	235	6.4
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	49.4%	25.9%	16.2%	8.5%	0.0%	141	8.3
Ontario	38.4%	36.5%	13.7%	11.4%	0.0%	915	3.2
Quebec	15.5%	27.8%	9.8%	7.0%	39.8%	622	3.9
Atlantic Canada	31.0%	32.2%	26.5%	10.4%	0.0%	176	7.4
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	38.4%	31.1%	11.6%	9.8%	9.1%	1173	2.9
Female	30.1%	30.6%	18.0%	10.4%	10.9%	1208	2.8
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	23.6%	24.0%	18.2%	22.1%	12.1%	234	6.4
25-44	29.2%	31.9%	16.1%	10.7%	12.2%	777	3.5
45-64	35.4%	32.0%	15.8%	7.3%	9.5%	892	3.3
65+	48.1%	30.7%	8.5%	7.0%	5.6%	478	4.5
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	37.3%	23.1%	15.2%	11.8%	12.7%	632	3.9
College or CEGEP	33.4%	28.6%	16.1%	10.6%	11.2%	864	3.3
University or higher	32.8%	38.5%	13.2%	8.4%	7.0%	885	3.3
<b>METROPOLITAN CANADA</b>							
Vancouver	31.9%	34.2%	23.0%	10.9%	0.0%	92	10.2
Calgary	60.8%	19.7%	15.1%	4.4%	0.0%	67	12.0
Toronto	34.8%	45.1%	13.5%	6.6%	0.0%	276	5.9
Ottawa	39.1%	44.3%	11.0%	5.5%	0.0%	147	8.1
Montreal	15.2%	27.4%	12.2%	9.0%	36.3%	238	6.4





### **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>34.9%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>5.7</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	44.6%	27.6%	16.2%	11.5%	145	8.1
Female	24.6%	35.0%	25.8%	14.7%	147	8.1
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	33.9%	18.4%	26.0%	21.7%	28	18.5
25-44	22.9%	38.2%	26.3%	12.7%	97	10.0
45-64	34.3%	34.6%	19.2%	11.9%	106	9.5
65+	56.8%	19.6%	12.0%	11.6%	61	12.6
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	45.1%	15.8%	22.9%	16.2%	74	11.4
College or CEGEP	34.0%	35.1%	21.4%	9.5%	102	9.7
University or higher	28.0%	38.1%	19.6%	14.3%	116	9.1





### **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>56.8%</b>	<b>18.4%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>6.4</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	61.4%	20.4%	11.4%	6.8%	127	8.7
Female	52.8%	14.6%	17.8%	14.8%	108	9.4
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	37.4%	14.9%	16.4%	31.4%	19	22.5
25-44	44.0%	28.6%	20.0%	7.4%	91	10.3
45-64	68.1%	12.7%	14.0%	5.2%	83	10.8
65+	70.4%	7.1%	5.0%	17.6%	42	15.1
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	60.2%	15.2%	11.3%	13.3%	57	13.0
College or CEGEP	55.6%	18.1%	17.8%	8.6%	88	10.5
University or higher	56.4%	18.5%	13.7%	11.5%	90	10.3





### **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>49.4%</b>	<b>25.9%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>8.3</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	56.8%	21.8%	10.2%	11.2%	75	11.3
Female	42.9%	29.3%	21.6%	6.2%	66	12.1
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	53.3%	15.5%	15.6%	15.6%	13	27.2
25-44	52.2%	27.9%	11.6%	8.2%	36	16.3
45-64	42.7%	29.2%	20.1%	8.0%	65	12.2
65+	58.2%	19.4%	15.2%	7.2%	27	18.9
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	48.0%	20.6%	19.2%	12.2%	45	14.6
College or CEGEP	52.7%	23.1%	13.5%	10.6%	46	14.5
University or higher	49.0%	31.9%	14.9%	4.1%	50	13.9






### **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>38.4%</b>	<b>36.5%</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	40.7%	36.9%	10.3%	12.1%	442	4.7
Female	35.5%	35.9%	17.3%	11.3%	473	4.5
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	23.2%	30.6%	19.4%	26.8%	80	11.0
25-44	38.1%	33.7%	14.9%	13.3%	278	5.9
45-64	37.4%	39.7%	14.1%	8.8%	337	5.3
65+	47.7%	38.2%	8.5%	5.6%	220	6.6
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	43.9%	26.6%	14.7%	14.9%	200	6.9
College or CEGEP	40.6%	30.4%	15.1%	14.0%	315	5.5
University or higher	33.0%	46.4%	12.5%	8.2%	400	4.9





### **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>15.5%</b>	<b>27.8%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	19.0%	31.2%	7.4%	6.6%	35.7%	302	5.6
Female	13.4%	25.8%	11.7%	6.2%	42.9%	320	5.5
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	13.0%	20.6%	13.2%	16.3%	36.9%	75	11.3
25-44	10.5%	29.0%	9.5%	8.1%	42.9%	221	6.6
45-64	18.7%	26.0%	10.7%	3.7%	40.9%	227	6.5
65+	24.9%	37.9%	5.0%	2.0%	30.1%	99	9.9
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	15.9%	26.6%	9.2%	7.2%	41.2%	210	6.8
College or CEGEP	14.5%	28.2%	9.2%	7.3%	40.8%	237	6.4
University or higher	19.0%	31.2%	10.4%	4.3%	35.1%	175	7.4

### **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>31.0%</b>	<b>32.2%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>GENDER</b>						
Male	36.5%	27.8%	25.8%	9.8%	82	10.8
Female	26.6%	36.1%	26.0%	11.3%	94	10.1
<b>AGE</b>						
<25	21.3%	28.9%	27.0%	22.8%	19	22.5
25-44	28.1%	32.6%	26.5%	12.7%	54	13.3
45-64	29.0%	33.9%	32.2%	4.9%	74	11.4
65+	54.8%	27.8%	10.1%	7.3%	29	18.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
High school or less	40.0%	22.5%	28.8%	8.7%	46	14.5
College or CEGEP	23.6%	31.6%	34.1%	10.6%	76	11.2
University or higher	36.2%	39.9%	12.2%	11.8%	54	13.3



### **Preferred Timing of Next Election**

*Q. Do you believe a federal election should be held this fall, or should it be held at some later time?*

	This fall	Some later time	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>2825</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>REGION</b>				
British Columbia	32%	68%	355	5.2
Alberta	20%	80%	277	5.9
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	25%	75%	175	7.4
Ontario	28%	72%	1067	3.0
Quebec	30%	70%	726	3.6
Atlantic Canada	28%	72%	225	6.5
<b>GENDER</b>				
Male	31%	69%	1352	2.7
Female	25%	75%	1473	2.6
<b>AGE</b>				
<25	44%	56%	300	5.7
25-44	32%	68%	927	3.2
45-64	24%	76%	1056	3.0
65+	17%	83%	542	4.2
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
High school or less	29%	71%	798	3.5
College or CEGEP	26%	74%	1018	3.1
University or higher	29%	71%	1009	3.1
<b>CURRENT VOTE INTENTION</b>				
Conservative Party of Canada	8%	92%	822	3.4
Liberal Party of Canada	41%	59%	733	3.6
NDP	38%	62%	346	5.3
Green Party	41%	59%	228	6.5
Bloc Québécois	37%	63%	252	6.2
Undecided	20%	80%	346	5.3

## 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 land-line 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 land-line and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and land-line only households. This dual frame yields a near perfect unweighted distribution on age group and gender, something almost never seen with traditional land-line RDD sample or interviewer administered surveys.

The field dates for this survey are the September 2-8, 2009.<sup>1</sup> In total, a random sample of 2,825 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 2,381 decided voters). The margin of error associated with total sample is +/-1.8 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 as we do not survey on Saturday or Sunday. As this past weekend was Labour Day, we did not poll on Monday, September 7, either.