

## CANADIANS ANXIOUS AS ELECTION BEGINS

*TORY SUPPORT CONFIDENT; OTHERS ANXIOUS*

[OTTAWA – September 8, 2008] – Forty-five per cent of Canadians say Canada is moving in the right direction, as they head to the polls, compared with 37% who say it is going in the wrong direction. That should be good news for Stephen Harper's Conservatives – except that he already has a corner on the happy vote.

In fact, 74% of those Canadians planning to vote Conservative in this election say they think the country is on the right path. Among the vast majority of Canadians who support one of the four opposition parties, it is a different story. Opposition supporters are not a happy lot. More than half of them say the country is pointed the wrong way, compared with less than a third who are optimistic.

In the three largest provinces, B.C., Ontario and Quebec, people are evenly split. And while men across the country are quite optimistic about the future, women are quite divided.

Most Canadians believe Canada is already in a recession – albeit a mild one – even if economists do not believe the current slow-growth has yet met the technical definition.

On a broader measure of quality of life, most Canadians are quite positive. Fifty-eight per cent rate their quality of life as good. Thirty per cent say it is average. And only 11% say it is poor. But dig a little deeper and there are pockets of discontent, which may be exploited by the opposition parties.

Strikingly, fewer Quebeckers and people in Manitoba and Saskatchewan say their quality of life is good; and more are inclined to say it is just average. Also, among the youngest generation of voters, the so-called "Generation Y", who are now in their late teens and twenties, there is a substantial number, 30% who describe their quality of life as poor.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **45% of Canadians say the country is moving in the right direction; 37% say the wrong direction.**
- **Conservative supporters overwhelmingly positive about the direction of the country.**
- **Discontent among opposition party supporters, with women, Ontarians, British Columbians and Quebeckers about evenly split.**
- **Anxieties about the current economy and the future environment.**

*Please note that the methodology and detailed tables of these and other results discussed in this release are provided at the end of this document.*

Looking backward, many Canadians are happy with the improvement in their lives, compared with the previous generation, 25 years ago. Half say they are better off; just a quarter say they are worse off; and about a quarter say they are about the same.

Looking forward, however, there is considerable anxiety. Almost half of Canadians (47%) say they think they will be worse off in 25 years than the generation preceding them. Only 18% expect to be better off; and 27% predict they will be about the same. These anxieties are most acute among NDP and Bloc supporters, and least among Tories.

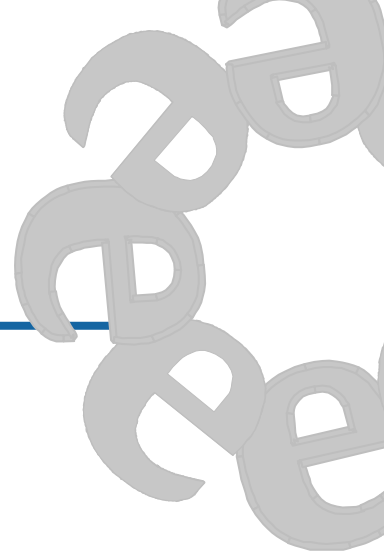
These concerns may be linked to worries about the environment. It is clear that many Canadians recognize that in time we will have to adjust to a "post-carbon" economy, but they are not entirely sure we are ready for it. Although the environment vies with as health and the economy as an issue of most concern in the context of the election, looking further out the matter of climate change looms large. Nearly two-thirds of Canadians believe it will be the most important issue facing the country in the medium- to long-term.

### **Methodology:**

Today's poll was conducted using EKOS' unique hybrid internet-telephone research panel, PROBIT<sup>®</sup>. This panel is **randomly** recruited from the general population, meaning that, the only way to be included in PROBIT<sup>®</sup> is through random selection. Unlike opt-in internet-only research panels, PROBIT<sup>®</sup> supports confidence intervals and error testing.

The field dates for this survey are September 2 to September 4, 2008. In total, a random sample of 2000 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey. A sample of this size provides a margin of error of +/- 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as regions).

All the data were statistically weighted to ensure the samples composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.



## Detailed Tables:

### Direction of Country

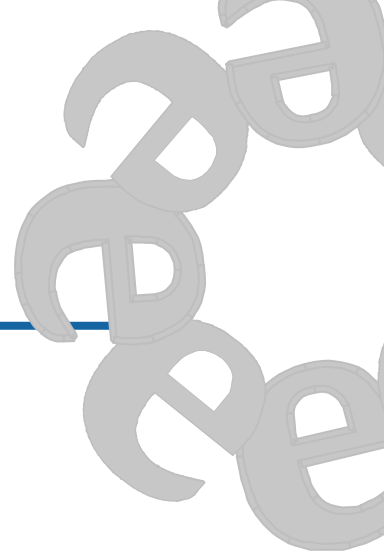
*Q. All things considered, would you say the country is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?*

BASE: Decided Voters n=	Canada		BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
	Sep. 08 2000	Jul. 08						
Right direction	45	57	43	61	51	44	40	46
Wrong direction	37	33	42	18	36	41	38	34
Don't know/No response	18	10	15	21	13	15	22	20

### Direction of Country (by vote intention)

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

BASE: All Canadians n=	CANADA 2000	Federal Vote Intention				
		CPC 693	Liberal 497	NDP 328	Green 177	BQ 128
Right direction	45	74	34	31	32	25
Wrong direction	37	12	53	54	49	49
Don't know/No response	18	14	13	14	19	25



## Quality of Life

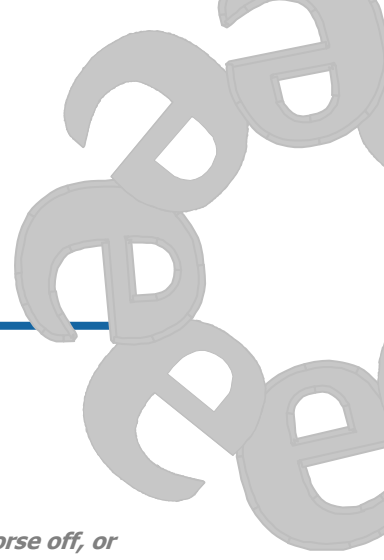
*Q. In general, how would you rate your quality of life?*

BASE: Decided Voters	Canada	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
n=	<b>2000</b>	281	172	142	731	453	220
Poor (1-3)	<b>11</b>	7	13	19	8	15	10
Average (4)	<b>30</b>	23	23	37	26	40	36
Good (5-7)	<b>58</b>	69	63	44	65	45	54

## Quality of Life (by vote intention)

*Q. In general, how would you rate your quality of life?*

BASE: All Canadians	Federal Vote Intention					
	CANADA	CPC	Liberal	NDP	Green	BQ
n=	<b>2000</b>	693	497	328	177	128
Poor (1-3)	<b>11</b>	8	8	16	14	20
Average (4)	<b>30</b>	29	25	31	27	38
Good (5-7)	<b>58</b>	63	66	53	59	42



## Quality of Life Compared to Previous Generation

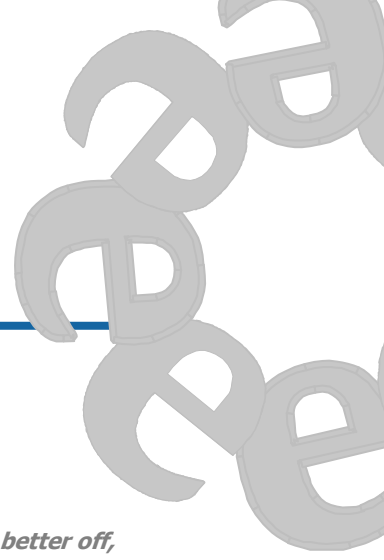
*Q. Thinking about your overall quality of life, would you say that you ARE better off, worse off, or about the same as the previous generation was twenty five years ago?*

BASE: Decided Voters	Canada	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
n=	<b>2000</b>	281	172	142	731	453	220
Better	<b>49</b>	42	53	57	54	43	42
Worse	<b>23</b>	26	28	18	20	25	30
About the same	<b>24</b>	25	18	22	24	28	25
Don't know/No response	<b>3</b>	6	1	2	3	3	2

## Quality of Life Compared to Previous Generation (by vote intention)

*Q. Thinking about your overall quality of life, would you say that you ARE better off, worse off, or about the same as the previous generation was twenty five years ago?*

BASE: All Canadians	Federal Vote Intention					
	CANADA	CPC	Liberal	NDP	Green	BQ
n=	<b>2000</b>	693	497	328	177	128
Poor (1-3)	<b>49</b>	55	49	43	47	39
Average (4)	<b>23</b>	22	21	32	22	19
Good (5-7)	<b>24</b>	20	27	24	27	41
Don't know/No response	<b>3</b>	2	3	2	3	2



## Quality of Life in the Future

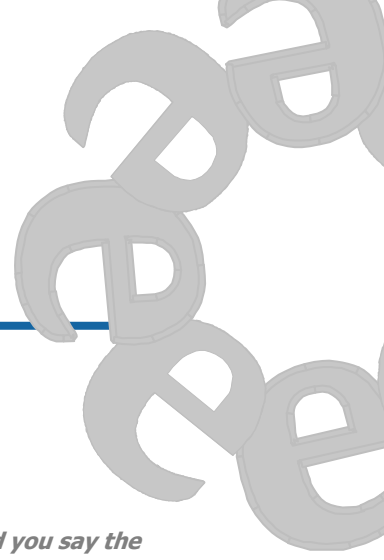
*Q. Thinking about your overall quality of life do you think the next generation WILL be better off, worse off, or about the same as you are twenty five years from now?*

BASE: Decided Voters	<b>Canada</b>	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
n=	<b>2000</b>	281	172	142	731	453	220
Better	<b>18</b>	15	18	24	17	22	20
Worse	<b>47</b>	56	41	52	51	37	49
About the same	<b>27</b>	23	32	21	26	35	17
Don't know/No response	<b>7</b>	7	9	3	7	6	15

## Quality of Life in the Future (by vote intention)

*Q. Thinking about your overall quality of life do you think the next generation WILL be better off, worse off, or about the same as you are twenty five years from now?*

BASE: All Canadians	Federal Vote Intention					
	<b>CANADA</b>	CPC	Liberal	NDP	Green	BQ
n=	<b>2000</b>	693	497	328	177	128
Poor (1-3)	<b>18</b>	21	22	17	10	19
Average (4)	<b>47</b>	42	44	52	57	46
Good (5-7)	<b>27</b>	32	28	25	21	28
Don't know/No response	<b>7</b>	5	6	6	12	7



## State of the Economy

*Q. Which of the following best describes how you feel about Canada's economy? Would you say the economy is currently ...?*

BASE: Decided Voters	Canada	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
n=	<b>2000</b>	281	172	142	731	453	220
...in a severe recession	<b>4</b>	2	1	1	4	7	2
...in a mild recession	<b>58</b>	54	42	45	72	46	60
...in a period of moderate growth	<b>30</b>	30	41	44	20	37	31
...in a period of strong growth	<b>2</b>	4	2	5	0	3	3
Don't know/No response	<b>6</b>	8	15	5	4	7	4

## Global Warming – Most Important Issue Facing Canada?

*Q. Over the medium to long term I think that global warming will be the most important issue facing Canada. Do you agree/disagree with...?*

BASE: All Canadians	CANADA 2008	Federal Vote Intention				
		CPC	Liberal	NDP	Green	BQ
n=	2000	693	497	328	177	128
Disagree (1-3)	<b>20</b>	36	11	14	7	6
Neither (4)	<b>15</b>	16	17	13	12	8
Agree (5-7)	<b>63</b>	47	70	72	78	85