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McGuinty Headed for Third Consecutive Majority

[Ottawa – October 5, 2011 (morning)] – In what would have been unthinkable as little as a week ago, McGuinty's Liberals appear headed towards a majority. Our three-day roll-up of more than 2,000 Ontario residents puts the Ontario Liberal Party at 39.0 per cent, a full nine points ahead of the Progressive Conservative Party who now stand at 29.7 per cent. The Ontario NDP, meanwhile, is at 23.1 points and the Green Party is sitting at 6.6.

We now turn to the question of what happened. Just ten days ago, our polls showed the Ontario Liberals with a small (albeit statistically significant) lead and now their victory seems all but certain. Pending a still premature post mortem, there are two interrelated factors which partially account for this turnaround. Recall that the Progressive Conservatives enjoyed a double digit lead in some polls six months ago.

In large measure, the demise of the Progressive Conservatives was forged from a failure in Toronto, both in the metro area and in the outlying suburbs. Indeed, the Liberals lead the Progressive Conservatives by a margin of two-to-one in those very areas which were the margin of majority difference for the federal Conservatives last May. It appears that continued reminders from federal Liberals about the connections to the Conservative government in Ottawa may well have diminished Tim Hudak's prospects by reinforcing voter anxieties about having too many eggs in one political basket. The fact that this effect was most pronounced in Toronto may well have been due to the presence of right leaning governments in both Toronto and federally.

Moreover, and related, the Ontario Liberals' huge lead with those born outside of Canada, most of whom live in Toronto may well have been related to various Hudak comments about Liberal policy favouring foreigners, most of whom live in Toronto. In any case, from the still smoldering ashes of the federal Liberal fortress, Toronto Liberals have shown a remarkable renaissance.

Come Election Day, we may see a slightly tighter outcome between the Liberals and Conservatives while the NDP, whose voter base is dominated by younger age groups who have historically shown the lowest turnout rates, will likely go down a bit. However, these differences will not

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Ontario provincial vote intention:**
 - ▣ 39.0% LPO
 - ▣ 29.7% PC
 - ▣ 23.1% NDP
 - ▣ 6.6% Green
 - ▣ 1.6% other

- **Ontario provincial vote intention (likely voters only):**
 - ▣ 40.0% LPO
 - ▣ 32.4% PC
 - ▣ 21.0% NDP
 - ▣ 5.5% Green
 - ▣ 1.1% other

- **Direction of province (Ontario):**
 - ▣ 58% right direction
 - ▣ 42% wrong direction

- **Direction of provincial government (Ontario):**
 - ▣ 53% right direction
 - ▣ 47% wrong direction

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

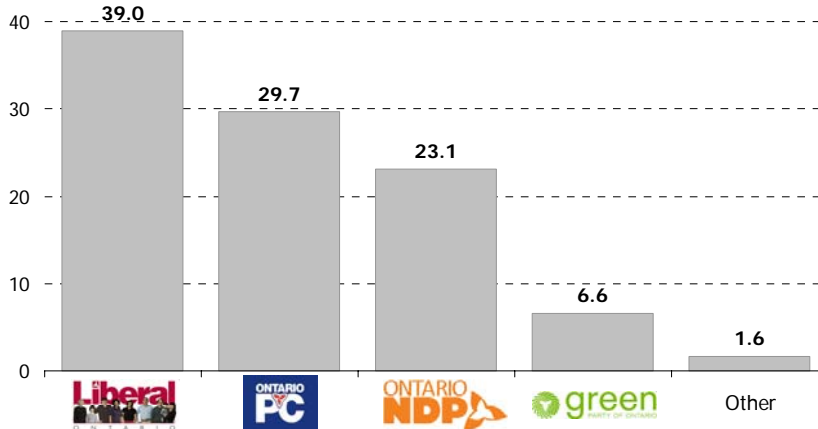
affect the final outcome. With Ontario Liberals holding a significant lead with the university educated and boomers, as well as a newfound lead among the always-voting seniors, all signs are pointing to a Liberal majority.

The methodology for this survey is provided at the end of this document.

Top Line Results:

Provincial vote intention

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



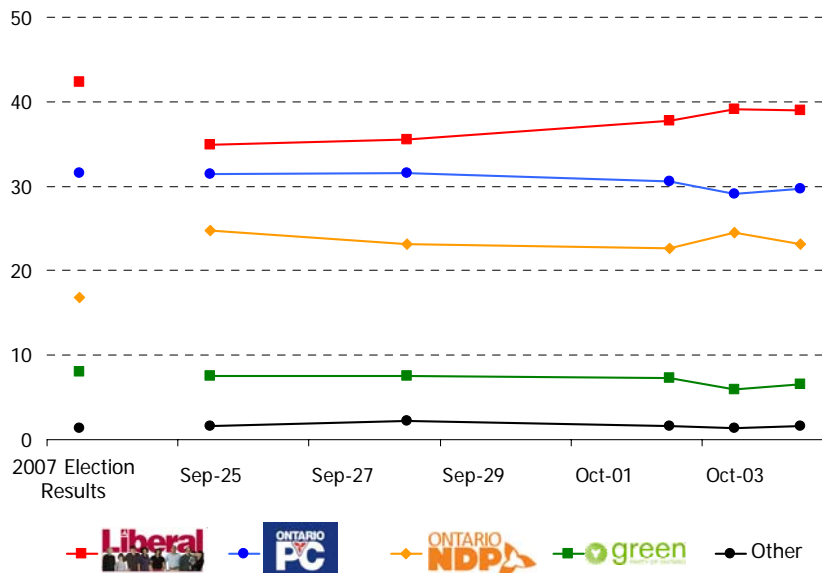
Note: The data on provincial vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only.

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BASE: Decided voters in Ontario; October 2-4, 2011 (n=1,892)

Tracking provincial vote intention

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



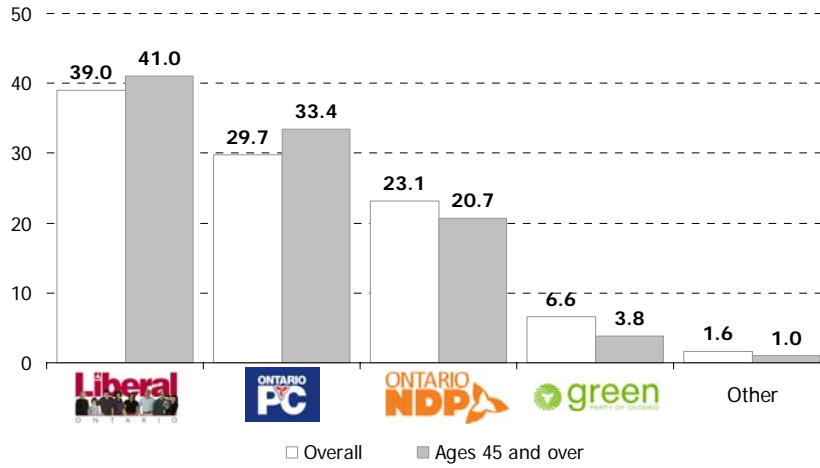
Note: The data on provincial vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only.

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BASE: Decided voters in Ontario; most recent data point October 2-4, 2011 (n=1,892)

Provincial vote intention by age

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



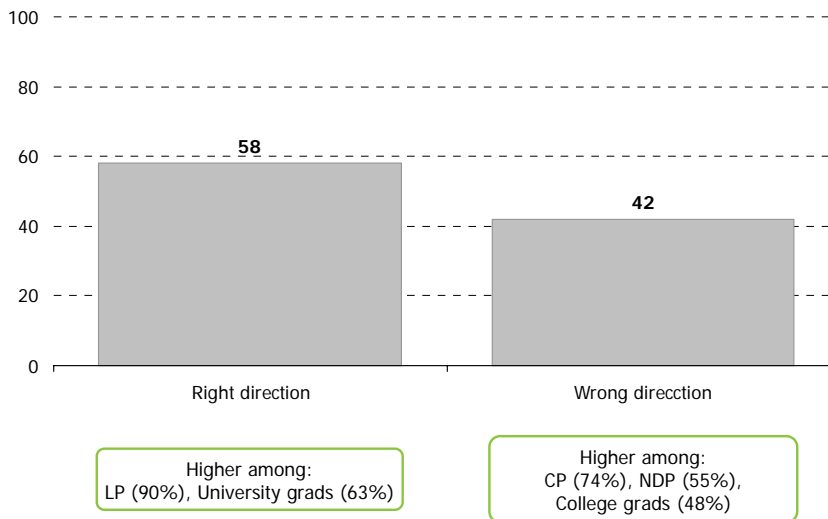
Note: The data on provincial vote intention are based on decided and leaning voters only.

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BASE: Decided voters in Ontario; October 2-4, 2011 (n=1,892)

Direction of province

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

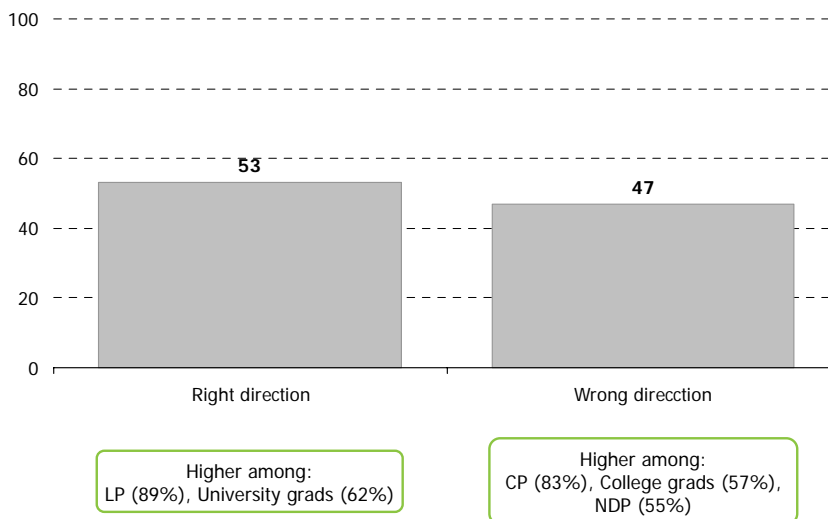


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BASE: Ontarians (half-sample); October 2-4, 2011 (n=904)

Direction of provincial government

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



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BASE: Ontarians (half-sample); October 2-4, 2011 (n=941)

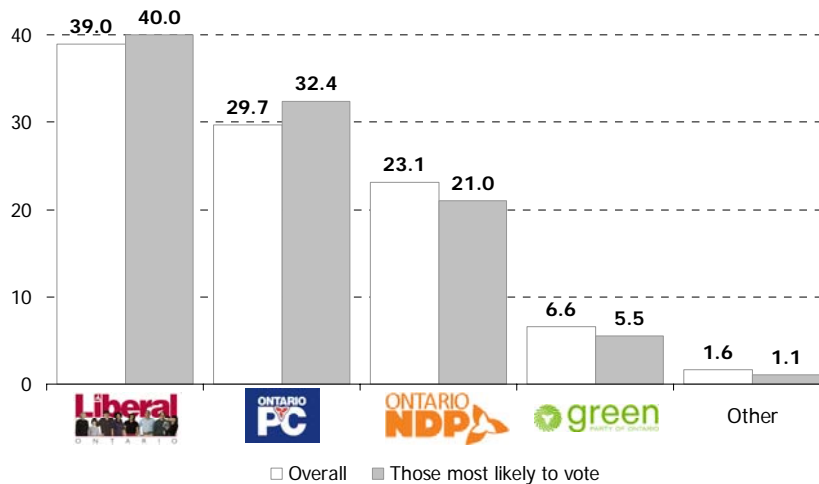
Voter Commitment:

We have constructed a preliminary estimate of voter support among the most likely voters. The results are shown below.

In this treatment of the data, we removed those who did not vote in the 2007 Ontario election. The data was also generated with an adjusted weight. We effectively doubled the weighted proportion of seniors (i.e., those over the age of 65) and halved the proportion of youth (those under 25). We also reduced the weight of the Gen X cohort (those ages 25-44) by 25 per cent and left the balance to those ages 45-64 (leaving this group basically as it appears naturally in the population).

Provincial vote intention by likelihood of voting

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



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

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BASE: Decided voters in Ontario; October 2-4, 2011 (n=1,892)


Detailed Tables:

Provincial Vote Intention (Ontario)							
<i>Base: Decided and leaning voters</i>							
<i>Q. If a provincial election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?</i>							
	Liberal	NDP	PC	Green	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
PROVINCIALLY	39.0%	23.1%	29.7%	6.6%	1.6%	1892	2.3
GENDER							
Male	38.8%	18.5%	34.3%	6.9%	1.4%	943	3.2
Female	39.2%	27.7%	25.3%	6.2%	1.7%	949	3.2
AGE							
<25	33.0%	28.1%	17.8%	17.0%	4.0%	100	9.8
25-44	37.8%	25.2%	27.8%	7.5%	1.7%	423	4.8
45-64	41.0%	22.7%	30.7%	4.2%	1.4%	786	3.5
65+	41.0%	17.0%	38.6%	3.1%	0.3%	583	4.1
EDUCATION							
High school or less	32.0%	25.4%	31.5%	8.7%	2.4%	463	4.6
College or CEGEP	32.8%	26.9%	32.3%	6.3%	1.7%	631	3.9
University or higher	47.7%	18.9%	26.8%	5.6%	1.0%	798	3.5
PLACE OF BIRTH							
Canada	37.9%	23.4%	30.6%	6.7%	1.4%	1479	2.6
Outside Canada	43.2%	22.2%	26.5%	5.9%	2.2%	413	4.8
REGION							
Toronto/Core GTA	49.1%	23.1%	19.6%	5.4%	2.8%	393	4.9
Suburban GTA	37.8%	21.1%	33.0%	7.7%	0.3%	487	4.4
Southwestern Ontario	35.0%	26.7%	31.3%	5.6%	1.5%	371	5.1
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	35.5%	19.7%	36.1%	6.6%	2.1%	390	5.0
Northeastern & Central Ontario	35.9%	26.9%	27.8%	8.0%	1.4%	223	6.6
Northwestern Ontario	28.3%	28.7%	37.2%	5.8%	0.0%	28	18.5


Direction of Province (half sample)
Q. All things considered, would you say Ontario is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
PROVINCIALY	58.1%	41.9%	904	3.3
GENDER				
Male	55.4%	44.6%	459	4.6
Female	60.8%	39.2%	445	4.7
AGE				
<25	62.1%	37.9%	50	13.9
25-44	56.0%	44.0%	211	6.8
45-64	56.4%	43.6%	401	4.9
65+	64.1%	35.9%	242	6.3
EDUCATION				
High school or less	56.6%	43.4%	208	6.8
College or CEGEP	52.3%	47.7%	306	5.6
University or higher	63.3%	36.7%	390	5.0
PLACE OF BIRTH				
Canada	57.0%	43.0%	699	3.7
Outside Canada	61.9%	38.1%	205	6.8
REGION				
Toronto/Core GTA	68.9%	31.1%	178	7.4
Suburban GTA	51.6%	48.4%	235	6.4
Southwestern Ontario	53.7%	46.3%	187	7.2
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	56.1%	43.9%	177	7.4
Northeastern & Central Ontario	65.4%	34.6%	113	9.2
Northwestern Ontario	53.3%	46.7%	14	26.2
PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION				
Liberal Party	90.2%	9.8%	350	5.2
NDP	45.2%	54.8%	163	7.7
Progressive Conservative Party	26.5%	73.5%	269	6.0
Green Party	51.9%	48.1%	43	14.9
Other	38.9%	61.1%	12	28.3

Direction of Provincial Government (half sample)

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

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
PROVINCIALLY	53.0%	47.0%	941	3.2
GENDER				
Male	49.4%	50.6%	465	4.5
Female	56.4%	43.6%	476	4.5
AGE				
<25	42.9%	57.1%	49	14.0
25-44	52.3%	47.7%	228	6.5
45-64	55.8%	44.2%	371	5.1
65+	54.9%	45.1%	293	5.7
EDUCATION				
High school or less	49.9%	50.1%	228	6.5
College or CEGEP	43.4%	56.6%	311	5.6
University or higher	62.2%	37.8%	402	4.9
PLACE OF BIRTH				
Canada	51.4%	48.6%	752	3.6
Outside Canada	59.5%	40.5%	189	7.1
REGION				
Toronto/Core GTA	66.0%	34.0%	199	7.0
Suburban GTA	55.4%	44.6%	234	6.4
Southwestern Ontario	50.5%	49.5%	174	7.4
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	46.2%	53.8%	214	6.7
Northeastern & Central Ontario	38.8%	61.2%	107	9.5
Northwestern Ontario	37.3%	62.7%	13	27.2
PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION				
Liberal Party	88.9%	11.1%	359	5.2
NDP	44.9%	55.1%	190	7.1
Progressive Conservative Party	17.0%	83.0%	280	5.9
Green Party	44.7%	55.3%	45	14.6
Other	36.5%	63.5%	6	40.0


2007 Provincial Vote (Ontario)
Base: Eligible voters
Q. How did you vote in the most recent provincial election, held in 2007?

	LP	PC	NDP	Green	Other	Didn't vote	DK/NR	Sample Size	MOE (+/-)
PROVINCIALLY	37.7%	25.1%	17.0%	5.0%	0.6%	8.8%	5.8%	2047	2.2
GENDER									
Male	38.1%	29.0%	14.0%	5.5%	0.6%	8.4%	4.4%	1007	3.1
Female	37.3%	21.4%	19.9%	4.5%	0.7%	9.1%	7.1%	1040	3.0
AGE									
<25	27.6%	14.5%	18.4%	9.1%	1.8%	23.8%	4.6%	109	9.4
25-44	35.6%	20.5%	18.3%	6.6%	0.2%	12.7%	6.0%	466	4.5
45-64	41.1%	27.9%	17.5%	3.7%	0.7%	3.5%	5.5%	855	3.4
65+	41.0%	35.3%	12.7%	1.6%	0.6%	2.4%	6.3%	617	4.0
EDUCATION									
High school or less	30.4%	25.7%	19.0%	6.8%	1.3%	10.7%	6.1%	508	4.4
College or CEGEP	31.7%	29.1%	20.2%	3.9%	0.3%	8.6%	6.1%	693	3.7
University or higher	46.6%	21.5%	13.3%	4.8%	0.6%	7.9%	5.2%	846	3.4
PLACE OF BIRTH									
Canada	36.2%	26.2%	17.5%	5.6%	0.5%	8.1%	5.9%	1588	2.5
Outside Canada	43.0%	21.2%	15.3%	2.8%	1.1%	11.4%	5.2%	459	4.6
REGION									
Toronto/Core GTA	44.2%	19.2%	17.8%	5.1%	1.1%	8.7%	3.8%	417	4.8
Suburban GTA	36.0%	29.5%	14.5%	4.8%	0.9%	8.5%	5.8%	527	4.3
Southwestern Ontario	34.6%	23.7%	19.2%	6.2%	0.5%	9.1%	6.8%	405	4.9
Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	38.5%	27.4%	13.8%	5.3%	0.4%	9.7%	5.1%	421	4.8
Northeastern & Central Ontario	33.7%	26.3%	22.5%	2.6%	0.0%	6.5%	8.3%	244	6.3
Northwestern Ontario	28.7%	18.8%	21.3%	5.1%	0.0%	16.5%	9.5%	33	17.1
PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION									
Liberal Party	69.8%	8.5%	9.5%	2.3%	0.0%	6.6%	3.2%	754	3.57
NDP	21.2%	10.1%	48.3%	4.4%	0.0%	10.6%	5.4%	411	4.83
Progressive Conservative Party	17.6%	65.0%	4.6%	2.4%	0.5%	6.0%	3.9%	603	3.99
Green Party	20.4%	12.2%	19.9%	35.1%	0.5%	9.6%	2.3%	100	9.8
Other	11.1%	9.5%	13.9%	13.6%	27.6%	21.4%	2.8%	24	20

Methodology:

EKOS' 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.

The field dates for this survey are October 2-4, 2011. In total, a random sample of 2,081 Ontario residents aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 1,892 decided and leaning voters). The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/- 2.2 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 Ontario according to Census data.