



Press Release

BC Election Too Close to Call

Voter Turnout and Winning Close Ridings Will Decide Whether NDP (40%, down 1) or BC Liberals (39%, down 4) Prevail

Improving Greens (17%, up 3) Could Play a Big Role, Especially on Vancouver Island

Vancouver, BC, May 8, 2017 — A new Ipsos poll conducted using a dual online and phone methodology reveals an election that remains tight and too close to call. The poll, which concluded Saturday May 6th, has the NDP (40%) and Liberals (39%) in a statistical dead heat among decided voters. The Green Party has 17% support, while 4% support other parties. These results exclude the 16% of British Columbians who are undecided or express no preference.

There have been some shifts since our post debate poll (Apr 27-30) released one week ago today that also showed a very close race. The Greens are the party on the rise (up 3 points from 14%), while the Liberals have seen the most decline (down 4 points from 43%). The NDP are down one point from a week ago (from 41%). The level of undecided/no preference has dropped a little as well (down 4 points from 20%).

What Will Happen on May 9th

The popular vote is too close to call, and making a seat prediction is even more precarious. Popular vote often does not correlate well with seat outcomes. Regional trends don't impact ridings equally. At a riding level, incumbency has an impact and so does the Get Out the Vote efforts of the parties.

The biggest factor on Election Day (and advance polls) is which voters actually turn up to cast their ballot. With more than four-in-ten voters choosing to abstain in the past few BC elections, this can have a substantial impact on the results. In 2013 it was clear that BC Liberals, fearing an NDP victory, turned out, while NDP voters, especially younger NDP voters, did not. Our current vote turnout model suggests that the BC Liberals will benefit from a lower voter turnout and that the popular vote remains close as turnout goes up.

As in 2013, the BC Liberals lead with older voters (by 6 points among 55+ years) and the NDP leads among younger voters (by 9 points among 18-34 years). However, adjusting the poll results for age turnout from the last election only makes things tighter (40% Liberal, 40% NDP). And as the federal election showed, past turnout is not always a good predictor of future turnout.

As in past elections, Green vote is the softest. Green voters are just as likely as other voters to say they will vote (74% rate 10 on a 10 point scale vs. 71% Liberals, 73% NDP), but they are less likely to say their mind is made up (55% 9-10 vs. 67% Liberal, 64% NDP) and less likely to think their vote really matters in this election (44% 9-10 vs. 57% Liberal, 57% NDP). A Green shift, assuming they do vote,

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is most likely to benefit the NDP as Green voters throughout the campaign have preferred the NDP over the Liberals by a wide margin as their second choice.

Breaking Down the Vote

Party preferences break down as follows.

- **Gender Gap:** The BC Liberals lead by 8-points among men (44% Lib vs. 36% NDP), while the New Democrats have a 10-point lead among women (44% NDP vs. 34% Libs).
- **Age Gap:** The BC Liberals lead by 6-points among 55+ years (44% Lib vs. 38% NDP), while the NDP leads by 3-points among the 35-54 years segment (41% NDP vs. 38% Lib) and by 9 points among the 18-34 years segment (42% NDP vs. 33% Lib). The Green Party does better with those under the age of 55 years (19% among 18-54 years vs. 14% among 55+ years).
- **Regions:** The NDP has a 5-point lead in Metro Vancouver (44% NDP vs. 39% Lib). The BC Liberals lead by 12-points in the Interior/North (46% Lib vs. 34% NDP). On the Island, the NDP leads at 40% of decided voters, with the Greens (28%) and BC Liberals (27%) splitting the rest of the vote.

The Issues

Health care (32%, down 4) and housing affordability (26%, down 6) continue to be the two top issues that British Columbians feel should receive attention from BC's leaders, but both are down compared to our post debate poll. Also down are the twin issues of jobs/employment (16%, down 3) and the economy (11%, down 5).

Education shows the biggest increase as an important issue, rising 7 points to 19%.

Deserving Re-Election

The appetite for change has increased since the post debate poll, with many of those on the fence moving into the time for a change column. Nearly six-in-ten (58%, up 7 points) believe that it's time for another provincial party to take over. Three-in-ten (30%, up 1 point) continue to believe that the Clark government has done a good job and deserves re-election, while 12% down 7 points) are undecided.

Best Premier

Both Andrew Weaver and Christy Clark have made gains in the past week on the best Premier metric. Weaver is up the most (up 6 points from 15%), and now has 21% of residents thinking he is the leader who would make the best Premier of British Columbia. Weaver, however, still trails the other two leaders as Christy Clark (33%, up 4 points) has widened her lead over John Horgan (27%, up 1 point). Two-in-ten (19%, down 11 points) British Columbians remain undecided about which of the three main party leaders would make the best Premier.

Best on Issues

Very little has shifted in the last week in terms of which leader/party British Columbians think is best on various issues.

- John Horgan and the NDP continue to lead on four of the five most important issues including health care, housing affordability, education and social issues.

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- Christy Clark and the BC Liberals continue to lead on many issues, most notably jobs/employment and the economy.
- Andrew Weaver and the Greens are still seen as by far the best on the environment. Weaver and the Greens have also improved 6 points on the issue of natural resource development, although this is the least important item on the list.

Which of the three main parties/leaders do you think would do the best job on each of the following issues?	Christy Clark and The BC Liberal Party	John Horgan and the NDP	Andrew Weaver and The Green Party	Don't know
Health care	23% (+1)	35% (=)	11% (+1)	30% (-3)
Housing affordability	18% (+1)	33% (-2)	13% (+2)	36% (-1)
Education	23% (+1)	33% (-1)	14% (+1)	30% (-1)
Jobs/employment	35% (+2)	28% (+1)	7% (-1)	30% (-1)
Social issues (e.g. poverty, homelessness)	16% (-1)	35% (+1)	17% (+2)	32% (-2)
Environment	14% (=)	12% (-3)	47% (+2)	27% (=)
Economy	37% (=)	22% (-2)	10% (+1)	31% (+1)
Keeping down taxes/government fees	28% (-1)	23% (-3)	11% (+1)	39% (+3)
Drugs/opioid crisis	19% (=)	24% (+1)	12% (+1)	45% (-2)
Government spending/finances	29% (-1)	22% (-3)	12% (+2)	37% (+2)
Transportation and infrastructure	30% (-1)	27% (+2)	9% (=)	34% (-1)
Pipelines	33% (=)	16% (+1)	19% (+2)	32% (-3)
Crime/justice issues	25% (=)	25% (=)	10% (+1)	40% (-1)
Natural resource development	30% (-2)	16% (-3)	25% (+6)	30% (-1)

Leadership Characteristics

All three leaders have improved slightly on most leadership attributes and no leader is dominating on any attribute (Clark's 8-point lead on most capable is the biggest gap). Half of British Columbians (47%) still haven't decided which leader is most trustworthy.

- Christy Clark continues to lead on the attributes of most capable, most tough (Horgan is close) and most smart.
- John Horgan leads on the attributes of most relatable, most honest (Weaver is close) and most caring (Weaver and Clark are close).
- Andrew Weaver continues to gain on most attributes and now leads on the attributes of most likeable (Clark and Hogan are close) and most trustworthy (Horgan is close).

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Which of the three main party leaders do you think is best described by each of the following words?	Christy Clark	John Horgan	Andrew Weaver	Don't know
Caring	17% (+1)	21% (-3)	20% (+1)	42% (+1)
Capable	32% (+1)	24% (-3)	13% (+1)	31% (=)
Honest	12% (-1)	21% (=)	20% (=)	47% (+1)
Likeable	21% (-1)	20% (-3)	24% (+4)	35% (=)
Relatable	17% (-2)	25% (-1)	20% (+4)	38% (-1)
Smart	27% (-2)	20% (-1)	19% (+2)	34% (+1)
Tough	30% (-1)	27% (+2)	8% (+1)	35% (-2)
Trustworthy	14% (-1)	19% (-4)	20% (+3)	47% (+2)

Projected Outcome

British Columbians are increasingly expecting some outcome other than a BC Liberal or NDP majority government. One-quarter (26%) now say they expect 'some other outcome', an increase of 8 points from a week ago. A little more than one-third (34%, down 1 point) project a Liberal majority, while one-quarter (26%, down 3 points) project an NDP majority. Thirteen percent are undecided about what to expect (down 5 points).

About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos/Global BC/CKNW poll of 1,404 British Columbians conducted May 4-6, 2017. The poll was conducted using a blended methodology, including 902 online interviews via the Ipsos I-Say Panel and 502 telephone interviews (live interviews, including 40% by cellphone). These data were statistically weighted by region, age, gender, education and data collection methodology to ensure the sample composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to Census data. The precision of Ipsos polls containing online data is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the overall poll is accurate to within ± 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all eligible voters been polled. Some of the questions were asked only of online respondents. The result for these questions is accurate to within ± 3.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all eligible voters been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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