



Factum

Less than a Year Before Election, Trudeau Leads in the Best (and Worst) Traits

Liberals Lead on 5 of the Top-10 Issues, while Tories Lead on 3; Two Remain Undifferentiated

Toronto, ON, December 21, 2018 — With less than a year to go until the next federal election, a new Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News shows that incumbent Prime Minister and Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau commands a large lead over other federal party leaders in terms of positive traits, but also in terms of negative ones – suggesting that Canadians know far more about Trudeau than his rivals Andrew Scheer and Jagmeet Singh.

For example, 36% of Canadians believe that Trudeau is someone who will best lead and represent Canada on the world stage (compared to 22% for Scheer and 8% for Singh). The Liberal Party leader also leads on a variety of indicators, such as being someone who will get things done (33% for Trudeau, 22% for Scheer, and 8% for Singh), having what it takes to lead Canada (33% for Trudeau, 21% for Scheer, and 9% for Singh), and being someone Canadians would like to get a beer or coffee with (33% for Trudeau, 15% for Scheer, 7% for Singh).

While this may paint a very positive picture going for Trudeau and the Liberal Party of Canada, it is also important to note that he leads his competitors on more “negative” indicators such as being someone who is willing to divide Canadians for political advantage (27% for Trudeau, 23% for Scheer, 9% for Singh). And while a third (33%) of Canadians believe that Justin Trudeau is someone who wants to impose his values on others, yet another third (31%) believe that he is someone who really listens and considers all points of view.

More than anything, this could point to the name-recognition power of an incumbent Prime Minister in comparison to his relatively lesser-known rivals. These findings are in line with an earlier Ipsos poll conducted in October of this year, which showed that nearly half of Canadians could not identify Andrew Scheer as the opposition leader among a dozen names, and nearly half could not identify Jagmeet Singh as leader of the NDP. As a result, the opposition party leaders face an uphill climb next year in convincing voters that they are the best person to lead Canada, as they are still trying to build familiarity among Canadians.

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Which major federal party leader is best described by the following traits:				
	Justin Trudeau	Andrew Scheer	Jagmeet Singh	None of these leaders
Someone who will best lead and represent Canada on the world stage	36%	22%	8%	34%
Someone who will get things done	33%	22%	8%	38%
Someone who has what it takes to lead Canada	33%	21%	9%	37%
Someone who will promote democracy and its processes effectively	33%	20%	12%	36%
Someone who is best to deal with President Donald Trump	33%	19%	7%	41%
Someone you'd like to have a beer or a coffee with	33%	15%	7%	45%
Someone who wants to impose his values on others	33%	21%	10%	36%
Someone who has a vision for Canada that you can support	32%	21%	11%	37%
Someone you can trust	31%	17%	9%	44%
Someone whose values best represent my own	31%	21%	10%	38%
Someone who really listens to and considers all points of view	31%	19%	10%	40%
Someone who will provide open, responsible, and ethical government	30%	20%	11%	38%
Someone who will fight for the middle class	30%	20%	13%	37%
Someone who is best to manage during tough economic times	29%	23%	9%	39%
Someone willing to divide Canadians for political advantage	27%	23%	9%	41%
Someone who gets how difficult it is for most people to afford the expenses of everyday life	26%	21%	13%	40%

Top Issues of Campaign Point to Liberal Advantage

The key to winning an election is to differentiate oneself positively on the issues that matter most to Canadians. Turning the corner into 2019 and with the federal election in sight, the top three issues that Canadians say will determine how they vote are healthcare (32%, down 3 points from October), taxes (30%, up 2 points), and economy (27%, unchanged). Rounding out the top ten are: climate change and the environment (19%, up 1 point), poverty and inequality (17%, unchanged), jobs and unemployment (17%, up 1 point), immigration (17%, down 2 points), housing (13%, down 1 point), seniors' issues (13%, down 2 points), and government deficits and debt (13%, unchanged).

Trudeau's Liberals have an advantage on the number-one issue of healthcare at the moment. Among those who identify healthcare among their top-three election issues, more believe that the Liberals are best to manage the issue than another party (26% Liberals, 18% Conservatives, 17% NDP). The Liberals are especially popular on this issue among male voters (32%) and Millennials (36%).

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By contrast, Scheer’s Conservatives own the issue of the economy by the same margin (35% Conservatives, 27% Liberals, 7% NDP), with an above-average level of support among Baby Boomers (41%) and those in Alberta (49%) and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (46%).

However, two important issues remain up for grabs in the minds of the electorate – taxes and senior’s issues. When asked which party they thought was best suited to deal with taxes, 29% said the Liberals, whereas 28% named the Conservatives (and 8% said the NDP). The Liberals enjoy a boost of confidence when it comes to taxes among Millennials (45%) and in British Columbia (44%), whereas the Conservatives can rely on the support of Albertans (53%) regarding the tax file.

When asked the same about senior’s issues, there was once again no clear winner – 25% pointed to the Conservatives and 23% placed their trust in the Liberals (and 13% in the NDP). These two traditionally Conservative issues have the potential to resurface during the election campaign as federal party leaders cross swords over who is best to handle these issues.

The chart below showcases the top-ten issues according to Canadians, and which party is believed to be best to manage the file.

	The Liberals	The Conservatives	The NDP	The Bloc	Some other party	None of them
Healthcare	26%	18%	17%	0%	4%	35%
Taxes	29%	28%	8%	1%	4%	30%
The economy	27%	35%	7%	1%	4%	25%
Climate change, the environment	39%	10%	13%	1%	18%	19%
Poverty, inequality	28%	14%	23%	2%	6%	28%
Unemployment, jobs	28%	22%	13%	1%	5%	31%
Immigration	13%	40%	7%	2%	9%	28%
Housing	27%	18%	22%	1%	2%	31%
Seniors’ issues	23%	25%	13%	2%	5%	31%
Government deficits, debt	10%	54%	8%	0%	4%	25%

Canadians Wary of Federal Leaders, Lack Confidence in Federal Parties

Not being aware of the opposition party leaders also feeds into the idea of not trusting those who are running for elected office. Although Trudeau leads on both positive and negative traits, over a third of Canadians also say that no federal leader fits the bill across a variety of positive (and negative) traits. Some of the traits for which Canadians said none of the federal leaders matched include:

- Someone you’d like to have a beer with: 45%
- Someone you can trust: 44%
- Someone who will get things done: 38%
- Someone who has what it takes to lead Canada: 37%
- Someone who will fight for the middle class: 37%

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This lukewarm reception of federal party leaders no doubt transfers to the perceptions of competence that Canadians have of the federal parties. Some areas where Canadians said that no federal party was best suited to dealing with include:

- Healthcare (35%)
- Unemployment (31%)
- Housing (31%)
- Senior's issues (31%)
- Taxes (30%)

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between December 7 to 12, 2018, on behalf Global News. For this survey, a sample of 2,001 adults living in Canada was polled. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults 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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