



PRESS RELEASE

Ahead of Tory Leadership Vote, Half (49%) of Canadians Will Consider Voting Tory under New Leader

While Peter MacKay Leads the Pack among Canadians, No Leader Individually Scores Above 39% Consideration

Toronto, ON, August 22, 2020 — As Conservative members prepare to elect their new leader, the poll reveals that half (49%) of Canadians, overall, agree (18% strongly/31% somewhat) that, given that the Conservative Party will have a new leader, they will consider voting for them in the next election.

While this may encourage the Conservative Party, they might also be humbled by the fact that 47% of Canadians agree (17% strongly/30% somewhat) that, until taking this poll, they were not even aware that the Conservative Party was picking a leader this month.

At this stage, Canadians are most likely to consider voting for a Tory party led by Peter MacKay, and to believe that a MacKay-led Conservative party has the best chance of defeating the Trudeau Liberals:

- Four in ten (39%) Canadians would be likely (13% very likely/26% somewhat likely) to **vote for the Conservative Party** if led by Peter MacKay. This drops lower if the party is led by Erin O'Toole (35% likely to consider – 9% very likely, 26% somewhat likely), Derek Sloan (31% likely to consider – 7% very likely, 23% somewhat likely) or Leslyn Lewis (30% likely to consider – 8% very likely, 22% somewhat likely).
- Thinking about who has the **best chance of defeating the Trudeau Liberals**, 22% of Canadians believe it is MacKay, while fewer believe O'Toole (7%), Sloan (3%) or Lewis (3%) has the best chance. Two in ten (21%) Canadians believe none of them has the best chance of defeating Trudeau, while 43% are entirely unsure.

Canadians are also largely unsure who would be best to lead Canada's economy and through the impacts of COVID-19, or whose values best represent their own:

- Fourteen percent (14%) say that Peter MacKay's **values best represent their own**, while fewer say the same about O'Toole (7%), Sloan (4%) or Lewis (4%). Three in ten (29%) say none of these leaders represents their values, while 42% are unsure. Even among Tory voters, 37% are unsure.



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- Fifteen percent (15%) say that Peter MacKay would be the best of the candidates to **manage Canada’s economy through a recession and the impacts of COVID-19**, while fewer say the best person is O’Toole (7%), Sloan (4%) or Lewis (3%). One quarter (23%) say that none of them has earned this designation, while 48% of Canadians are unsure. Among Conservative voters, 39% are unsure of which leader would be best to lead during these times.

Overall, four in ten (44%) Canadians agree (9% strongly/34% somewhat) that the outcome of the Conservative Party leadership race will have an impact on who they will vote for in the federal election, including 53% of Canadians who way they are presently undecided about who they will vote for.

Regardless of who ends up winning the contest, most Canadians (80%) agree (24% strongly/56% somewhat) that the government of Canada works better when there are strong opposition parties. And while 42% of Canadians believe that if the Prime Minister, his Chief of Staff and his Finance Minister (who has already resigned), don’t resign because of the WE scandal, the new Tory leader should support a Bloc motion to defeat the Liberals and trigger an election this fall. A majority (58%) of Canadians, however, do not support such a move. Such a move could motivate the Tory base, however, as 71% of Conservative voters support bringing down the Liberals with the Bloc’s help and triggering a fall election.

Leadership Contestants Fail to Make Their Mark on Most Canadians

Since most Canadians have likely been paying more attention to COVID-19 and its implications than the Tory leadership race, it’s not surprising that the candidates have generally failed to make an impression one way or the other on most Canadians. Peter MacKay is the most well-known candidate among Canadians, but garners mixed reviews. The chart below shows how Canadians feel about each candidate, with tracking back to a similar poll conducted in January 2020, where applicable.

Impressions among all Canadians

Leadership Contestant	% favourable	% unfavourable	% don’t know enough about them to have an informed opinion
Peter MacKay	28% (-2)	24% (+7)	49% (-4)
Erin O’Toole	14% (+3)	18% (+5)	68% (-9)
Derek Sloan	8% (+1)	16% (+4)	77% (-4)
Leslyn Lewis	10%	13%	77%



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Even among Conservative voters, a majority don't know enough about three of the four candidates to have an opinion of them either way. While Peter MacKay is viewed most favourably among Conservative voters, he also has the highest share of unfavourable impressions. Erin O'Toole has made the biggest impression on Conservative voters throughout the leadership race, driving his favourability scores significantly higher – but 56% of Tory voters still don't know enough about him to have an informed opinion.

Impressions among Conservative voters

Leadership Contestant	% favourable	% unfavourable	% don't know enough about them to have an informed opinion
Peter MacKay	44% (-3)	19% (+8)	37% (-5)
Erin O'Toole	29% (+16)	15% (+3)	56% (-19)
Derek Sloan	12% (+5)	16% (+8)	72% -13)
Leslyn Lewis	16%	12%	72%

Canadians Say New Leader Should Focus on COVID-19, The Economy and Cost of Living

Thinking about what issue the new leader of the Conservative Party should make their first priority once assuming the leadership, COVID-19 (28%) and the economy (17%) are the areas with the most support among Canadians. Rounding out the top-five priority issues are affordability and cost of living (11%), health care (8%) and government deficits/debt (7%). Other issues of less priority for Canadians include: climate change (6%), corruption and ethics in government, taxation (5%), seniors' issues and an aging population (4%), energy/pipelines/gas prices (2%), immigration (2%), or some other issue (5%).

Looking specifically at Conservative voters, their top-five list changes: first and foremost is the economy (28%) followed by COVID-19 (20%), government deficits/debt (13%), corruption and ethics (9%) and affordability/cost of living (7%).

About the Study



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These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between August 17th and 18th, 2020, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 2000 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Half of the interviews were conducted prior to the resignation of Bill Morneau, while half were conducted afterwards. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. 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 Canadians aged 18+ been polled for the full sample, or ± 3.5 percentage points for the "before" and "after" samples individually. 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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ISIN code FR0000073298, Reuters ISOS.PA, Bloomberg IPS:FP

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