

PRESS RELEASE

Conservatives Could Benefit from Ballot-Box Bonus on E-Day, But COVID Concerns, Apathy Make Election Outcome Uncertain

More Canadians Believe Liberals (36%) Will Win Over Conservatives (25%); Three in Ten (29%) Say the Election Outcome is Uncertain

Toronto, ON, Sep 17, 2021 — With the two leading parties so close in the national popular vote, the party leaders will be spending the final days of the campaign shoring up support and ensuring that their voters turn up on election day. A new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News finds that nearly four in ten (36%) believe the Liberals will win the election, while one in four (25%) believe the Conservatives will win. A further three in ten (29%) say the election outcome is not certain either way – in which case it's all about the get-out-the-vote effort. The results of the poll show that the Conservative Party could receive a ballot-box bonus, as their supporters appear most enthusiastic about their party and about showing up to cast their ballot.

Underscoring this campaign is the belief that we should not be having a federal election during the pandemic, a feeling shared by 69% of Canadians, up a remarkable 13 points since the outset of the election. Even 60% of Liberal voters hold this point of view. Moreover, a sense of apathy is strong: nearly half (46%) of Canadians agree (13% strongly/34% somewhat) that they don't really like any of the parties in this election, up 11 points since the start of the campaign, and another factor which could contribute to lower turnout.

Certainty to Vote: Bloc and Conservative Voters Poised to Show Up

Six in ten (62%) Canadians who have not yet voted say they are completely certain that they will vote on Election Day. Conservative (74%) and Bloc (74%) voters are most likely to insist that they will show up to vote, while Liberal (68%), PPC (66%), NDP (63%) and Green Party (60%) are less likely to say they are committed to voting.

Certainty of Vote: Bloc and Conservative Voters Most Committed to their Choice

A majority (53%) of Canadians say they are certain of their vote choice (up 4 points since last week), either because they say there is no chance that they could change their mind, or that they've already voted for this party. Bloc (61%) and Conservative (58%) supporters are most likely to say their vote is locked in, while Liberal (55%), PPC (53%), Green (45%) and NDP (44%) voters are less committed to their choice.

Second Choice: NDP Has Most Room to Grow

Four in ten (41%) voters say that the leaders' debates solidified their vote choice (highest among Liberal voters at 53%), while 22% say that the debate has changed their intended vote. However, only Green Party voters (41%) are more likely than voters of the Liberal (24%), New Democratic (24%), Bloc (20%) and Conservative (20%) parties to say the debate changed their mind – underscoring why voting intentions didn't change much in the aftermath of the debate.

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Among those who haven't already cast their ballot, the NDP is the second choice of one in four (25%). Fewer voters would opt for the Liberals (13%), Greens (12%), Conservatives (10%), Bloc (3%) other parties, including the PPC (8%). Three in ten (30%) are unsure of whether they'd pick another party second.

Examining the possibilities for where voters could wander in the final days of the campaign...

- Among current **Conservative** voters, 23% would pick the NDP second, while fewer would vote for other parties including the PPC (14%), Liberals (11%), Greens (8%) or Bloc (5%). Four in ten (39%) say they don't know who they would pick second, reflecting a stronger commitment to vote Tory.
- Among current **Liberal** voters, 47% would vote NDP as their second choice, leaving the Greens (13%), Conservatives (12%), the Bloc (1%) and others (2%) further down the list. One in four (24%) Liberal voters are unsure of their second choice.
- Among current **NDP** voters, one in three (32%) would opt for the Liberals second, while the Greens (19%), Conservatives (12%), the Bloc (1%) and others (8%) are further behind. Nearly three in ten (27%) are unsure of who they would pick second.
- Among **Bloc** voters, their second choice is spread diffusely among the NDP (18%), Liberals (16%), Conservatives (13%), Greens (11%) and others (4%). Four in ten (38%) Bloc voters are unsure of who they would vote for second.

NDP Voters are Mailing It In

While mail-in ballots have been available to Canadians in previous elections, they have not been widely utilized. There has been some speculation that over one million Canadians could cast their ballot by mail in this election campaign, and Ipsos polling has revealed that 8% of Canadians indicate that this is the means by which they will vote. However, with a learning curve associated with any method that is new to people, some may find that they've acted too late or that the process is too difficult for them to follow through on their intentions.

NDP voters (13%) are by far the most likely to say that they will cast their ballot by mail, potentially meaning that some of these votes might not end up being cast. Green Party (9%) and Liberal voters (8%) are also more likely than PPC (4%), Conservative (3%) and Bloc (1%) voters to say they will vote by mail.

One in four (25%) say they will or have casted their ballot in an advance poll, higher among Bloc voters (31%) than Liberal (26%), NDP (25%), Conservative (23%), Green (22%) or PPC (20%) voters.

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One in four (22%) Canadians disagree that they feel safe going to vote on Election Day (down 2 points since the start of the campaign), with NDP (24%) and Green (25%) voters far and away the most likely to express this concern over Conservative (17%), Liberal (13%) Bloc (13%), and PPC (7%) voters. This could result in the NDP and Greens receiving fewer votes on E-Day than the opinion polls are suggesting.

Majority Government is Preferred Outcome, But Voters Standing By their Party Leader if Goal Isn't Achieved

Canadians have expressed their desire for a majority government, but with such a close horserace it is difficult to see how that could happen. Four in ten (41%) say that the best outcome for Canada is a majority government, while one in three (32%) believe that a minority government is the best choice. Three in ten (27%) are unsure of which option is best for the country.

With a minority the most likely outcome of the election, six in ten (59%) Canadians agree (14% strongly/45% somewhat) that they would be happy with a minority government as a result of this election, a feeling most strongly held by Bloc (80%), Green (74%), NDP (68%) and Liberal (61%) voters. Conservatives (49%) are much less thrilled with the prospect of another minority government situation.

If the Liberals win a plurality of seats, Parliament is likely to function much in the same way as it has in the prior two years. However, if the Liberals do not win a plurality of seats, Canadians are split down the middle as to whether the Conservatives (32%) or NDP (32%) would be better suited to lead the next government. In contrast, few say the Greens (4%), Bloc (2%), PPC (2%) or another party (1%) would be the best leader of a new government. Interestingly, among Liberal voters, to a two-to-one margin, they prefer a non-Liberal government to be led by the NDP (44%), not the Conservatives (20%).

Reflecting on various possibilities that could happen on Election Day...

- 59% of Canadians agree that if **Justin Trudeau and the Liberals don't win a majority government**, Trudeau should resign as party leader. However, only 33% of Liberal voters feel this way.
- 57% agree that if **Justin Trudeau and the Liberals don't win the most seats**, Trudeau should resign as party leader. Once again, only 29% of Liberal voters believe he should resign if he loses the election.
- 50% agree that if **Erin O'Toole and the Conservatives don't win the most seats**, O'Toole should resign as party leader. One in three (35%) Conservative voters feels this way.
- 37% agree that if **Jagmeet Singh and the NDP don't win the most seats**, Singh should resign as party leader. Only 13% of NDP voters hold this opinion.

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 10 and 13, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of n = 2,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. A sample of n = 1,501 was interviewed online, via the Ipsos I-Say panel and non-panel sources, and respondents earn a nominal incentive for their participation. A sample of n = 500 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed by live-interview telephone interviewers by landline and cellphone, using random-digit dialing. Quotas and weighting were 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 polls which include non-probability sampling 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 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. Ipsos abides by the disclosure standards established by the CRIC, found here:

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<https://ipsosintelligence.ca/canadiancontext/>

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