



## FACTUM

### Progressive Conservatives Pull Away from the Pack as Official Race Gets Underway

On Heels of Pre-Election Budget, PCs (39%, +4) Pull Out Ahead while Liberals (26%, -6) and NDP (25%, +2) Split Progressive Vote

**Toronto, ON, May 4, 2022** – As the official election writs are being prepared and on the heels of a budget packed with spending commitments, a new Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News has found that the Progressive Conservatives have pulled away from the rest of the pack as the Liberals and the NDP jockey for the progressive vote.

If the election were held tomorrow, the Progressive Conservative Party under Premier Doug Ford would receive 39% of the decided popular vote, up 4 points since last month but 2 points off their share of the vote in 2018. Well back from the frontrunner, the Ontario Liberal Party led by Steven Del Duca would receive 26% of the vote, which is down 6 points since last month but still ahead of the popular vote the Liberals received in the 2018 general election by 6 points. Andrea Horwath and the NDP would receive 25% of the vote, up 2 points from last month but well off the 34% they received four years ago. One in twenty voters (5%) would cast their ballot for their local Green Party candidate, while 6% have declared their support for some other party. Nearly two in ten either would not vote (5%) or remain undecided (13%).

The strong figures for the incumbent Tories are largely driven by a commanding lead in the 905 suburban region of Toronto, Ontario's most populous region:

- In the **905**, the PCs (47%) have a 21-point lead over the Liberals (26%) and NDP (20%), while the Green Party (3%) and others (3%).
- In the **416**, or Toronto proper, the Liberals (36%) have a modest lead over the PCs (32%), NDP (26%), Greens (2%) and others (5%).
- In **Southwest Ontario**, the Progressive Conservatives (38%) are well ahead of the NDP (25%), Liberals (21%), Greens (6%) and other parties (10%).
- In **Central Ontario**, the PCs (39%) are also significantly ahead of the NDP (23%), Liberals (18%), Greens (13%), and others (7%).
- In **Eastern Ontario**, the race among the Tories (37%), NDP (30%) and Liberals (25%) is closer while the Green Party (3%) and others (4%) trail.
- In **Northern Ontario**, the NDP (37%) and PCs (34%) are statistically tied, with the Liberals (15%), Greens (8%) and other (5%) behind.

The data also reveals significant differences based on gender and age:

- Among **women**, the race among the three major parties is very tight with support for the PCs (33%), NDP (30%) and Liberals (28%) bunched tightly together, while the Greens (4%) and others (7%) lag.
- **Men** are solidly in the PC camp (46%) over the Liberals (24%), NDP (20%), Greens (5%) and others (5%).
- Among those **aged 55+**, the Tories (46%) have a substantial lead over the Liberals (26%), NDP (19%), Greens (2%) and others (6%).

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- Among those **aged 35-54**, the PCs (39%) enjoy a comfortable lead over the NDP (26%), Liberals (23%), Greens (5%) and others (7%).
- Among those **aged 18-34**, the NDP (34%) has a slight advantage over the Tories (28%) and Grits (28%), with the Green Party (7%) and others (3%) trailing.

The poll also revealed that underlying support for the government remains strong and is helping to bolster Tory fortunes in the opinion polls. Half (51%) continue to **approve** (12% strongly/38% somewhat) of the performance of the Progressive Conservative government under the leadership of Premier Doug Ford.

Moreover, four in ten (40%) believe that the **Ford government has done a good job and deserves re-election**, a figure which typically tracks very closely with the percentage of the popular vote the incumbent receives on election day. Conversely, six in ten (57%) believe it's time for another party to take over at Queen's Park, while 3% don't know or refused to answer.

### *Majority Wishes They Had Different Options to Choose From*

While six in ten (60%) Ontarians agree that they **have a great deal of interest in following news and information about the upcoming election**, a majority (55%) also agrees that they wish there were different party leaders to choose from in this election – a sentiment most strongly held by current Liberal voters (60%) than those voting for the NDP (52%) or Conservatives (48%).

Ipsos polling has shown that pocketbook issues are likely to dominate the issue agenda during the election, and three quarters (74%) agree that they will be **voting for the party that has the best plan for helping make things more affordable for the middle class**. Interestingly, NDP (80%), Conservative (79%) and Liberal (78%) voters are all equally likely to say so.

There is also a prevailing sentiment among a majority (54%) of Ontarians that it's **hard for someone like them to get ahead**, a feeling held more widely among NDP (60%) voters than those voting for the Liberal (52%) or Progressive Conservatives (51%).

### *Tories Have Strong Advantage, but Not a Lock on Election*

With the official election campaign just beginning, the Progressive Conservatives clearly have the advantage. Especially since the progressive vote is so evenly split between the Liberals and NDP. But the election result is not a foregone conclusion. Campaigns matter and four weeks is a long time in politics.

Firstly, it's important to note that 13% of voters are still completely undecided about which party they'd vote for.

Secondly, only 44% of voters say that they are absolutely certain to support the party they indicated on election day, meaning that the majority (56%) of those who declared their support for a party in this poll are not locked in and still swayable. In fact, parents with kids (38%), women (40%), those 35-54 years old (38%) and those 18-34 (40%) are least likely to be absolutely certain of their choice and represent likely targets for the parties.



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Liberal (41%) and NDP (43%) voters are also much less likely to say they're absolutely certain of their choice than Progressive Conservative (49%) voters which means we're likely to see movement between these two parties before the election is over. That's why the first part of the election campaigns amounts to being a "Progressive Primary" between the Liberals and NDP. As previous elections have shown, unless a clear champion emerges to unite the progressive vote the PCs will benefit from the vote split on the left and almost certainly be re-elected in June.





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### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between April 29 and May 1, 2022, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of n = 1501 Ontarians aged 18+ was interviewed online (n = 1001 through the Ipsos I-Say panel and non panel sources) and by live-operator telephone interview (n = 500 through landline and cellphones). Online respondents earn a nominal incentive for their participation. 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  $\pm 2.9$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Ontarians 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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