
STRONG SUPPORT FOR CHAREST AS LEADER OF THE QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY

This opinion prevails in Quebec (63%) and in the rest of Canada (62%)



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This Globe and Mail/Angus Reid Group Canada-wide poll was conducted by telephone between March 4th and March 10th, 1998 among a representative cross-section of 1,500 adult Canadians; a sub-sample of 400 adult Quebecers are part of this survey.

The data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian and Quebec population according to the 1996 Census data.

With a national sample of 1,500, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within ± 2.6 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. With the Quebec sub-sample, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within ± 5.0 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within the various sub-groupings of the survey population.

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Canadians want Charest to seek the leadership of the Quebec Liberal party

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All things considered, six in ten (62%) Canadians believe it would be a “good idea” for Jean Charest to leave the leadership of the federal Progressive Conservative Party to run for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Quebec (Tables 1 and 1a). This sentiment is prevalent both inside Quebec (63%) and in the rest of Canada (62%). In the minority, one-third (33%) of Quebecers and 24% throughout the rest of the country believe that Charest’s move to provincial politics would be a “bad idea”.

Charest (58%) is the favourite candidate for the Quebec Liberal leadership

Lisa Frulla (15%) lags behind in second place

On the basis of an open-ended question, Quebecers were asked who they believe would be the best person to replace Daniel Johnson as the leader of the Quebec Liberal Party (because respondents were also invited to provide an alternate candidate, totals exceed 100%) (Table 2). Jean Charest received the resounding support of 58% of Quebecers. In second place, Lisa Frulla received 15% of total mentions and Pierre Paradis, who has recently stepped out of the race, received 10% of total mentions. One-quarter (26%) of Quebecers are undecided on this issue.

While Charest’s support is strong among all socio-demographic groups in Quebec, it is strongest among those over 55 (72%), those who have not completed high school (66%) and the most affluent (67% among those with household incomes over \$60,000). While he is still their favourite, younger Quebecers are the least likely to name Charest as the best candidate (51% among those between 18 and 34 years).

Charest's leadership positions the Quebec Liberals to win a provincial election

Charest and the Liberals fall behind the Parti Quebecois among voters between 35 and 55

Given a scenario where Jean Charest led the Liberal Party of Quebec, Lucien Bouchard led the Parti Quebecois, and Mario Dumont led the Parti Action Democratique, half (50%) of Quebecers indicate that they would support the Liberal Party if an election were held “tomorrow” (Table 3). The Parti Quebecois led by Lucien Bouchard garners the support of 37% of Quebecers and the Parti Action Democratique led by Mario Dumont captures 7% of the vote.

Fortunes for a Charest-led Liberal party vary across different socio-demographic groups. In particular, it is weakest among younger Quebecers. In fact, the Liberals fall behind the Parti Quebecois among those between 35 and 54 (39% versus 45%) and only inches ahead of the PQ among those between 18 and 34 (43% versus 40%). Charest and the Liberal party pull ahead of the pack among those over 55 years as they capture three quarters (73%) of their support (the PQ captures 20% of the vote among those over 55 years).

Although both men and women are inclined to support Charest and the Liberal Party over the other alternatives, women are stronger supporters of Charest and the Liberal Party than men are (53% versus 46% respectively).

Since the Angus Reid Group last asked Quebecers this question (February 1998), support for a Charest led Liberal party has increased from 46% to 50%. Alternately, support for the Parti Quebecois (39% to 37%) and the Parti Action Democratique (9% to 7%) have softened (Table 4).

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Full survey details are available at the Angus Reid Group website at: www.angusreid.com

Table 1

All things considered, do you think it would be a good idea or a bad idea for Jean Charest to leave the leadership of the federal Progressive Conservative Party to run for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Quebec?

	Total	Region						Age			Gender	
		BC	Alta	Sk/ Mb	On	PQ	Atl	18- 34	35- 54	55 +	Male	Female
Unweighted	1500	200	135	120	525	400	120	462	673	352	677	823
Weighted	1500	196	135	105	566	377	122	506	574	408	735	765
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Good Idea	62	59	61	59	66	63	50	60	61	67	67	57
Bad Idea	26	23	27	22	21	33	33	25	29	23	26	27

Table 1a

All things considered, do you think it would be a good idea or a bad idea for Jean Charest to leave the leadership of the federal Progressive Conservative Party to run for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Quebec?

	Total	Quebec	Rest of Canada
Unweighted	1500	400	1100
Weighted	1500	37	1123
	%	%	%
Good Idea	62	63	62
Bad Idea	26	33	24

Table 2

*First, in your view, who would be the best person to replace Daniel Johnson as the leader of the Quebec Liberal Party? ... anybody else?**

	Total (Quebec)	Age			Gender	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female
Unweighted	400	142	191	66	179	221
Weighted	377	122	151	103	184	193
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Jean Charest	58	51	54	72	56	60
Lisa Frulla	15	12	18	16	14	16
Pierre Paradis	10	4	11	17	11	10
Lucienne Robillard	3	1	2	5	5	1
Mario Dumont	1	1	1	2	1	1
Pierre Pettigrew	1	3	1	-	3	-
None	6	3	8	6	6	7
Other	7	9	9	1	12	2
Don't Know	26	38	23	16	24	28

*Base: Quebec respondents only

Table 3

Suppose Jean Charest left the leadership of the Federal Progressive Conservative Party to lead the Quebec Liberal party. If Jean Charest were to become the leader of the Liberal Party in Quebec, and if a Quebec election were held tomorrow, would you be most likely to support a candidate representing...

	Total (Quebec)	Age			Gender	
		18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female
Unweighted	400	142	191	66	179	221
Weighted	377	122	151	103	184	193
	%	%	%	%	%	%
The Liberal Party led by Jean Charest	50	43	39	73	46	53
The Parti Quebecois led by Lucien Bouchard	37	40	45	20	41	33
The Parti Action Democratique led by Mario Dumont	7	8	8	5	7	8
Don't Know	5	7	6	2	5	6
Refused	1	2	2	-	3	-

Table 4

*If Daniel Johnson stepped down as leader of the Liberals and was replaced by Jean Charest and a provincial election was held today, would you vote for (ROTATE LEADERS AND PARTIES) the Parti Quebecois lead by Lucien Bouchard, the Liberals lead by Jean Charest, or the Action Democratique lead by Mario Dumont?
(December, 1997 and February, 1998)*

*Suppose Jean Charest left the leadership of the Federal Progressive Conservative Party to lead the Quebec Liberal party. If Jean Charest were to become the leader of the Liberal Party in Quebec, and if a Quebec election were held tomorrow, would you be most likely to support a candidate representing...
(March, 1998)*

	December 1997	February 1998	March 1998
Sample	1000	1000	400
	%	%	%
The Liberal Party led by Jean Charest	49	46	50
The Parti Quebecois led by Lucien Bouchard	33	39	37
The Parti Action Democratique led by Mario Dumont	12	9	7
Don't Know	6	5	5
Refused	2	2	1