

# BC ELECTION DAY NEARS - PART IV

## BC-STV

*Two-Thirds Still Know Very Little or Nothing About BC-STV*  
*“Yes” Side Widens Lead Over “No” Side*



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#### *Two-Thirds Still Know Very Little or Nothing About BC-STV*

#### *“Yes” Side Widens Lead Over “No” Side*

**Vancouver, BC**— British Columbians have not become any more familiar with BC-STV over the course of this election campaign, according to a new Ipsos-Reid survey conducted on behalf of BCTV News, The Vancouver Sun and The Victoria Times Colonist. Two-thirds (66%, up 2 points from early in the campaign) of British Columbians still say they know “very little” or “nothing” about the proposed BC-STV system.

While knowledge of BC-STV hasn’t improved, the chances of the referendum passing have improved over the last few weeks. The “Yes” side (45%, up 3 points) has opened up an 8-point lead over the “No” side (37%, down 1 point) on the referendum question, “Should British Columbia change to the BC-STV electoral system as recommended by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform?”

Among decided voters (excluding the 17% who won’t vote or who have no opinion) the “Yes” side leads by 55% to 45%, just short of the 60% threshold to pass the referendum.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid telephone poll conducted May 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005 with a randomly selected sample of 1,050 adult British Columbia residents, including 400 residents of Vancouver Island. The overall results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire BC adult population been polled. The Vancouver Island results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to the 2001 Census.*

## ***Two-Thirds Still Know Very Little or Nothing About BC-STV***

British Columbians still have a lot to learn about the proposed new electoral system called BC-STV. Two-thirds (66%, up 2 points) of British Columbians say they know either “very little” (40%, up 1 point) or “nothing” (25%, unchanged) about the BC-STV, or single vote transferable vote electoral system. About one-third (34%, down 2 points) say they know either “a great deal” (6%, up 2 points) or “a fair amount” (28%, down 3 points) about BC-STV.

Some regional and demographic groups are more likely to know “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about BC-STV, including Vancouver Island residents (45% vs. 34% overall), older residents (42% 55+ years vs. 22% 18-34 years, 35% 35-54 years) and higher income residents (42% \$75K+ vs. 25% <\$40K, 34% \$40-\$75K).

## ***“Yes” Side Widens Lead Over “No” Side***

The “Yes” side has doubled its lead over the “No” side from 4-points to 8-points. Currently, 45% (up 3 points) of residents say they intend to vote “Yes” to the referendum question, “Should British Columbia change to the BC-STV electoral system as recommended by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform?” while 37% of residents say they intend to vote “No”. The remaining residents are undecided (14%) or do not intend to vote at all (3%) on the referendum question.

Support for the “Yes” side is highest among Green Party supporters (60%) and Vancouver Island residents (54%).

Support for the “Yes” side also increases with knowledge of BC-STV.

- Among those who know “a great deal” or “a fair amount”, the “Yes” side leads the “No” side by 69% to 28% (3% undecided/won’t vote).
- Among those who know “very little”, the “Yes” side trails the “No” side by 39% to 42% (19% undecided/won’t vote).
- Among those who know “nothing”, the “Yes” side trails the “No” side by 24% to 41% (35% undecided/won’t vote).

Among decided voters (excluding the 17% who won’t vote or who have no opinion) the “Yes” side leads by 55% to 45%, just short of the 60% threshold to pass the referendum.

## *The Vancouver Island Perspective*

As part of this Ipsos-Reid poll, The Victoria Times Colonist commissioned an additional “oversample” of Island residents to bring the total Vancouver Island sample size to 400, including 200 residents in the Capital Region District (CRD) and 200 residents in the rest of the Island.

**Knowledge:** Vancouver Island residents are more familiar with BC-STV than residents in the rest of the province. Forty-five percent say they know either “a great deal” (6%) or “a fair amount” (39%) about BC-STV, 11-points higher than for the province as a whole. Still, a majority (55%) of Island residents say they know either “very little” (38%) or “nothing” (17%) about the BC-STV.

- CRD residents say they are more knowledgeable (50% “great deal” or “fair amount”) than their counterparts in the rest of Vancouver Island (40%).

**Vote on Referendum:** The highest levels of support for BC-STV are found on Vancouver Island, both in the CRD and the rest of the Island. Overall, a slight majority (54%) of Island residents intend to vote “Yes” compared to 34% who intend to vote “No”. Twelve percent of residents say they are undecided (10%) or do not intend to vote (2%) on the referendum question.

- In the CRD, the “Yes” side leads the “No” side by 56% to 35% (9% undecided/won’t vote).
- In the Rest of the Island, the “Yes” side leads the “No” side by 52% to 33% (15% undecided/won’t vote).

Among decided Island voters (excluding the 12% who won’t vote or who have no opinion) the “Yes” side leads by 61% to 39%, just above the 60% threshold to pass the referendum.

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