

# **At the Gate: National Race Tightens as Canadians**

## **Contemplate Going to the Polls**

*Conservatives (33%) Just Edge Liberals (31%), Followed By*

*NDP (16%), Green (10%)*

*Tories (21%) Trail Bloc (34%) and Grits (27%) in Quebec as*

*Liberals Open 12 Point Lead in Ontario*

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**Ipsos Reid**

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**Ottawa, ON** – As a potential Federal election looms, triggered by Prime Minister Stephen Harper who decries a “dysfunctional parliament” and a Liberal “Green Shift Carbon Tax” that would damage the economy, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted exclusively on behalf of CanWest News Service and Global Television finds that the Conservatives (33%, down 3 points since August 14, 2008) are just slightly ahead with what otherwise might be considered a statistical tie of Stephane Dion’s Liberal’s (31%, up one point) nationally among decided voters if an election were to happen tomorrow. The NDP under Jack Layton would receive 16% of the vote (up 2 points), while the Green Party led by Elizabeth May would receive support from one in ten (10%, unchanged) Canadians. Nine percent (9%) of Canadians remain undecided.

In perhaps an acknowledgement of Conservative polling that shows similar numbers, Prime minister Harper this past week suggested that the outcome might produce another minority government for his party – but with a fresh mandate to govern.

Potentially worrisome for the Prime Minister's strategists should be seat-rich Ontario where the Liberals (41%, up 6 points) have opened up a 12 point lead over the Conservatives (29%, down 4 points), while the NDP (16%) and Green Party (13%) trail.

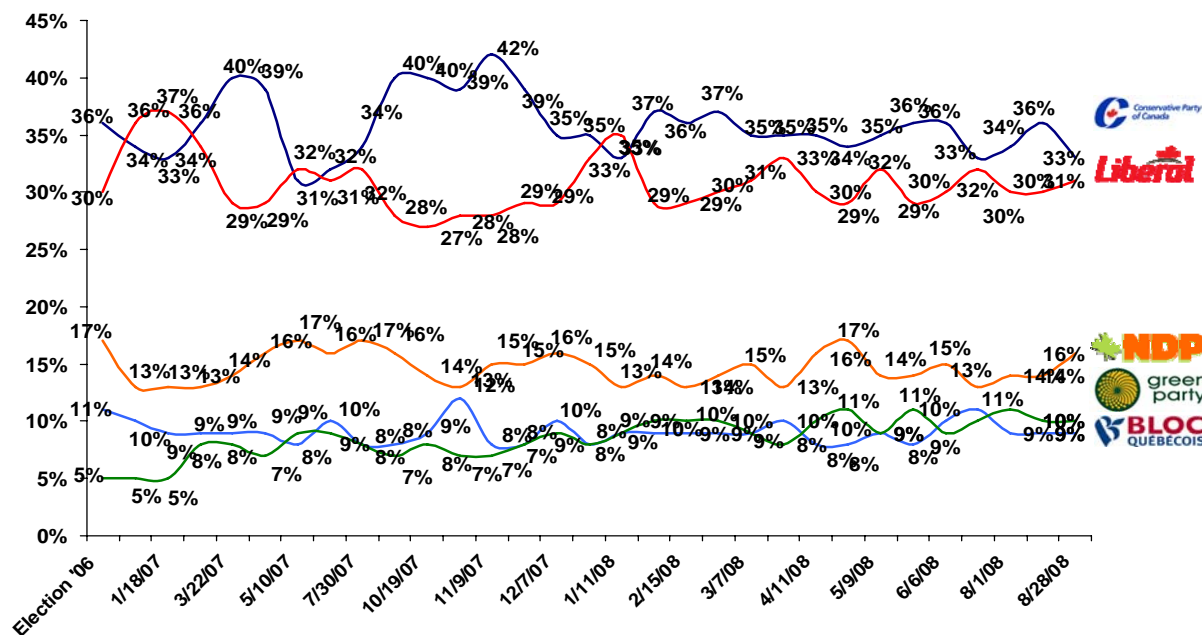
Also, while the Bloc remains in the lead (34%, unchanged) in the other crucial battleground Quebec, the Liberals (27%, up 2 points) have opened up a six point lead on the Conservatives (21%, down 4 points). The NDP is receiving support from 10% of Quebecers (up one point), while the Green Party (8%) trails.

**Other Regional Highlights include:**

- In **Atlantic Canada**, the NDP (37%) leads with the Liberals at 29%, followed by the Conservatives (23%) and Green Party (7%)
- In **British Columbia**, the Conservatives lead with 45% of the decided vote, followed by the Liberals (25%), the NDP (16%) and the Green Party (13%)
- In **Alberta**, the Conservatives have a massive lead (71%) followed by the Liberals (15%), the NDP (7%) and the Green party (6%)
- In **Saskatchewan and Manitoba**, the Conservatives lead with 40% of the decided vote, followed by the NDP (32%), the Liberals (24%) and the Green Party (4%)

# Federal Vote Support

Aug 28, 2008, percentage of decided voters.



CanWest News Service/Global News Ipsos Reid Survey, Aug 26 – Aug 28, 2008. Decided voters including leaners (897).

9% of all Canadian adults (n=1003) are undecided

## Does the Harper Government Deserve to be Re-elected?

Despite the fact that the Harper Conservatives only lead slightly in the decided vote column, it would appear that many more Canadians (44%) believe that "the Conservative Party under Stephen Harper has done a good job and deserves re-election" compared to 48% who believe that "the Conservative Party does not deserve to be re-elected and it's time for another federal party to be given a chance to govern the country". Even in Ontario -- where the Liberals hold a 12 point lead -- 42% believe that the Harper government deserves re-election, almost the same (43%) as in Québec.



## ***Is it Time For an Election?***

Not much has changed in the view of Canadians over the last two weeks:

Four in 10 (41%, up one point) Canadians believe that "Parliament and our federal political process is hopelessly deadlocked right now and that we really need an election to clear the air". This compares with 55% (down one point) who think "the federal political process is operating just fine at the moment [and] there's no need for election".

## ***What's Motivating the call for an Election?***

Two weeks ago 40% of Canadians agreed with the Prime Minister's assertion that "the House of Commons is no longer working and that it's time to clear the air", but as of this week that has fallen to 34% (down six points).

In fact, 57% believe that the reason an election is being called is because "the Conservatives have a better chance of winning now than they would in October of 2009] whereas 9% don't know either way.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of CanWest News Service and Global Television from August 26 to August 28, 2008. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1003 adult Canadians was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of Canada been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data.*



Ipsos Reid

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