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Greens (10%, down 5 points)*

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(11%) say Party Leader is Main Reason for Vote*

Support for BC-STV Plummet (52% Status Quo vs. 33% STV)



Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, BC – With only a few days remaining in the BC Election campaign, a new Ipsos Reid poll reveals the race is tightening, but the BC Liberals are still heavy favourites to win a third consecutive majority government. The NDP currently has the support of 39% of decided voters, an increase of 4 percentage points from a March Ipsos Reid pre-election poll. However, the BC Liberals continue to lead at 47% support (up 1 point), 8 points ahead of the NDP. Green Party support has fallen to 10%, down 5 points from March. These results exclude the 11% of British Columbians who are undecided or express no preference.

- The BC Liberals lead by 15 points in the Lower Mainland (51% Lib vs. 36% NDP), while the two main parties are effectively tied in the rest of the province (41% Lib vs. 43% NDP).
- There continues to be a substantial gender gap in voter preferences. Men favour the BC Liberals by 16 points (51% Lib vs. 35% NDP), while women are equally split between the two main parties (43% Lib vs. 43% NDP).

Decided Vote Tracking

	May 09	Mar 09	Nov 08	Jun 08	Mar 08	Dec 07	Sep 07	Jun 07	Apr 07	Dec 06	Sep 06	Jun 06	Mar 06	Dec 05	Sep 05	Vote 05
BC Libs	47%	46%	44%	47%	46%	45%	46%	45%	49%	45%	47%	51%	43%	43%	42%	46%
NDP	39%	35%	35%	33%	34%	35%	36%	36%	32%	36%	37%	35%	40%	41%	39%	42%
Green	10%	15%	16%	16%	16%	16%	15%	15%	15%	16%	13%	10%	12%	13%	13%	9%
Other	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%	5%	3%

Likely Voters: There are a couple of ways to look at the firmness of the vote. One measure is to look at voters who are most likely to go out and vote on Election Day. Looking only at voters who say they are “absolutely certain to vote” (66% of British Columbians), the BC Liberal lead expands to 11 points among decided voters (Lib 49%, NDP 38%, Green 11%).

Vote Switching: A second measure of vote strength is to look at the percentage of each party’s supporters who might still change their mind. Overall, two-in-ten (21%) decided voters say there is still a good chance they will change their mind and vote for some other party’s candidate on Election Day. Vote support is firmest among BC Liberal voters (15% might change mind) and weakest among Green supporters (32% might change mind). Almost one-quarter (24%) of NDP voters say there is a good chance they might change their mind.

Leadership: Gordon Campbell (50%) leads Carole James (33%) by a wide 17 point margin as the leader who would make the best Premier of British Columbia. Green Party leader Jane Sterk lags at 5% support, with 13% undecided.

The importance of leadership is downplayed by the finding that only 11% of decided voters say the party leader is their main reason for supporting their vote choice. Nearly half (49%) of voters say their choice is based mostly on a party’s stance on the issues. Two-in-ten (21%) say they are supporting a particular party because of their local candidate, while 19% cite other reasons.

Electoral Referendum: It does not appear that BC-STV has much chance of passing. Only 33% of British Columbians say they plan to vote for BC-STV, while 52% plan to vote for the existing First-Past-The-Post system. Fifteen percent said they are undecided or will not vote in the referendum.

A March Ipsos Reid survey conducted for No STV had support for STV at 43% (10 points higher than today) compared to 41% (11 points lower than today) for the existing electoral system.

Among decided voters only, 61% say they will vote for the existing electoral system, compared to 39% for STV. Support for STV is strong among Green voters (65% support STV), split among NDP voters (47% support STV) and weak among BC Liberal voters (25% support STV).

Two-in-ten (21%) decided voters say there is still a good chance they will change their mind and vote for the other referendum option on Election Day, including 22% of First-Past-The-Post supporters and 19% of STV supporters.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid telephone poll conducted between May 4 and 7, 2009. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of BC been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and 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 2006 Census data.

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