

Just Two in Ten (18%, Up 1 Point) Say Senate Should Stay the Way It Is

Half (49%) Want to See Senate Reformed and Elected (Down 8 Points),

One Third (33%, Up 7 Points) Want Senate Abolished

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Toronto, ON – Just two in ten (18%) believe that the Senate should be left alone and should be kept as is as an appointed body, up 1 point from 2007, according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Postmedia News and Global National.

Fully one in three (33%) Canadians want to see the senate done away with completely. By comparison, a 2007 Ipsos Reid poll revealed that 26% of those who had an opinion wanted to do away with the Senate.

The most popular option for the Senate is reform, with one half (49%) of Canadians indicating that their preference is to have an elected Senate. With more Canadians now favouring abolishment than before, fewer Canadians now than in 2007 (57%) favour reform.

Senate reform has been in the news a lot recently, with NDP Leader Jack Layton arguing that the Senate is simply a reward for party faithful, campaign strategists, and failed candidates of the governing party. His ultimate goal is to abolish the Senate, a concept that is gaining steam among the Canadian public, but has said he will settle with reform, the more popular concept.

Doing away with the Senate is most popular in Quebec (45%), followed by Atlantic Canada (35%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (33%), Ontario (29%), British Columbia (28%) and Alberta (23%).

Those most likely to favour an elected Senate are Albertans (59%), British Columbians (54%), Ontarians (51%) and those living in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (51%). A minority of Atlantic Canadians (46%) and Quebecers (39%) favour an elected Senate.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between January 24 to 27, 2011, on behalf of Postmedia News and Global Television. For this survey, a sample of 1,006 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and 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. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults who drive and have a car in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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