

# **While Half (51%) Believe Ontario Heading on Right Track (+19 Points from One Year Ago), Just One Third (34%) Say McGuinty Government Has Done a Good Job and Deserves Re-Election**

***PC Hudak (38%, +1) Continues to Lead as Ontarian's Choice for Best Premier But Incumbent Liberal Premier McGuinty (33%, +4) Closing the Gap***

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## **While Half (51%) Believe Ontario Heading on Right Track (+19 Points from One Year Ago), Just One Third (34%) Say McGuinty Government Has Done a Good Job and Deserves Re-Election**

### ***PC Hudak (38%, +1) Continues to Lead as Ontarian's Choice for Best Premier But Incumbent Liberal Premier McGuinty (33%, +4) Closing the Gap***

**Toronto, ON** - With the writ dropping for the Ontario Election on September 7<sup>th</sup> and the official campaign for the fixed Election Day of October 6<sup>th</sup> nearly underway, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Postmedia News, Global Television and CFRB Radio NewsTalk 1010 suggests that the gap between the two leading parties - and leaders - is closing, and that the campaign is shaping up to be a tight horserace that is still to be either won or lost.

One half (51%) of Ontarians believe that the province is heading on the right track, a marked improvement of 19 points since this time last year. Conversely, one half (49%) believe that the province is heading in the wrong direction, a drop of 19 points in one year.

Even with the general improvement in sentiment, just one in three (34%) more closely believe that the 'McGuinty government has done a good job and deserves re-election', a proportion that typically aligns quite closely with popular vote support. In contrast, two in three (66%) say it's 'time for another political party to take over'.

Four in ten (38%) say that Tim Hudak would make the best Premier of Ontario (up 1 point since August 2010), compared to one in three (33%) who believe that current Premier Dalton McGuinty would make the best leader of the province (up 4 points), narrowing the gap to 5 points from 8 points a year ago. One quarter (24%) believe that NDP leader Andrew Horwath is best suited for that role of Premier (up 3 points), while Green Party leader Mike Schreiner's share of the vote has dropped to 5% (down 8 points).

In anticipation of next month's election campaign, over the weekend Ipsos Reid undertook a flash sample update on vote intentions in Ontario, gathering 400 completes (instead of the typical 800 completes). The numbers suggest a tightening of the horserace between the leading Progressive Conservatives and the incumbent Liberals. Based on this sample, if the election were to be held tomorrow, Tim Hudak and the Progressive Conservatives would garner 38% of the vote among decided voters (down 4 points), compared to 36% for Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals (up 5 points). Andrea Horwath's NDP would receive 23% of the vote (up 1 point), while Mike Schreiner and the Green Party would receive 3% of the vote (down 2 points). One in ten (9%) Ontarians are undecided.

Tim Hudak also continues to lead on various positive leadership attributes, although there has been a general, if not slight, improvement in McGuinty's numbers in the last year, meaning that the gap between the two leaders has been shrinking.

- **Someone who is best to manage the economy:** Hudak (42%, -1), McGuinty (32%, +3), Horwath (21%, unchanged), Schreiner (5%, -2).
- **Someone who is best to manage taxpayers dollars:** Hudak (42%, +4), McGuinty (32%, +7), Horwath (22%, +1), Schreiner (5%, -10).

- **Someone who will get things done:** Hudak (39%, -2), McGuinty (32%, +1), Horwath (25%, +5), Schreiner (5%, -4).
- **Someone who has a vision of Ontario that you can support:** Hudak (38%, -2), McGuinty (31%, +7), Horwath (25%, +2), Schreiner (6%, -7).
- **Someone who is best to manage the future of the provincial healthcare system:** Hudak (36%, -1), McGuinty (30%, +5), Horwath (30%, +4), Schreiner (4%, -8).
- **Someone you can trust:** Hudak (35%, +2), McGuinty (29%, +2), Horwath (29%, +4), Schreiner (7%, -8).
- **Someone who has what it takes to lead Ontario:** Hudak (38% -3), McGuinty (35%, +5), Horwath (23%, +3), Schreiner (4%, -5).
- **Someone who is open to the ideas of others:** Hudak (33%, +5), Horwath (30%, +3), McGuinty (29%, +9), Schreiner (8%, -17).
- **Someone who knows when to compromise for the greater good:** Hudak (34%, +1), McGuinty (32%, +4), Horwath (29%, +3), Schreiner (5%, -7).

There is one leadership attribute, however, where Premier Dalton McGuinty bests his rivals, although there has been a significantly tightening since last year:

- **Someone who has a hidden agenda:** McGuinty (46%, -10), Hudak (35%, +11), Horwath (14%, +2), Schreiner (6%, -2).

*These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between July 29 and August 4, 2011, on behalf of Postmedia News, Global Television and CFRB Newstalk 1010. For this survey, a sample of*



899 Ontarians from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and political composition to 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 +/-3.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Ontario 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.

For the flash poll sample, a representative randomly selected sample of 400 adults living in Ontario was interviewed by telephone from August 5 to 8, 2011. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population living in Ontario been polled.

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