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Political Support as Tories (37%) Maintain Large Lead  
Over NDP (29%), Liberals (23%)  
*Half (51%) Say Country on Right Track,  
Down 6 Points since Election Campaign***

**Public Release Date: Sunday, March 11, 2012, 11:00 AM EDT**



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**Toronto, ON** – Despite a tumultuous month in Ottawa due to recent announcements and scandals, the overall political landscape in Canada has yet to change in a significant way since the last federal election in May of last year, according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Postmedia News and Global Television.

In the wake of accusations levied against the Tories about orchestrating a conspiracy to suppress opposition votes in the last election through robo-calling, the Conservatives under Stephen Harper continue to enjoy a comfortable lead over their rivals with 37% of support among decided voters, unchanged since last November. The NDP under interim Leader Nycole Turmel would receive 29% of the vote (down 2 points), and the Liberals led by interim leader Bob Rae would garner 23% of the vote if an election were held tomorrow (up 2 points). The Bloc Quebecois under Daniel Paillé would receive 7% of the vote, up 1 point, while Elizabeth May's Green Party would muster 4% support, also up 1 point.

While political fortunes might ebb and flow from week to week with a great deal of short-term volatility, the overall trend appears to be stable. From the robo-calling scandal to Wikileaks scandal, decisions to examine raising the age of eligibility for old-age security to 67 and the controversial introduction of bill C-30, 2012 has seen its share of controversy, but these controversies have only had a modest impact on the government's level of support.

Overall, nearly half (47%) of Canadians 'approve' (10% strongly/37% somewhat) of the performance of the Conservative government under the leadership of Prime Minister Harper, suggesting that the government draws at least some public support from those who may not have voted for a Conservative candidate in the last election. Conversely, 52% 'disapprove' (24% strongly/28% somewhat) of the government's performance, and 1% don't know. The last time this particular question was asked was in 2006, when 54% approved of the newly-elected Conservative minority government's performance at the time.

Furthermore, thinking specifically about the performance of Stephen Harper, half (48%) say they 'approve' (13% strongly/35% somewhat) of his handling of the Prime Minister's job (unchanged since last month), while the other half (51%) 'disapprove' (24% strongly/28% somewhat). One percent (1%) don't know.

Overall, a slim majority (51%) of Canadians believe this country is heading on the right track. By comparison, during the federal election campaign, 57% of Canadians believed the country was on the right track. Conversely, 48% currently believe the country is headed in the wrong direction.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Postmedia News and Global Television from March 6 to 8, 2011. For the survey, a representative randomly-selected sample of 1,001 adult Canadians was interviewed by telephone, and 2,153 interviews were conducted online via the Ipsos I-say panel. Ipsos merged the two sample sources and employed weighting to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflected that of the adult population according to Census data. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of sample of  $\pm 2$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error would be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. All sample*

surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to, methodology change, coverage error and measurement error.

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