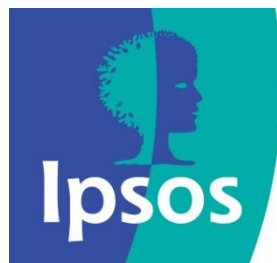


At The Midpoint: The Federal Canadian Landscape

Part II

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At The Midpoint: The Federal Canadian Landscape

Part II

Toronto, ON – With the Harper government at the halfway point in its majority mandate, a new CTV/Ipsos Reid survey shows the three main political parties clustered within a range of just five points among decided voters, and the underlying numbers indicate that at this time no single party has a lock on anything – other than the incumbent government which can use a Cabinet shuffle, the tools of parliament and its party apparatus to create some of its own winning conditions at the polls two years from now.

But the Ipsos Reid poll shows the Harper Conservatives are clearly in political trouble at this time in their mandate as switch voters have moved to the Liberals.

The poll also introduces two sets of reporting numbers that will now become standard for reporting political polls at Ipsos Reid: the first set being the total of just “decided voters” and the second set is of voters who are most likely to turn up and vote at the ballot box. The overall undecided is 15%.

The current poll findings show the total decided vote at:

Liberals – 33%, Conservatives – 30%, New Democrats – 28%, Bloc Quebecois – 6% , Green Party – 3% and Other – 1%.

But when the voter turnout calculation is applied the Liberal lead widens:

Liberals – 35%, Conservatives – 29%, New Democrats – 26%, Bloc Quebecois – 5% , Green Party – 3% and Other – 1%.

With a multi-party system, it's instructive to note that no single party needs a majority to win a majority government. In fact, the current sitting government won its 53.9% majority of the seats in parliament with just 39.62% of the vote. Putting this in perspective, six in 10 Canadian voters could wake every morning and have views contrary to the government of the day yet the other four in 10 by breakfast can keep the government of the day in power.

As such, when assessing the strength of the incumbent government, it's not the weekly or monthly shift in the top line vote numbers that matter that much heading towards an election day far out on the horizon, but rather the subtleties and the nuance of things like approval, leadership, direction and the character assessment of the party itself. And on top of that, geography plays a critical role where parties can have large support in a region that boosts its national numbers only to find it produces a marginal numbers of seats.

The Top Line Vote—A Snapshot in Time...

Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party continue to lead in voter support – but that lead has slipped over the last month with the parties now in a tight cluster range of just five points.

The Liberals are supported by 33% (down 3 points) of decided voters to the Conservatives at 30% (no change) and the Mulcair-led New Democratic Party at 28% (up 1 point). A further 6% (up 2 points) indicate they'd support the Bloc Quebecois, while 3% would support the Greens or another party (1%).

Regionally, the Conservatives are still the top choice in Alberta (60%, up 5 points), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (46%, up 10 points), British Columbia (33%, up 3 points), and tied with the Liberals for the lead in Ontario (34%, - 1 point).

The Liberals have lost ground in British Columbia (30%, down 4 points), Alberta (22%, down 2 points), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (21%, down 11 points), Ontario (34%, down 1 point) and Quebec (34%, down 5 points), while they've made slight gains in Atlantic Canada (53%, up 2 points).

While the NDP have made gains in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (23%, up 5 points), and Ontario (29%, up 2 points) over the last month, they have seen dips in British Columbia (29%, down 1 point), Alberta (13%, down 4 points), and Atlantic Canada (19%, down 6 points). NDP gains in Quebec (34%, up 5 points) now places them tied with the Liberals as the province's top choice.

Interestingly, the Bloc Quebecois (23%) have seen an 8 point gain in their home province, likely coming from the dip in support for Liberal and Conservative supporters in the region.

Voters Who Indicate they would Actually Go Out and Vote are Key on Election Day...

Anyone can say they will vote for a party, but the real question for politicians (and pollsters for that matter) is to try and determine who is actually going to turn up and mark their ballot. On the heels of the British Columbia provincial election campaign where old turnout models proved volatile or inadequate to measure the true outcome, it's critical that the pure group of "turn out and turn up" voters be identified and monitored.

Testing a new voter "turn out and turn up" model, Ipsos Reid found that six in ten (59%) Canadians believe that nothing short of an unforeseen emergency could stop them from getting to the voting booth and casting a vote, closely mirroring the 61.1% voter turnout rate in the 2011 election. The remaining bulk of Canadians are divided into two in ten (20%) who

say they'll do their best to vote, but sometimes things get in the way; one in ten might vote, but won't make a special effort to do so (8%); as many who probably won't vote (7%); and, six percent (6%) who say they definitely won't vote in the next election.

Liberal supporters (75%) are the most likely to indicate that nothing barring an unforeseen emergency will prevent them from getting to the polls, ahead of both Conservative (69%) and NDP (66%) supporters, meaning that they're likely to get an election-day bonus if they can mobilize their get-out-the-vote teams.

What Does it All Mean at the Ballot Box for the Parties if a Vote Were Held Tomorrow?

They say that a week in politics is a lifetime – and the next Federal election is still just under two years from now so the political timeframe is, well, almost infinity. Anything can happen – just look at the huge long standing margin that NDP leader Adrian Dix had in British Columbia that crashed to earth during the writ. Ergo, campaigns matter.

But it's instructive to note that if decided voters are measured as noted above, the Liberals are supported by 33% compared to the Conservatives at 30% and the New Democratic Party at 28% (with a further 6% who indicate they'd support the Bloc Quebecois and another 4% who would support another party, including the Green Party). But what would the "turn out and turn up" outcome look like?

Right now, with a 60% turnout rate and with those most likely to "turn up" at the ballot box, voters could look like this: **Liberals – 35%, Conservatives – 29%, New Democrats – 26%, Bloc Quebecois – 5%, Green Party – 3% and Other – 1%**



The Switch Voters...

And while the top line of vote seems to ebb and flow from poll to poll, it's with good reason and foundation: not every "decided" voter is a firmly "committed" voter. These are voters who really haven't yet settled on a place to cast their final and decisive vote and tend to harden up during an official election campaign, usually in the back half after the leaders' debates (again, just under two years out from now). In essence, these are the voters that the parties fight over to woo and keep because they are most likely to go out and vote but the real question is for whom at the end of the day.

Among the three major parties, Conservative supporters (7%) are the least likely to say their vote is up for grabs with Liberal supporters in-between at 17% while NDP supporters are most likely to say their vote is for the taking (21%), meaning that they are the most likely to switch their support.

The Bottom Line...

Overall, the race looks close. The Grits have determined supporters but they aren't where they need to be geographically. They are strong in Atlantic, are tied in Quebec with the NDP, are tied in Ontario, and are losing everywhere else. The NDP also have an inefficient vote on a geographic basis. A split opposition, especially one that splits this way geographically, helps the Tories. The CPC, on the other hand, remains strong in its Western base and is tied with the Grits in Ontario. Also, the NDP is in the game in Ontario which will give the Tories some necessary three-way splits.



While the Senate scandal has clearly hurt the Tories, their descent has stopped. Also, their approval numbers have popped (barely) above 40 again which, when combined with their incumbency, means they're still in the game for re-election.

However, the data reveal that the Grits are the most determined to show up to the polls, with the Tories being less likely to consider another party. The new Ipsos 'turn out and turn up' model indicates that if a vote were held today, the Liberals (35%) would emerge victorious, ahead of the Tories (29%) and the NDP (26%). This suggests that, for the moment, those who want the Tories out are clustering around the Grits.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between June 21st to 25th, 2013, on behalf of CTV News. For this survey, a sample of 1,177 Canadians from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics 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. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/-3.3 percentage points had all Canadians adults 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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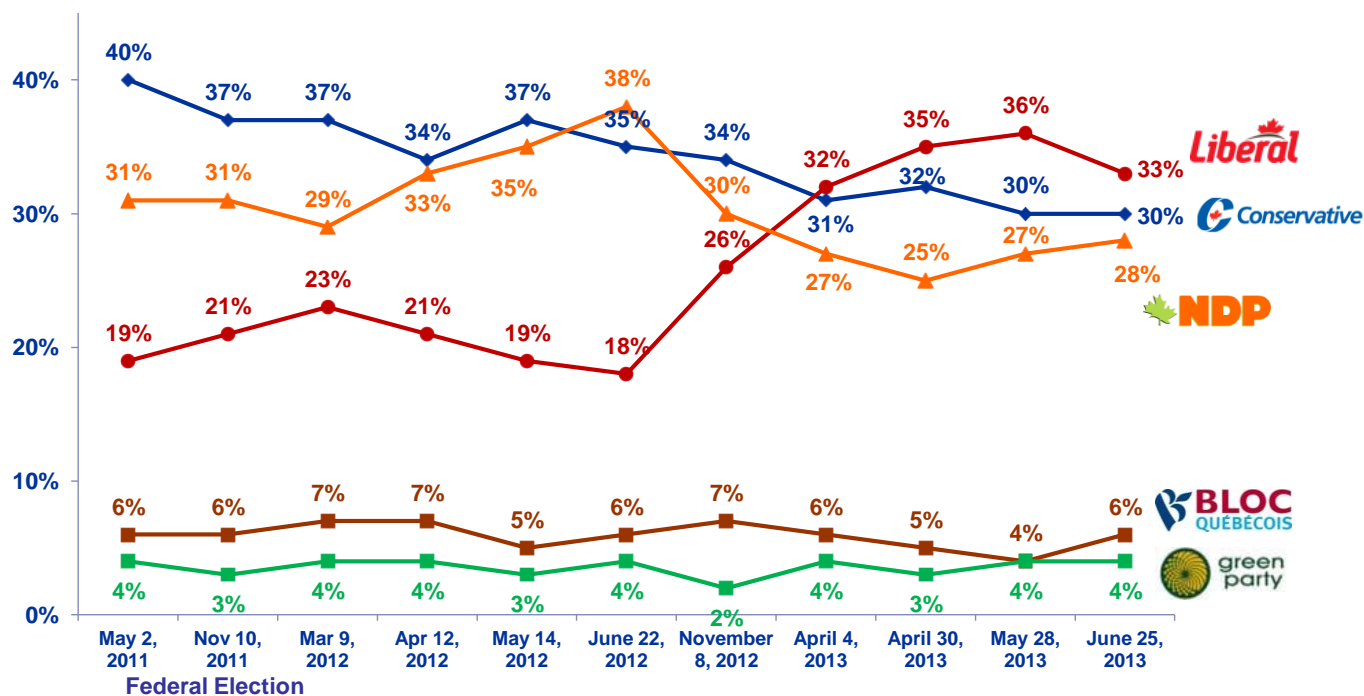
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2013 Federal Vote Support

Jun 25th, 2013, percentage of decided voters (no turnout model)



CTV/Ipsos Reid Survey, June 21 to 25, 2013. Decided voters including learners (n=903).

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