

Four in Ten (40%) Voters Struggle to Differentiate Among Canada's Political Parties, Particularly Between the Liberals and NDP

*But NDP Seen as Different Party from Ten Years Ago,
Most View Conservatives as Same Old Party,
Voters Equally Split on Liberal Party*

Public Release Date: Friday, September 4, 2015, 2:00 pm EDT



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Toronto, ON – Four in ten (40%) eligible voters in Canada ‘agree’ (9% strongly/31% somewhat) that ‘all of the major political parties are basically the same’, according to an Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News. However, six in ten (60%) ‘disagree’ (26% strongly/34% somewhat) that this is the case, believing that the parties are distinguished enough in their policies to tell them apart.

Some parties are better differentiated than others:

- Four in ten (42%) ‘agree’ (9% strongly/33% somewhat) that ‘it’s hard to tell the difference **between the policies of the NDP and the Liberals**’, reinforcing the notion that the centre-left of the political spectrum in Canada is crowded and has led to vote splitting to the benefit of the Conservatives. Six in ten (58%) ‘disagree’ (15% strongly/43% somewhat) that it’s difficult to tell the policies of these two parties apart. Even one in in three NDP (31%) and Liberal (33%) voters agree, although that’s still less than the majority (54%) of Tory voters who struggle to tell the two apart.
- One in three (31%) ‘agree’ (6% strongly/25% somewhat) that ‘it’s hard to tell the difference **between the policies of the Liberals and the Conservatives**’, while two in three (69%) ‘disagree’ (30% strongly/39% somewhat). Only two in ten Grit (23%) and

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Tory (19%) voters agree the two parties are very similar, but 35% of NDP voters feel this way.

- One quarter (23%) ‘agree’ (4% strongly/19% somewhat) that ‘it’s hard to tell the **difference between the policies of the NDP and the Conservatives**’, while most (77%) ‘disagree’ (41% strongly/36% somewhat), considering they have traditionally been on the opposite sides of the Canadian mainstream political spectrum.

While it’s important for political parties to differentiate themselves to voters, it’s likely also important for parties to be responsive to voters and adapt to the times. In this regard, it appears the **NDP** has done the best job at reinventing itself, with a majority (56%) ‘disagreeing’ (15% strongly/41% somewhat) that ‘the NDP is basically the same as it was ten years ago’. A minority (44%) ‘agrees’ (12% strongly/32% somewhat) the party is the same as it used to be.

In stark contrast, most (68%) voters ‘agree’ (26% strongly/42% somewhat) that ‘the **Conservative Party** is basically the same as it was ten years ago’, while one in three (32%) ‘disagrees’ (8% strongly/24% somewhat) with this premise. The Conservative party is the only party that has the same leader now as a decade ago. Interestingly, Tory voters are split on whether the party is basically the same (56%) or not (44%).

When it comes to the **Liberal Party**, voters are equally split overall: one half (50%) agrees (15% strongly/35% somewhat) that it’s basically the same as ten years ago, while the other half (50%) disagrees (11% strongly/39% somewhat) that it’s the same party. However, most (67%) Liberal voters believe it’s a different party than the one ten years ago.



These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between August 24 to 26, 2015 on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,000 Canadians eligible to vote was interviewed online via the Ipsos I-Say Panel. 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 +/- 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all eligible voters been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. 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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