

## Federal Politics: As Liberal support bleeds to other parties, CPC vote stays solid

*Trudeau's favourability among the public continues to sink alongside Liberal fortunes*

**March 28, 2019** – Two months of scandal have eroded support for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Liberal Party, opening up a nine-point lead among Canadian voters who say they would vote for the Conservative Party of Canada if an election were held tomorrow.

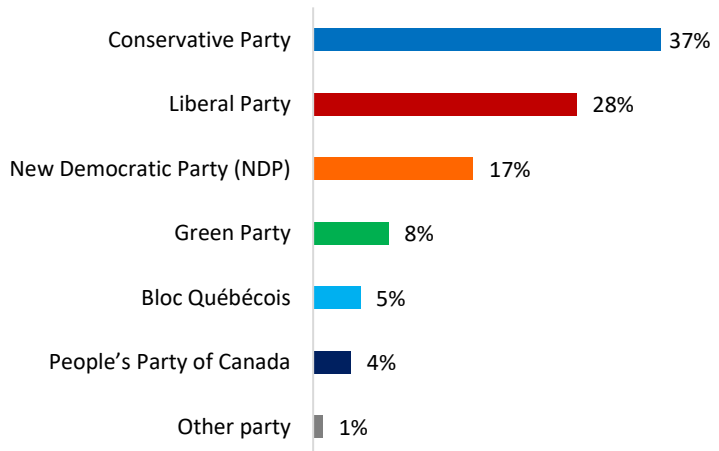
This, according to a new analysis of public opinion polling data by the non-profit Angus Reid Institute. The data was donated to ARI by [Angus Reid Global Public Affairs](#).

The Conservatives capture 37 per cent of the decided and leaning vote – essentially unchanged from where they stood last month – but it is the governing Liberals who have dropped three points to 28 per cent as the SNC-Lavalin affair has remained in the headlines.

The principal beneficiaries of this decline in Liberal support appear to be the New Democratic Party and smaller parties, including the Green Party and the People's Party of Canada.

These parties are seeing their fortunes rise as the Canadian public expresses unfavourable views of the main parties and their leaders.

### Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only (n=5289)



#### **METHODOLOGY:**

The Angus Reid Institute analyzed the results of an online survey conducted from March 11 – 25, 2019, among a representative, randomized sample of 5,807 Canadian adults who are members of the [Angus Reid Forum](#). The sample plan included large oversamples in some regions, which were then weighted back to provide a national snapshot. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size, with this sample plan, would carry a margin of error of +/- 2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Regional sub-samples would carry higher margins of error. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was conducted by Angus Reid Global and donated to the Angus Reid Institute. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

#### **More Key Findings:**

- More Canadians have a favourable view of CPC leader Andrew Scheer (44% do) and New Democratic Party leader Jagmeet Singh (39%) than Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (36%)
- Demographics are a huge driver of partisanship, with men and older Canadians skewing much more Conservative, while women and younger Canadians are more likely to be sticking with the Liberals or choosing other left-of-centre parties

#### **CONTACT:**

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
Ian Holliday, Research Associate: 604.442.3312 [ian.holliday@angusreid.org](mailto:ian.holliday@angusreid.org)

- Regionally, the Liberals trail the Conservatives in every region but Quebec, where vote intentions show a competitive four-way race

### **About ARI**

*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

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#### **Part 1 – The political landscape**

##### **Liberal decline benefitting smaller parties**

A lot can change during a federal election campaign. In 2015, each of the three main federal parties held the lead in Angus Reid Institute polling at some point between the time writ was dropped and election day.

With more than six months to go until the 2019 vote, it is not understatement to say a lot may change. That said, if the election were held tomorrow, it’s unlikely that the Trudeau Liberals would retain their majority in Parliament.

Among decided and leaning voters, 37 per cent say they would back the CPC if they went to the polls tomorrow. Fewer than three-in-ten (28%) would vote for the Liberals, and roughly one-in-six (17%) would cast their ballots for the NDP.

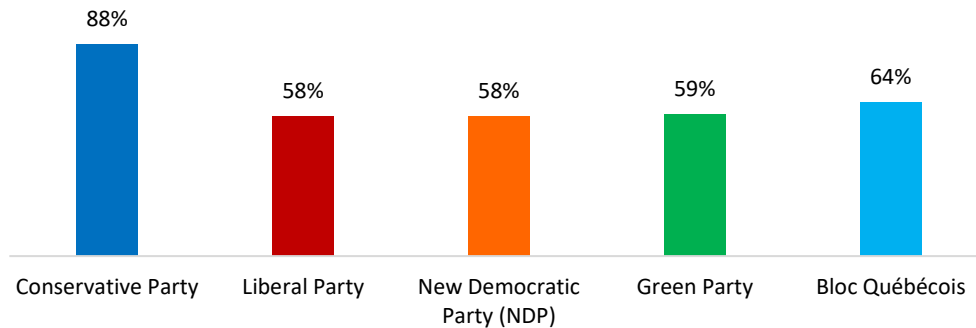
Conservative strength comes from the party’s higher retention rate. The party is holding the votes of nearly nine-in-ten who voted CPC in 2015, while fewer than six-in-ten 2015 Liberals say they’re inclined to vote for Trudeau’s party again today:

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#### **CONTACT:**

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
Ian Holliday, Research Associate: 604.442.3312 [ian.holliday@angusreid.org](mailto:ian.holliday@angusreid.org)

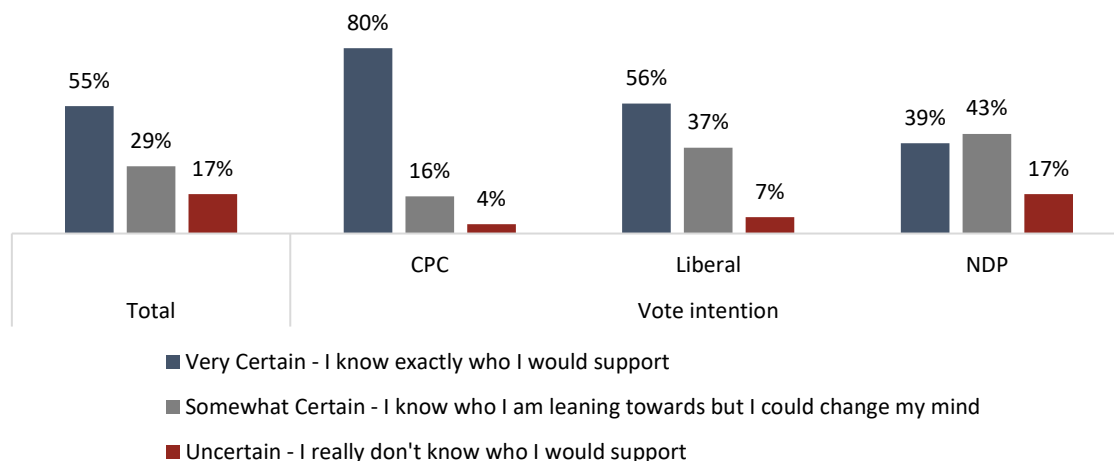
**Vote retention**  
(Percentage of each party's 2015 voters who would vote for that party again, including undecideds and leaners, n=5807)



Perhaps the biggest advantage for the Conservative Party at this stage is the firmness of its base. While a significant proportion of potential Liberal and NDP supporters say they are uncertain or only somewhat certain that they will, indeed, end up supporting one of those two left-of-centre parties, four-in-five Conservatives say they are very certain about where they stand.

This is not a new phenomenon. The CPC had the most committed base in ARI polling ahead of the 2015 election as well, but were unable to rally enough voters outside of that base to retain former Prime Minister Stephen Harper's majority government.

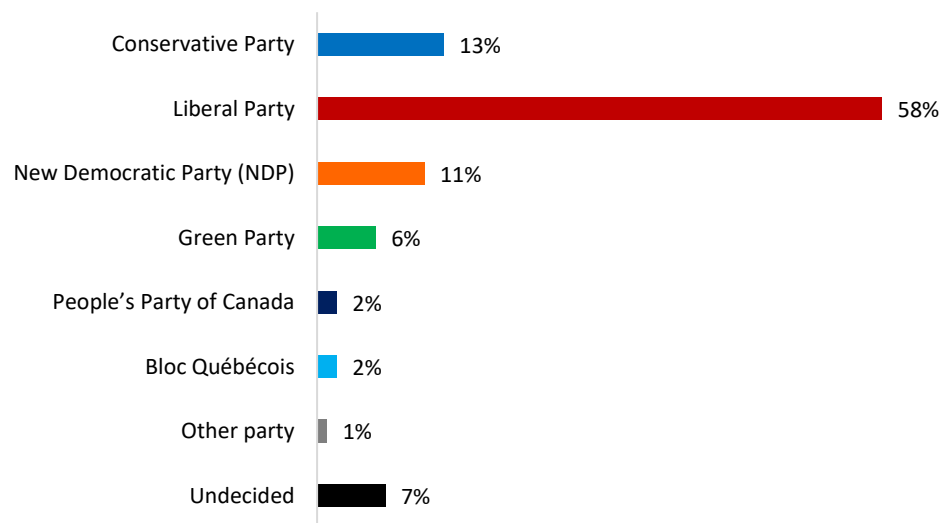
**If a federal election were held tomorrow, how certain are you about which party's candidate you would support?**  
(All respondents)



The Liberal Party's low retention of its 2015 supporters is one part of the equation. Also notable is where those voters are going.

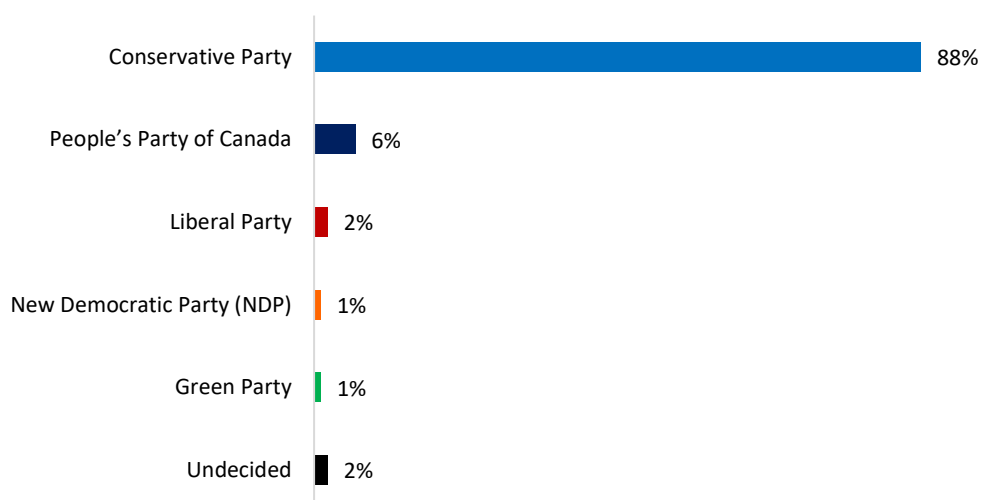
About one-in-eight 2015 Liberals (13%) say they plan to support the CPC, and one-in-ten (11%) say the same of the NDP. Significant numbers are also turning to the Green Party or remain truly undecided:

**Vote intention among 2015 Liberal voters, including leaners and undecideds (n=1953)**



The CPC, by contrast, appears to be losing just a handful of supporters (6%) to former Conservative cabinet minister Maxime Bernier and his People's Party of Canada. Aside from that challenge, few 2015 Conservatives are jumping ship – with 88 per cent saying they intend to support the party again:

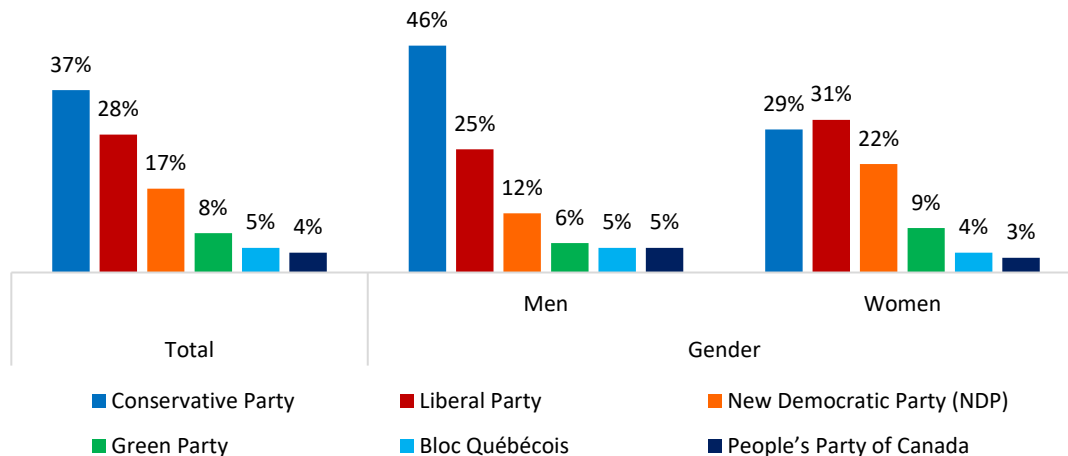
**Vote intention among 2015 CPC voters, including leaners and undecideds (n=1529)**



**Demographic differences**

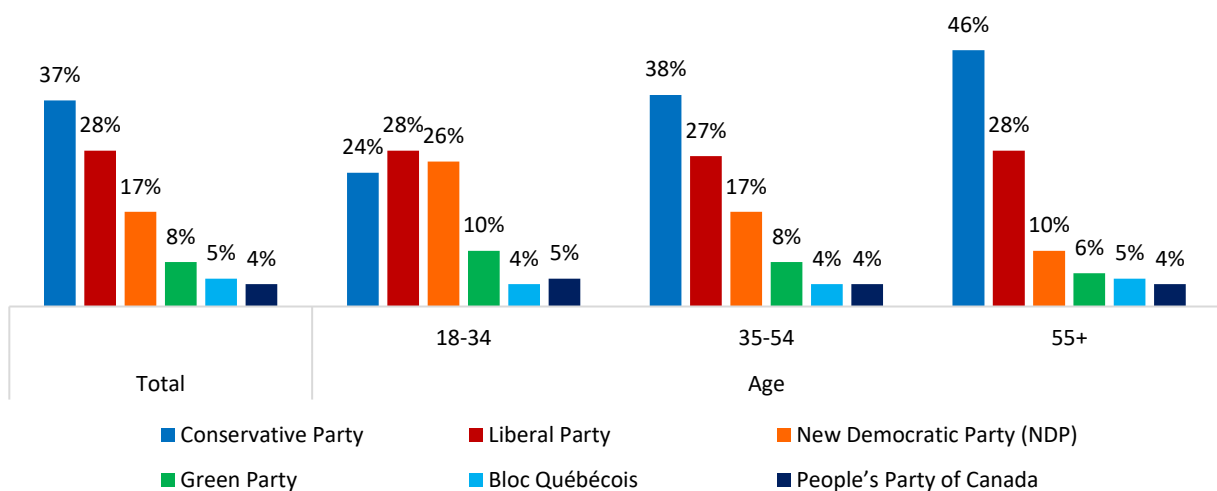
A key component of the vote intention story is the influence of gender and age – often working in tandem – on political partisanship. The Conservative Party commands a healthy lead among men in Canada, but it runs basically even with the Liberals among female voters. Women are also almost twice as likely as men to say they would vote for the NDP:

**Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only (n=5289)**



This three-way race among female voters is also seen among younger Canadians (those ages 18-34). The three parties are close to a statistical tie among this age group, while the CPC leads by a wide margin among Canadians over the age of 35 – a group who are historically much more likely to turn out and vote.

**Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only (n=5289)**



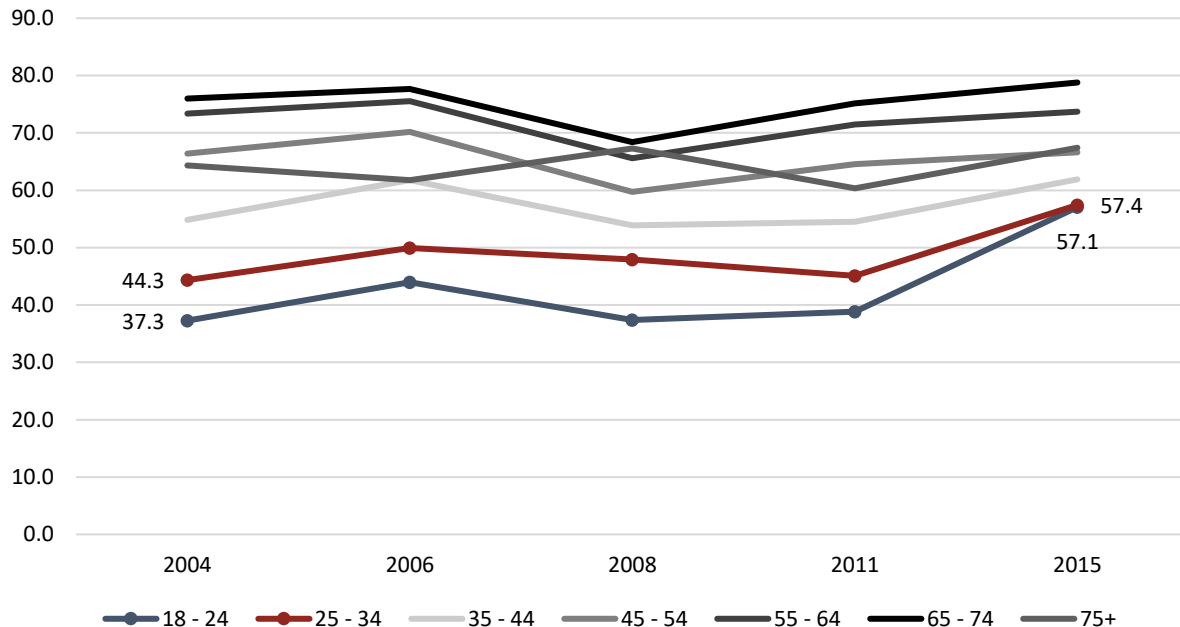
Looking at these two variables in combination, a clear pattern emerges. Men of all ages are more likely than women their age to support the CPC, while women of all ages are more likely than men their age to support the Liberals and the NDP:

Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:							
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (5289)	Men			Women		
		18-34 (730)	35-54 (880)	55+ (978)	18-34 (713)	35-54 (938)	55+ (1018)
Conservative Party	37%	33%	50%	52%	16%	28%	40%
Liberal Party	28%	26%	22%	26%	32%	33%	29%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	17%	19%	12%	7%	33%	22%	14%
Green Party	8%	6%	6%	6%	13%	10%	7%
Bloc Québécois	5%	5%	4%	5%	3%	4%	5%
People's Party of Canada	4%	8%	4%	3%	2%	4%	4%
Other party	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%

These age and gender differences are significant not only because they tell such different stories about the moods of different segments of the Canadian electorate, but also because of the dramatic differences in turnout between age groups.

The 2015 election saw a massive increase in turnout among younger voters, a phenomenon that bucked the trend of previous elections and was widely seen as contributing to the Trudeau Liberals' victory. If turnout among this age group were to revert to where it was in the 2011 election or the several before it, which are shown in the graph that follows, this poll suggests the Liberals would be in even greater electoral trouble.

**Voter turnout (in per cent) among 18-34-year-olds by election year:**  
(Source: Elections Canada)



### The regional picture

Regional vote intentions have remained fairly consistent [since ARI's last poll in February](#), which currently spells trouble for Justin Trudeau's Liberals. The party's lead in Quebec has diminished to a statistical tie with the Conservatives, while the NDP and Bloc Quebecois trail closely behind.

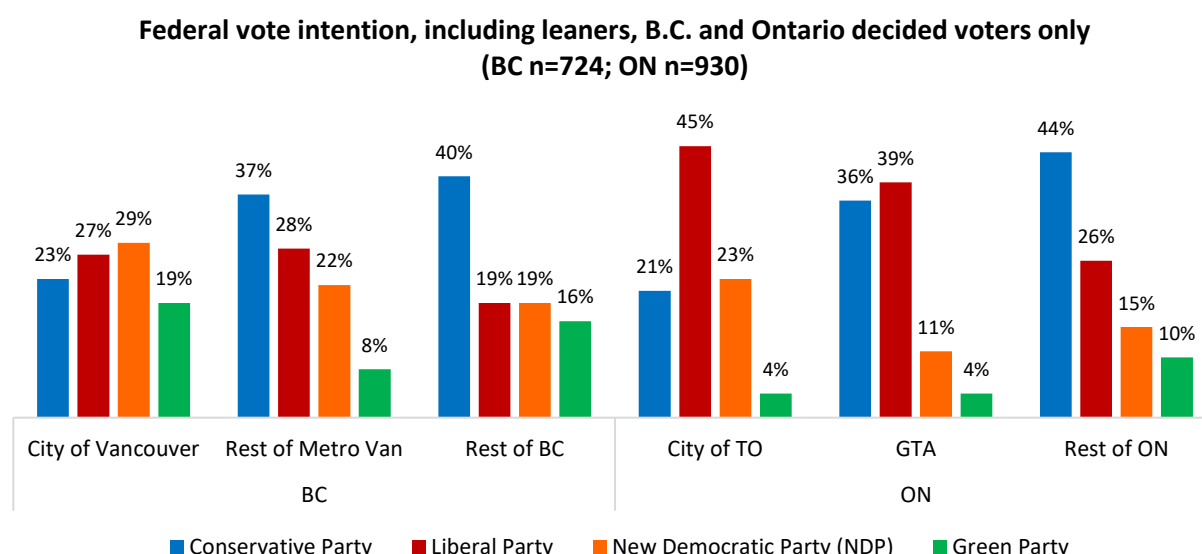
The CPC leads by wide margins in the prairie provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, and by smaller, four-point margins in vote-rich Ontario and 2015 Liberal stronghold Atlantic Canada.

Andrew Scheer's Conservatives also hold a wide lead over the Liberals in B.C., where the NDP and Greens are strongest and likely help to split left-of-centre respondents:

Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:								
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (5289)	Region						
		BC (724)	AB (788)	SK (771)	MB (610)	ON (926)	QC (710)	ATL (763)
Conservative Party	37%	36%	59%	59%	50%	37%	25%	35%
Liberal Party	28%	23%	19%	14%	24%	33%	27%	31%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	17%	21%	12%	17%	16%	16%	18%	15%
Green Party	8%	14%	4%	4%	6%	7%	6%	13%
Bloc Québécois	5%	-	-	-	-	-	20%	-
People's Party of Canada	4%	4%	6%	4%	3%	4%	3%	5%
Other party	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%

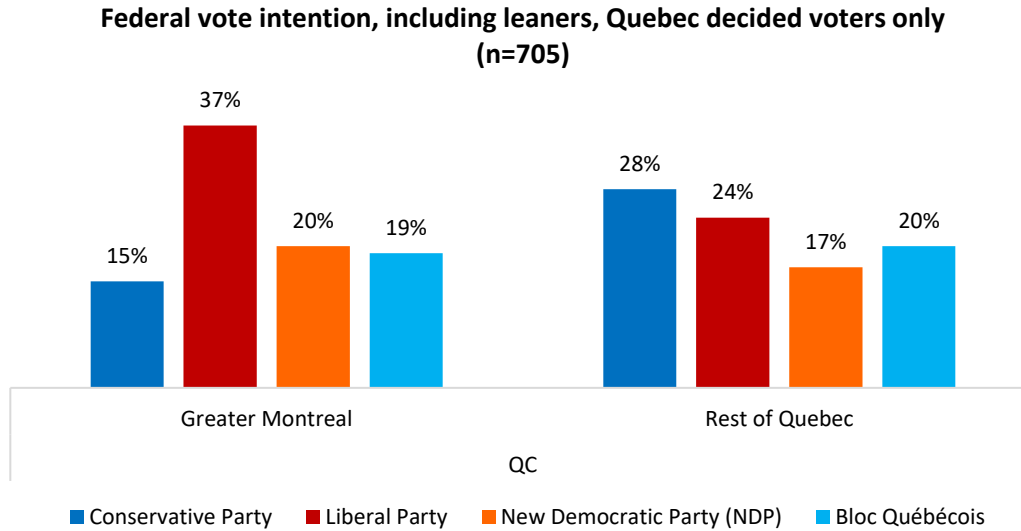
The large sample size of this study allows for a deeper dive into the regional results. Generally, it shows the Liberals performing strongest in urban areas – as they did in 2015, when they won every riding in the City of Toronto and nearly all of the ridings in the Greater Toronto Area.

Today, the Liberals lead by a wide margin in the City of Toronto and are neck-and-neck with the NDP in the City of Vancouver, but they find themselves tied or trailing in in those cities' suburbs, and trailing badly in the rest of B.C. and Ontario:





In Quebec, the Liberals are strongest in Greater Montreal, while this poll finds a competitive four-way race elsewhere in the province:



Even in provinces where the Conservatives have a wide lead, the Liberals keep things closer in major cities, but trail by much wider margins outside of them:

Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:									
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (5289)	AB			SK			MB	
		Calg. (210)	Central Edm. (124)	Rest of AB (452)	Greater Reg. (180)	Greater Sask. (183)	Rest of SK (408)	Wpg. (356)	Rest of MB (253)
Conservative Party	37%	50%	40%	68%	42%	42%	75%	38%	65%
Liberal Party	28%	21%	30%	16%	23%	12%	10%	33%	13%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	17%	18%	19%	7%	16%	39%	8%	21%	10%
Green Party	8%	5%	5%	3%	8%	4%	3%	6%	6%
People's Party of Canada	4%	7%	6%	6%	6%	3%	3%	2%	3%

**CONTACT:**

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
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**Part 2 – Issues and approval**

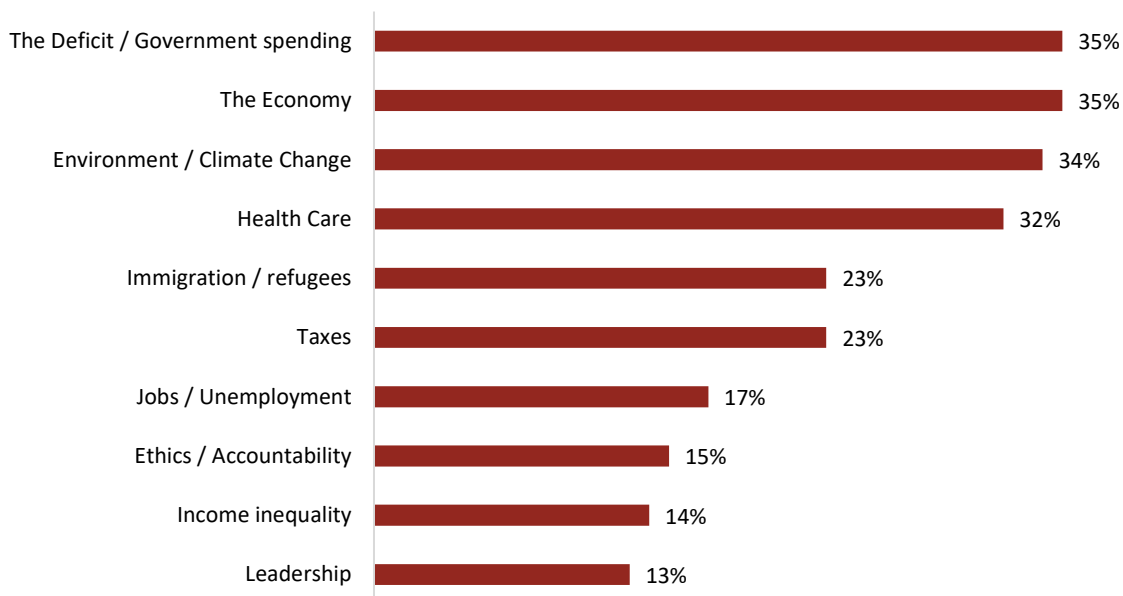
**Deficits, economy, environment top the list**

Campaign strategies are undoubtedly being tested and plotted by each party’s team in preparation for the writ later this year, and these data offer a window into which issues are likely to carry the most weight for Canadians.

Asked to choose the top three issues in Canada today, Canadians name three topics – the deficit/government spending (35%), the economy (35%), and the environment/climate change (34%) – at a roughly equal rate. The balance between economic growth and environmental sustainability is something the government has been vocal about since 2015, and represents a difficult challenge for each leader to make their case on.

Health care is also a top issue for roughly one-in-three Canadians (32%), ahead of immigration and taxes, chosen by just under one-quarter (23%):

**Please rank the top three issues facing Canada that you care about the most  
(issues chosen by more than 10 per cent of Canadians shown)**



Looking at responses from decided and leaning voters yields some interesting insights into partisan concerns during this election year.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, would-be Liberal voters are not especially likely to name deficits and spending by a government they support re-electing as a top issue in Canada today. The government has continued to spend well past its initial 2015 campaign promises, but has boasted that low unemployment and low poverty rates are a direct result of that spending. Those inclined to vote for the Conservatives, meanwhile, are more than four times more likely to choose the deficit as a top concern than potential Liberal and NDP supporters.

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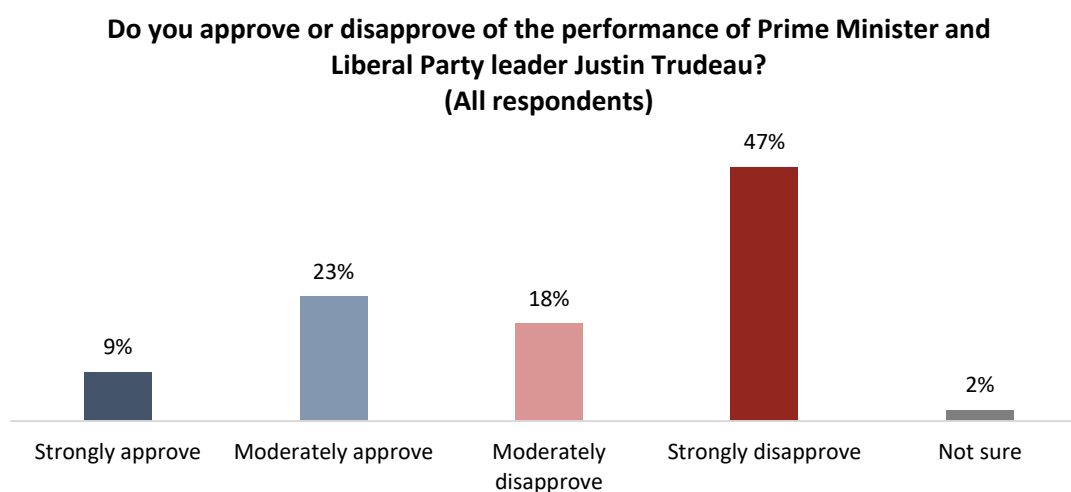
Notably, at least half of all potential supporters for the Liberals (56%), NDP (51%), Bloc (53%) and Green Party (66%) say that the environment and climate change are a top issue for the country. Meanwhile, just 6 per cent of Conservatives say this a top concern:

Percentage naming each as a top-three issue by vote intention: (Question asked of all respondents)							
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (5807)	Vote Intention					
		CPC (1982)	Liberal (1470)	NDP (895)	Bloc (244)	Green (415)	Other (includes PPC) (291)
The Deficit / Government spending	35%	63%	15%	14%	34%	17%	52%
The Economy	35%	41%	39%	24%	30%	18%	40%
Environment / Climate Change	34%	6%	56%	51%	53%	66%	13%
Health Care	32%	17%	44%	42%	28%	33%	25%
Immigration / refugees	23%	30%	15%	14%	28%	14%	38%

### One-third approve of Trudeau’s performance

At the personal level, Justin Trudeau’s approval rating continues to sputter. One-in-three Canadians (33%) say they approve of the PM this quarter, statistically unchanged since December, when his approval stood at 35 per cent.

Importantly, nearly half say they “strongly disapprove” of Trudeau, compared to fewer than one-in-ten who “strongly approve”:

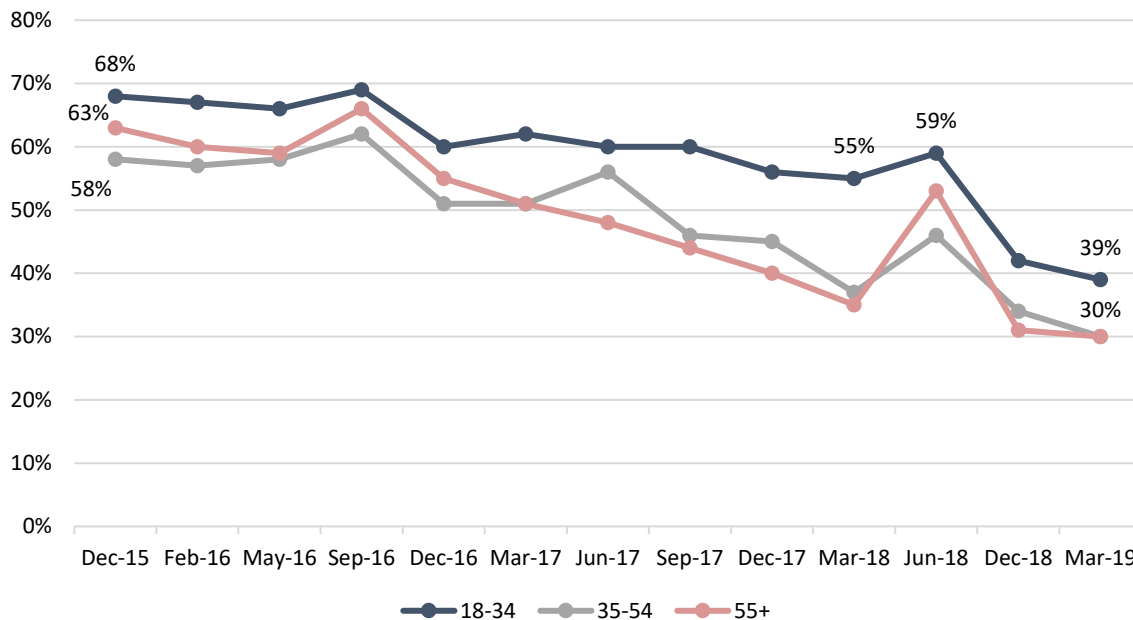


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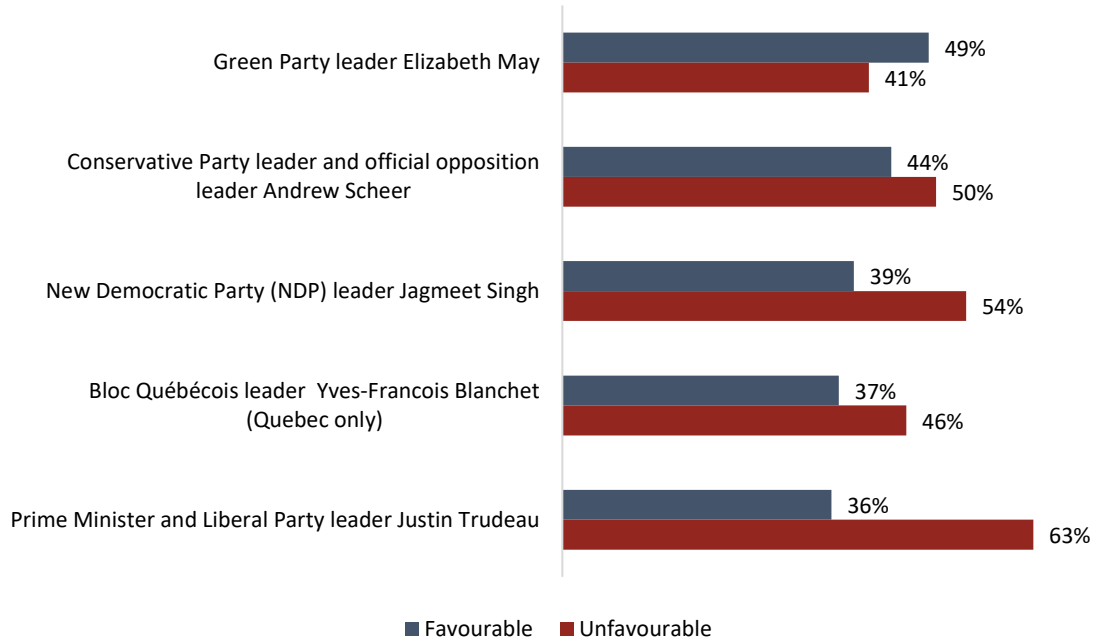
While Trudeau's approval remains strongest with Canadians under the age of 35, the days of majority approval among that group have vanished, down to just 39 per cent currently:

**Approval of Trudeau by age of respondent:  
(All Respondents)**



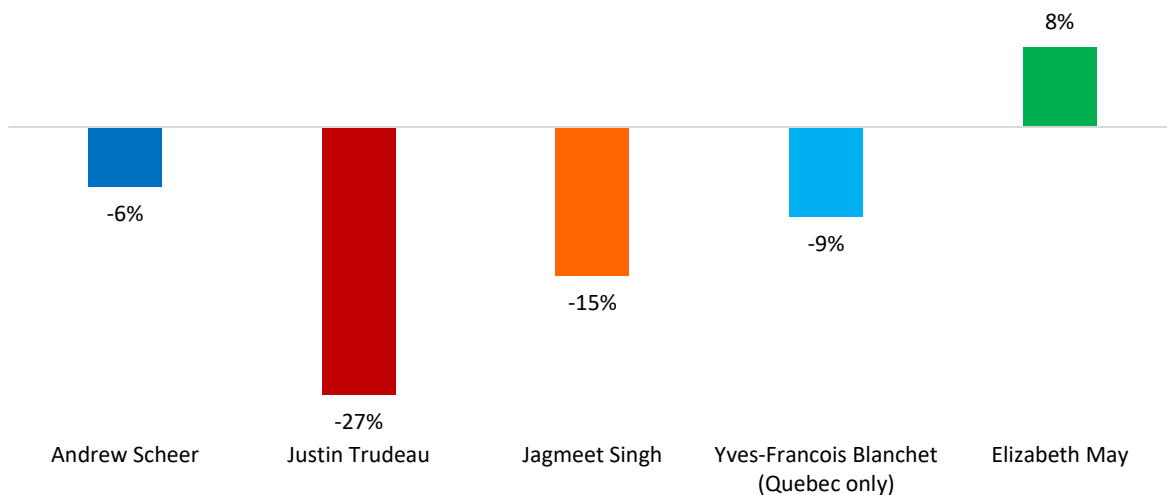
Asked a similar question of each of the party leaders, Canadians are more likely to hold unfavourable than favourable views of everyone except Green Party leader Elizabeth May. Just over four-in-ten Canadians say they have a favourable view of Andrew Scheer (44%), while slightly fewer say the same of the NDP's Jagmeet Singh (39%).

**What is your overall impression of each of the following leaders?**



Looking at net favourability (unfavourable minus favourable) makes it clear that – although each of the three main leaders is more disliked than liked – Trudeau is easily the least popular:

**Net favourability (favourable minus unfavourable)**



**Summary tables follow. For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here.](#)**

**If a federal election were held tomorrow in Canada, which of the following parties would you be most likely to support?**  
**Including leaners**

	Total (5807)	Last federal vote							
		CPC	Liberal	NDP	Bloc	Green	Other	Can't recall/not sure	Did not vote
Conservative Party	34%	88%	13%	10%	15%	11%	10%	8%	26%
People's Party of Canada	4%	6%	2%	1%	1%	5%	27%	3%	5%
Liberal Party	25%	2%	58%	13%	2%	4%	8%	16%	18%
New Democratic Party	15%	1%	11%	58%	5%	13%	1%	18%	11%
Bloc Québécois	4%	*%	2%	3%	64%	*%	11%	17%	3%
Green Party	7%	1%	6%	9%	3%	59%	3%	8%	9%
Other party	1%	*%	1%	*%	2%	1%	35%	2%	3%
Undecided	7%	2%	7%	5%	7%	6%	6%	22%	15%
Would not vote	2%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	-	6%	9%
I cannot vote	*%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3%

\*indicates that the total is statistically 0, though at least one response was received.

If a federal election were held tomorrow, how certain are you about which party's candidate you would support?									
	Total (5807)	Vote intention							
		CPC	Liberal	NDP	Bloc	Green	Other	Undecided/ Don't know	Will not vote
Very certain - I know exactly who I would support	55%	80%	56%	39%	40%	36%	51%	1%	13%
Somewhat certain – I know who I am leaning towards but I could change my mind	29%	16%	37%	43%	34%	39%	35%	15%	5%
Uncertain – I really don't know who I would support	17%	4%	7%	17%	26%	26%	14%	84%	82%

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