

Federal politics: Liberals appear to have stopped bleeding; can the Conservatives be bloodied?

Most CPC voters have no second choice, but nearly one-in-five could switch to the People's Party

June 10, 2019 – Notwithstanding a summer sitting of the House of Commons, these will be the final days for MPs in Ottawa before returning to their constituencies to fight for their political futures in the federal election campaign this fall.

The latest analysis of new polling data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute suggests that for Liberal candidates, a disastrous slide in support over the first half of the year appears to have ended, making this a critical – albeit shrinking – period of time to try to regroup and rebuild.

Conservatives, meanwhile, will take comfort in maintaining a wide lead over the governing party, but must be mindful of a failure to build momentum as their opponent plummeted.

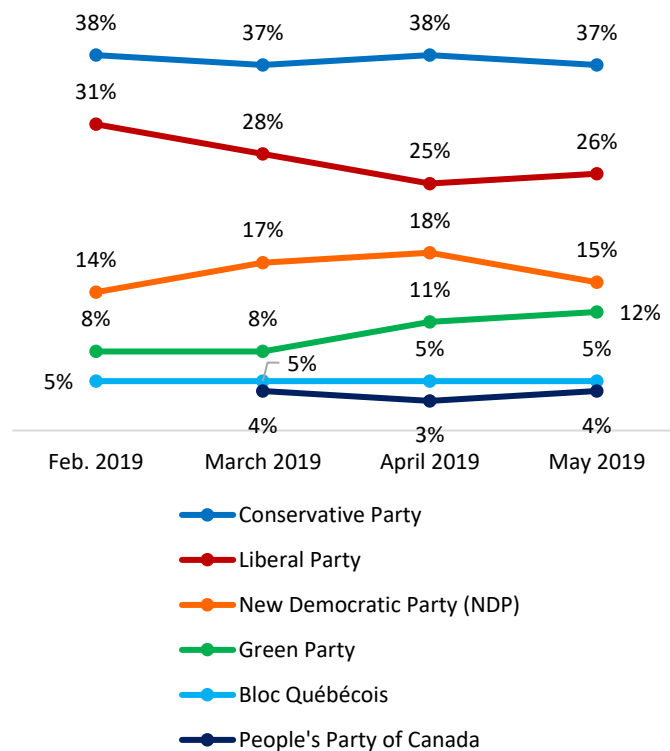
Indeed, 37 per cent of decided and leaning voters say they would cast ballots for the CPC if the election were held tomorrow, a number that is statistically unchanged from where it has been since the SNC Lavalin scandal first hit the headlines [back in February](#).

For the [second straight month](#), the Liberals hold the support of roughly one-quarter of Canadian voters (26%), still well below the 31 per cent they recorded in February, but no longer dropping month after month.

The Liberal decline has benefitted the Green Party, which sees its support among decided and leaning voters reach 12 per cent in this survey. This

comes as more Canadians identify the environment and climate change as a top issue facing the country.

Decided and leaning vote intention in ARI surveys in 2019:



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute analyzed data from an online survey conducted between May 28 – June 4, 2019 among a representative randomized sample of 4,698 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. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was conducted by Angus Reid Global Public Affairs and donated to the Angus Reid Institute. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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That said, sizeable numbers of Green and New Democratic supporters list the Liberals (and each other) as their second choice. Whether Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's party can win any of these voters over will be one of the defining narratives of the fall campaign.

More Key Findings:

- The CPC leads in vote intention across all regions of the country, but the race with the Liberals is much closer in Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada than it is in the four western provinces
- Asked if there is a party they could never vote for, one-third of eligible voters (33%) choose the Liberals, but a nearly identical number (32%) say this of the Conservatives. Other parties are less likely to see Canadians ruling them out entirely
- One-in-three Canadians (33%) approve of Trudeau's performance as Prime Minister, while 64 per cent disapprove. Other federal leaders are also viewed less than favourably. Only Green leader Elizabeth May receives a net positive rating from the Canadian public (53% favourable, 38% unfavourable)

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: Vote intention

Conservatives lead everywhere

The CPC's overall lead has decreased slightly (from 13 percentage points to 11) since the Angus Reid Institute's [federal vote intention poll last month](#), but the Tories remain well ahead, largely on the strength of their performance in Western Canada.

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Andrew Scheer's party holds commanding leads in traditional strongholds Alberta and Saskatchewan, as well as in Manitoba. The Conservatives are also well ahead in British Columbia, though this has more to do with a divided field in that province than an exceptionally high level of support for the CPC. As seen in the table that follows, Conservative support tops 50 per cent in each of the three Prairie provinces, while in B.C. it is 36 per cent, with the Liberals, Greens, and New Democrats all holding the support of roughly one-in-five.

The Liberals and Conservatives are statistically tied in Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada, though the CPC is ahead by a couple of percentage points in each of these three regions:

Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:								
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (4268)	Region						
		BC (530)	AB (573)	SK (582)	MB (552)	ON (755)	QC (535)	ATL (762)
Conservative Party	37%	36%	62%	60%	51%	34%	28%	33%
Liberal Party	26%	20%	16%	10%	19%	32%	26%	30%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	15%	18%	11%	17%	20%	16%	13%	12%
Green Party	12%	22%	4%	8%	8%	13%	9%	18%
Bloc Québécois	5%	-	-	-	-	-	20%	-
People's Party of Canada	4%	3%	6%	4%	2%	3%	3%	6%
Other party	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%

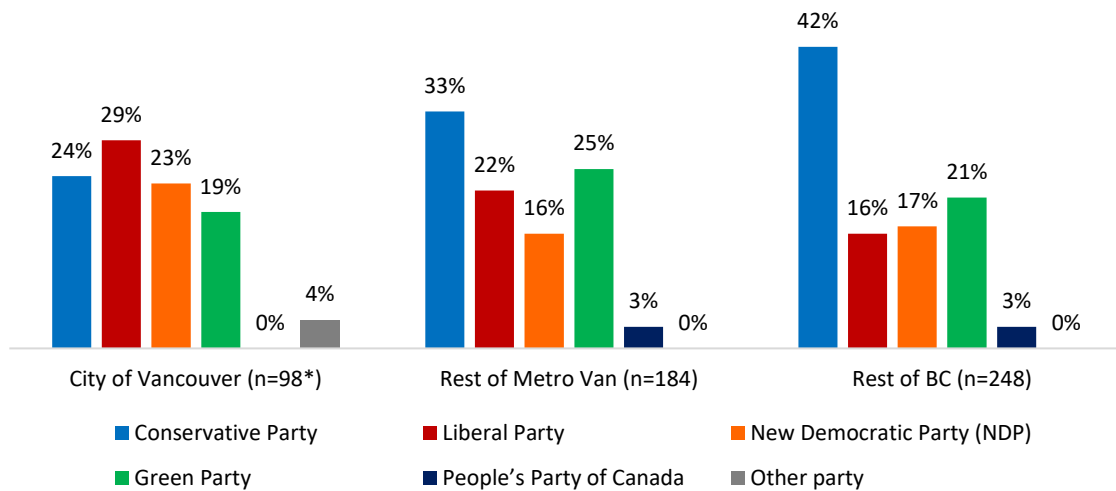
The large sample size of this poll allows for deep sub-regional analysis within provinces. Looking at vote intention at this level, a clear pattern emerges: As it did in the 2015 election, the Liberal Party performs best in cities. The Conservatives, meanwhile, do best outside of them, in rural and suburban areas.

In B.C., this dynamic manifests itself as a narrow Liberal lead within the City of Vancouver and Conservative leads elsewhere in the province. It's also notable that the Green Party is polling at 20 per cent or better in every region of B.C., as seen in the graph that follows:

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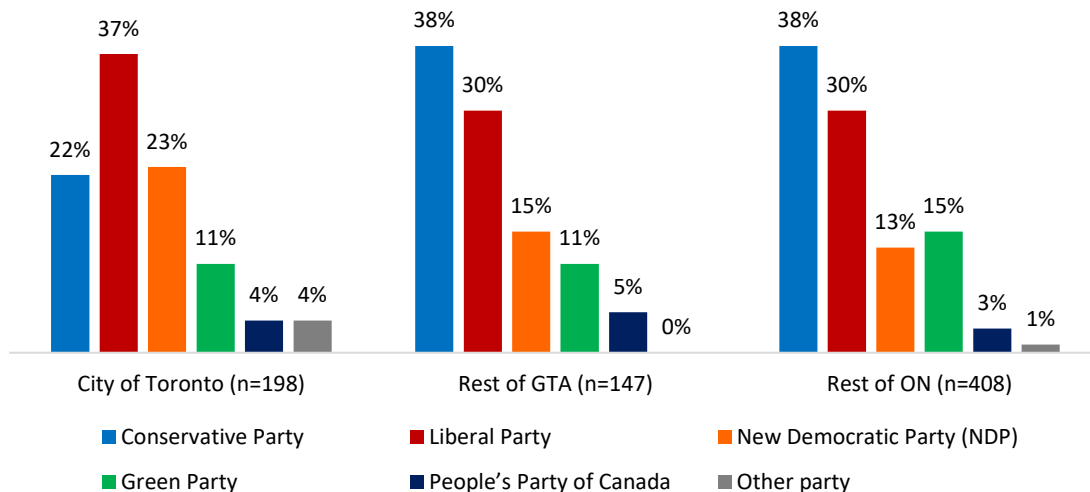
Vote intention in British Columbia (Decided and leaning voters, n=530)



***small sample size, interpret with caution**

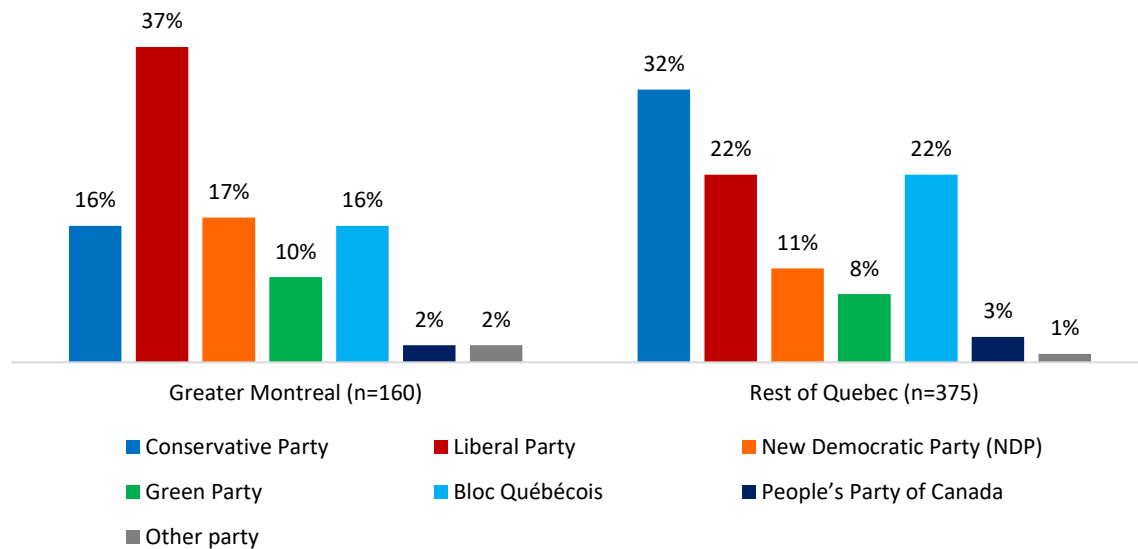
In Ontario, the Liberals hold a sizeable lead within the City of Toronto, but trail the Conservatives by eight percentage points in the rest of the Greater Toronto Area and in the rest of the province:

Vote intention in Ontario (Decided and leaning voters, n=755)



In Quebec, the Liberals hold a commanding lead in Greater Montreal, but trail the Conservatives elsewhere in the province:

Vote intention in Quebec (Decided and leaning voters, n=535)



Massive age and gender divides persist

Consistent with the results of ARI political polling throughout 2019, there are significant generational and gender differences in vote intention.

Younger Canadians are much less likely to express an intention to vote for the CPC, while older ones are more likely to say they plan on doing so.

This dynamic doesn't bode well for Trudeau and the Liberal Party for two reasons:

First, older people tend to turn out to vote at higher rates than younger generations. Even in 2015, when turnout surged among those under age 35, the bulk of votes in the election were cast by people older than that.

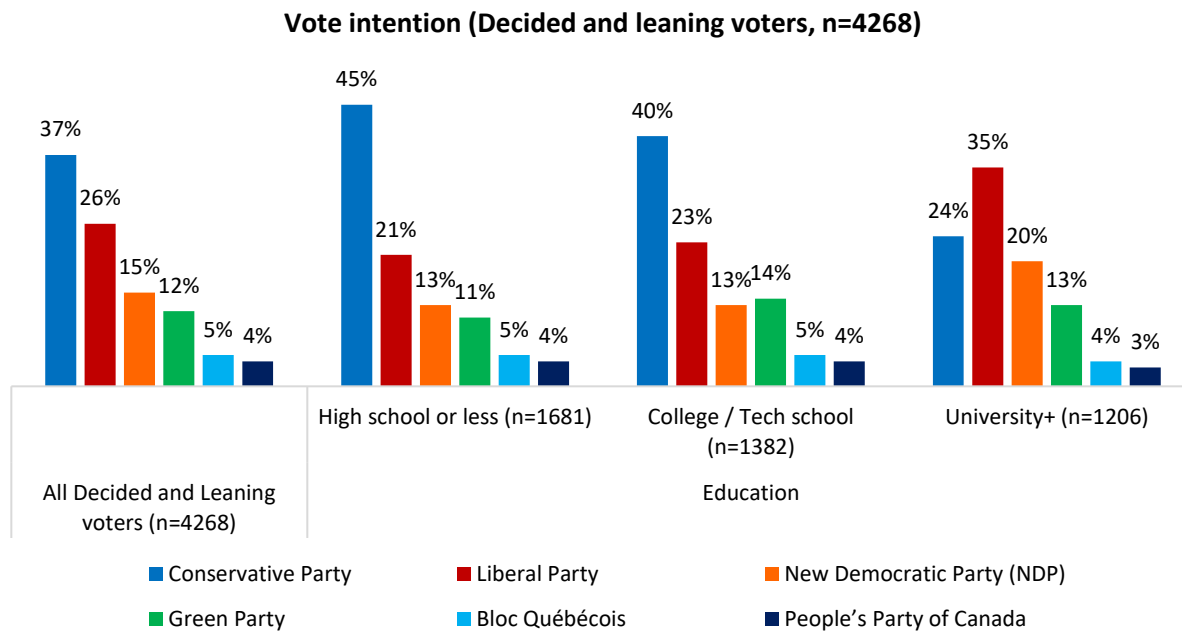
Second, the CPC's struggles among the under-35 age group don't appear to be benefitting the Liberals. Instead, this age group's vote intentions are more dispersed, with above-average numbers saying they plan to vote for the NDP, the Green Party, and even Maxime Bernier's People's Party of Canada. This last finding is driven largely by men aged 18-34:

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Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:							
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (4268)	Men			Women		
		18-34 (618)	35-54 (741)	55+ (801)	18-34 (588)	35-54 (716)	55+ (803)
Conservative Party	37%	30%	44%	54%	17%	28%	42%
Liberal Party	26%	22%	22%	23%	30%	29%	30%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	15%	17%	12%	6%	28%	20%	10%
Green Party	12%	14%	12%	8%	17%	16%	10%
Bloc Québécois	5%	6%	4%	6%	2%	3%	6%
People's Party of Canada	4%	7%	5%	3%	4%	2%	2%
Other party	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

A more positive dynamic for the Liberals is their strength among those who attended university. Historically, people with higher levels of formal education have been more likely to turn out to vote, and some 35 per cent of them say they plan to cast ballots for the Liberals:



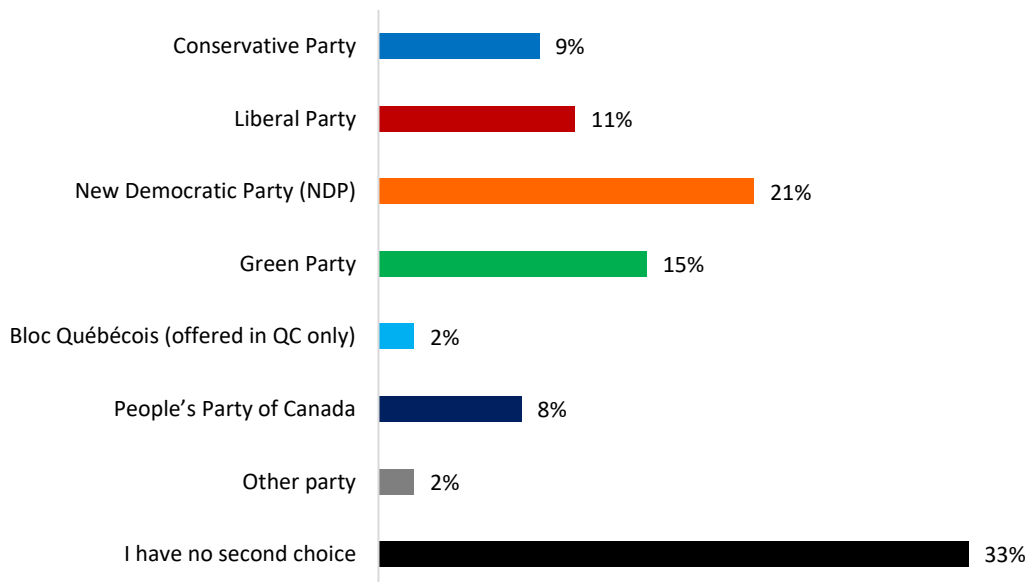
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Voters' second choices can be both a strength and a weakness

In 2015, Justin Trudeau had the now-apparent benefit of coasting through the first months of the campaign as many Canadians' second choice for the fall election, if, for whatever reason, they wavered in their support for their primary option. Indeed, the Angus Reid Institute found large numbers of both CPC and NDP voters listing the Liberals as their backup plan. When NDP leader Tom Mulcair's moment passed and many voters decided they were not willing to offer Stephen Harper's Conservatives another term, Trudeau and the Liberals emerged to form a majority government.

This time around, roughly one-in-ten decided and leaning voters see the Liberals as a second choice, a number that is only slightly better than the total who view the CPC or the PPC this way. The NDP and the Greens are more popular second choices:

And which party would be your second choice? (Asked of decided and leaning voters, n=4268)



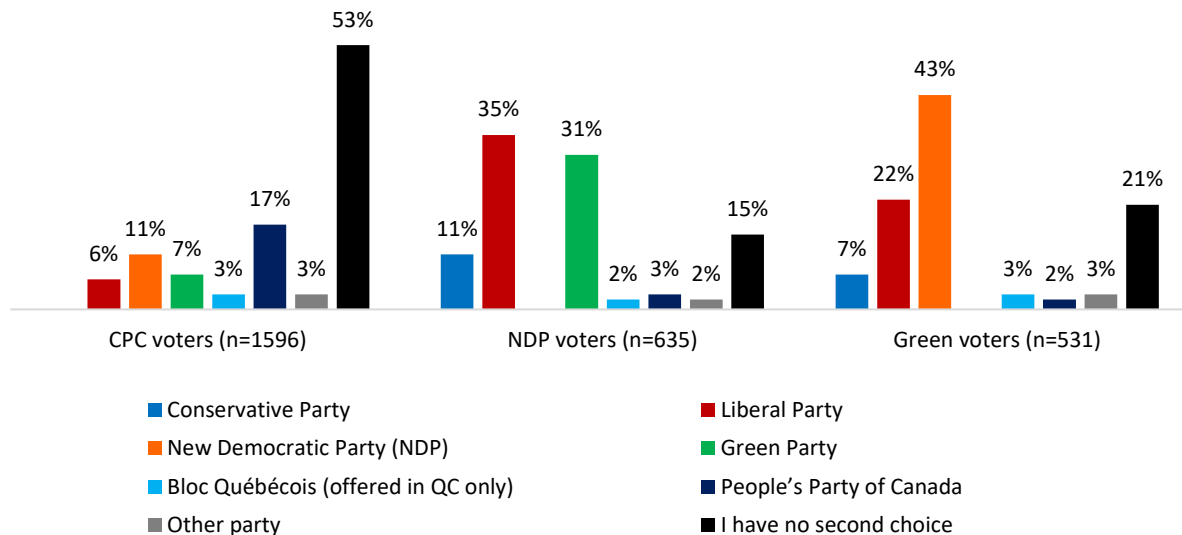
For those who intend to support the NDP this year, 35 per cent say they would fall back to the Liberals, while 31 per cent say the Greens are their second choice.

Likewise, one-in-five would-be Green voters (22%) name Trudeau's party as their second choice. In order to hold their majority, the Liberals will likely need to convince a significant number of these voters to back them.

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And which party would be your second choice? (Asked of decided and leaning voters, n=4268)



The CPC is notable for having the most committed base, something that was also the case in the lead-up to the 2015 election. That said, while more than half of CPC voters say they have no second choice, a sizeable number would consider voting for the People's Party of Canada.

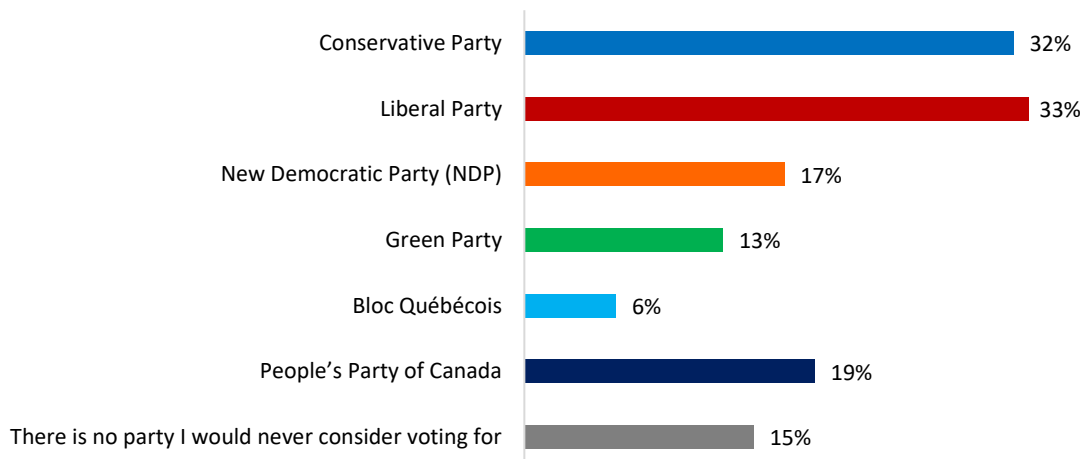
This suggests that the CPC may not be likely to lose much of its vote share, but it's also not likely to be able to grow it much more. If the PPC is able to gain some momentum and peel off CPC voters, that could become a liability for Andrew Scheer in an election where every vote counts.

One-in-three would never consider the Liberals, CPC

So how difficult will it be for each party to draw supporters from one side of the fence to the other? Each appears to have significant room to grow, as no more than one-in-three Canadians choose each one when asked if there is a party they would never consider supporting. One-in-three Canadians (33%) name the governing Liberals, and roughly the same number (32%) choose the official opposition Conservatives.

Smaller numbers choose each of the other parties as a possibility they would never entertain:

**Is there a party you would never consider voting for?
(Asked of eligible voters, n=4676)**



Here again, there are significant age and gender differences. Young people are more likely to say they won't consider the Conservatives or the PPC, while the Liberal Party, NDP and Greens are more likely to be spurned by men than women across all age groups.

Interestingly, while young men are the group most likely to say they would vote for Maxime Bernier's PPC in an election held tomorrow (though only 7% of them do), they are also the group most likely to say they **could not** vote for that same party:

Is there a party you would never consider voting for? (Asked of eligible voters, n=4676)							
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (4676)	Men			Women		
		18-34 (639)	35-54 (777)	55+ (834)	18-34 (682)	35-54 (841)	55+ (902)
Conservative Party	32%	42%	31%	22%	45%	34%	25%
Liberal Party	33%	34%	41%	38%	21%	27%	35%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	17%	24%	20%	19%	10%	12%	16%
Green Party	13%	19%	15%	17%	9%	10%	11%
Bloc Québécois (offered in QC only)	6%	4%	7%	6%	5%	7%	7%
People's Party of Canada	19%	36%	18%	17%	18%	15%	14%
There is no party I would never consider voting for	15%	12%	12%	11%	20%	20%	12%

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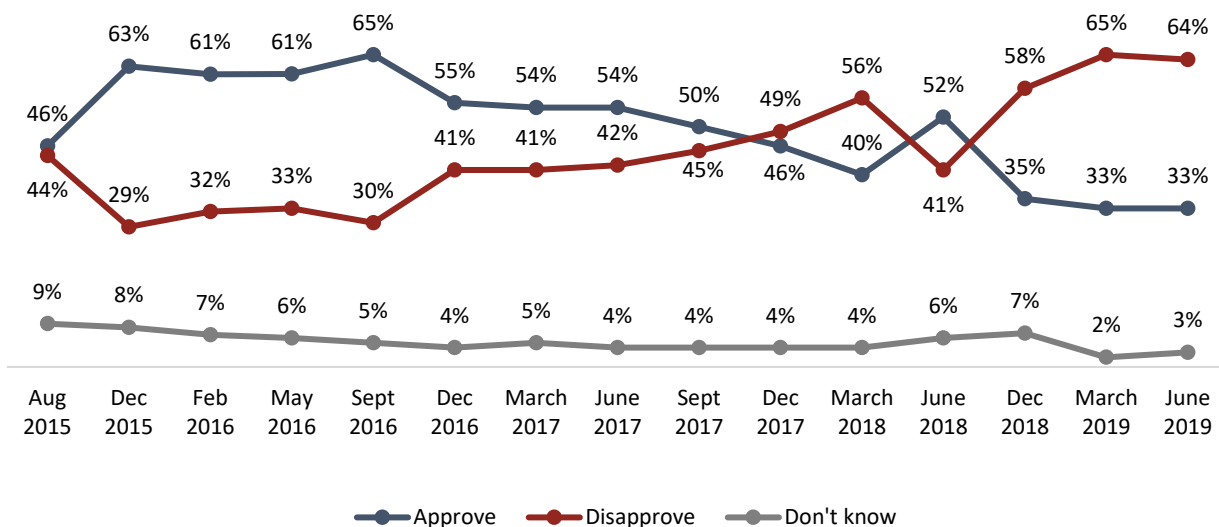
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Part 2: Issues and leadership

One-third approve of Trudeau

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's approval rating remains at 33 per cent, unchanged since last quarter. In some respects, this could be interpreted as a positive sign for the Liberal leader, whose disapproval numbers spiked dramatically over the last year. That said, he continues to struggle to recover the lustre he carried for the first two years of his term and has the disapproval of two-thirds of Canadians.

Do you approve or disapprove of Justin Trudeau?



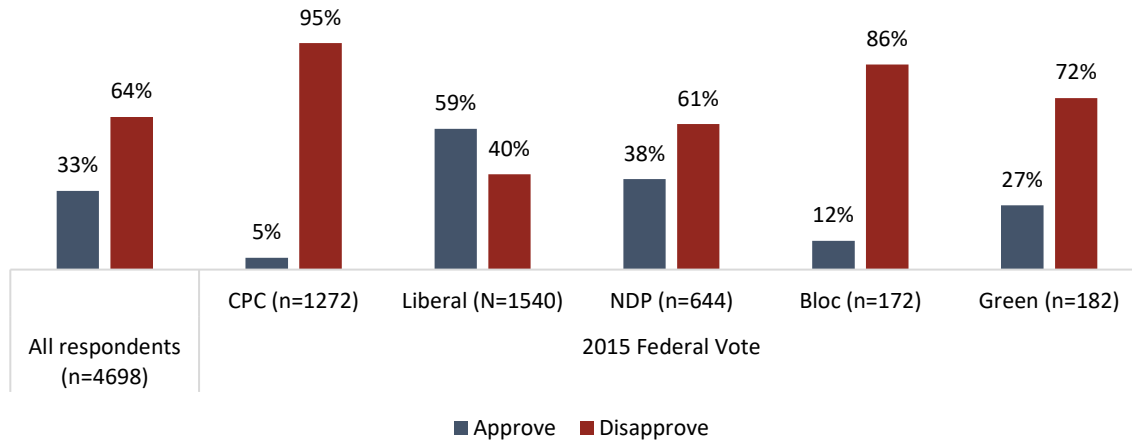
Much of the Liberal Party's fortunes in the coming election will likely rest on Trudeau's ability to recapture support from young voters who held him in such high esteem in 2015. Just 39 per cent of 18-34-year-olds approve of him, unchanged from last quarter, but down significantly from the more than two-thirds approval he enjoyed among this age group throughout his first year in office.

Aside from the age factor, Trudeau would do well to shore up approval among past voters. Four-in-ten (40%) who voted for Trudeau's Liberals in the last election now *disapprove* of his performance in the job they elected him to do. His disapproval is also driven by near unanimous negativity from those who voted Conservative in 2015, as well as poor marks among past New Democrats and Greens.

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Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of Prime Minister and Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau? (All respondents, n=4698)

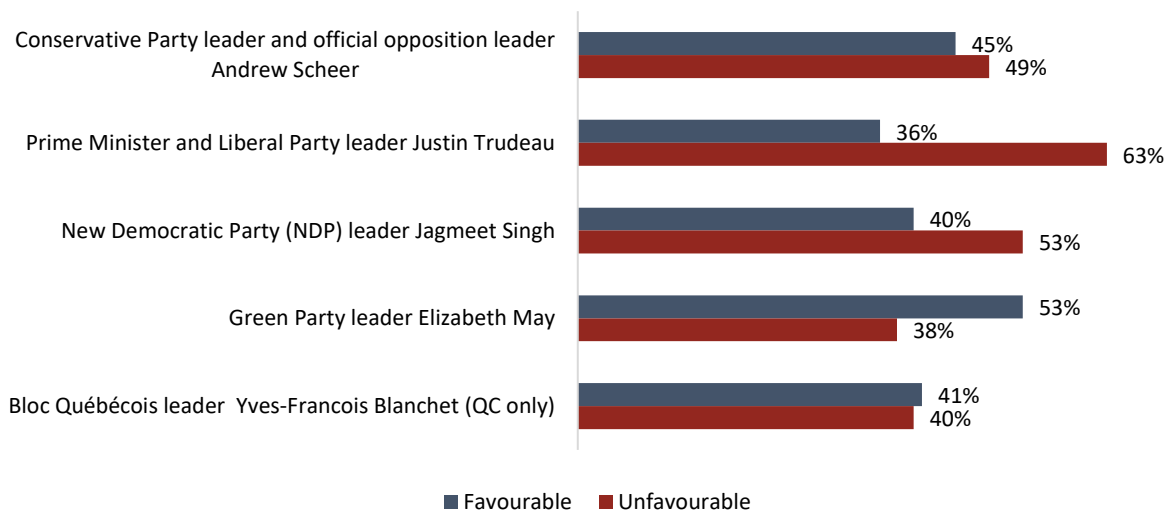


May remains only leader with net favourable rating

While Trudeau and company would likely appreciate a bump to his personal favourability numbers – he’s the least well-liked of all federal party leaders on this measure – his main opponent is not regarded especially highly either.

Larger numbers of Canadians hold unfavourable views than favourable ones of Andrew Scheer (49% unfavourable, 45% favourable) and NDP leader Jagmeet Singh (53% unfavourable, 40% favourable). As was the case [in March](#), only Green leader Elizabeth May receives a positive review from more Canadians than she receives a negative one.

What is your overall impression of each of the following party leaders? (All respondents)



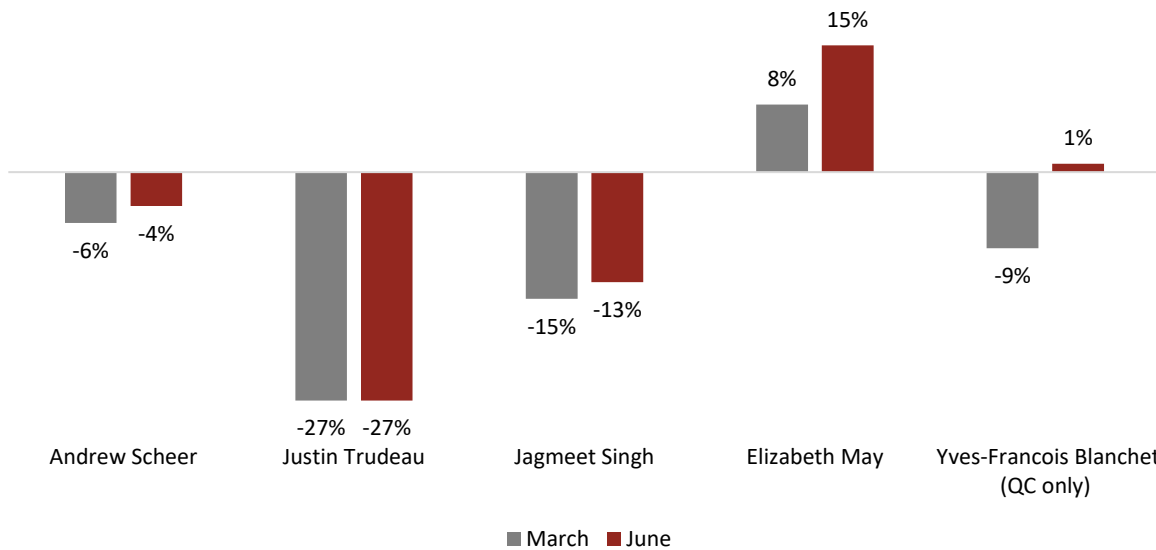
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Looking at this same data in terms of “net favourability” (subtracting unfavourable from favourable) highlights the depth of Canadians’ unfavourable views of Trudeau relative to Scheer or even Singh.

Also notable is the fact that every leader except Trudeau has improved in net favourability since March, though Singh and Scheer have shown only small changes, and remain in the net negative:

Net favourability (favourable minus unfavourable, among all respondents)



Climate change considered the top issue facing Canada

One of the possible factors driving Elizabeth May’s popularity in Canada may be the prominence of her party’s signature issue – the environment. Four-in-ten Canadians choose “environment/climate change” as one of the three most important issues facing Canada today, more than do this for any other issue shown in this study. Health care and the economy remain key concerns for Canadians as well, taking positions two and three on the priority list, respectively.

Age and gender are key areas of difference on this question, with younger people more likely to choose climate change as a top issue, and women of all ages more likely to choose health care than men, who are themselves more likely to choose “the economy”:

Please select the top three issues facing Canada that you care about the most (All respondents, items chosen by more than 10 per cent shown)							
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (4698)	Men			Women		
		18-34 (641)	35-54 (777)	55+ (835)	18-34 (693)	35-54 (845)	55+ (905)
Environment / Climate Change	40%	47%	33%	29%	56%	41%	36%
Health Care	33%	24%	22%	29%	38%	39%	43%
The Economy	30%	35%	38%	31%	21%	28%	25%
The Deficit / Government spending	28%	24%	36%	39%	16%	20%	31%
Immigration / refugees	25%	22%	25%	30%	19%	23%	30%
Taxes	25%	23%	32%	29%	14%	24%	24%
Ethics / Accountability	16%	19%	17%	19%	10%	11%	18%
Income inequality	16%	20%	14%	7%	22%	17%	16%
Jobs / Unemployment	14%	14%	15%	11%	20%	19%	9%
Leadership	14%	10%	13%	25%	7%	10%	13%

Partisanship is the other key divide on this question. Supporters of the Conservative Party almost uniformly do not mention climate change as a key concern, while at least half of those who intend to vote for each of the other main parties name it.

This dynamic correlates with lower levels of concern over climate change in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, all provinces where more than half currently plan to vote for the CPC ([see comprehensive tables for greater detail](#)).

For Conservatives, the bigger issues are deficits (named by 51%), taxes (39%) and immigration (36%) – all likely to be key components of Andrew Scheer’s election campaign:

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Please select the top three issues facing Canada that you care about the most (All respondents, items chosen by more than 10 per cent shown)						
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (4698)	Vote intention				
		CPC (1596)	Liberal (1104)	NDP (635)	Green (531)	Bloc (198)
Environment / Climate Change	40%	8%	65%	58%	71%	50%
Health Care	33%	18%	49%	40%	33%	26%
The Economy	30%	35%	34%	23%	19%	17%
The Deficit / Government spending	28%	51%	9%	11%	14%	33%
Immigration / refugees	25%	36%	15%	16%	13%	40%
Taxes	25%	39%	14%	13%	14%	12%
Ethics / Accountability	16%	24%	8%	13%	15%	17%
Income inequality	16%	4%	21%	27%	30%	15%
Jobs / Unemployment	14%	12%	16%	15%	12%	6%
Leadership	14%	22%	7%	9%	12%	6%

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Green leader Elizabeth May is seen as the leader best equipped to deal with climate change by a wide margin. That said, and likely concerning to the governing Liberals, on all other issues canvassed, Scheer takes the lead as best to handle each:

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Which of these leaders is best suited to deal with...? (All respondents)					
	Economy	Health Care	Climate Change	Foreign Affairs	Immigration
Conservative Party leader and official opposition leader Andrew Scheer	39%	29%	22%	34%	35%
Prime Minister and Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau	23%	21%	15%	27%	22%
New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh	10%	17%	7%	10%	15%
Green Party leader Elizabeth May	5%	7%	35%	4%	4%
Bloc Québécois leader Yves-François Blanchet (QC only)	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%
None of them	9%	9%	10%	9%	10%
Not sure	13%	14%	10%	13%	12%

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

Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of Primer Minister and Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau? (Asked of all respondents)						
(weighted sample sizes]	Total (4698)	2015 Federal Vote				
		CPC (1272)	Liberal (1540)	NDP (644)	Bloc (172)	Green (182)
Strongly approve	8%	1%	19%	3%	3%	5%
Moderately approve	25%	4%	40%	34%	9%	22%
Moderately disapprove	19%	7%	21%	29%	13%	30%
Strongly disapprove	46%	87%	18%	31%	73%	42%
Not sure	3%	0%	2%	2%	2%	1%

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Vote intention in British Columbia (Decided and leaning voters, excluding not sure)

(unweighted sample sizes]	BC Total (530)	B.C. subregion		
		City of Vancouver (98*)	Rest of Metro Vancouver (184)	Rest of BC (248)
Conservative Party	36%	24%	33%	42%
Liberal Party	20%	29%	22%	16%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	18%	23%	16%	17%
Green Party	22%	19%	25%	21%
People's Party of Canada	3%	0%	3%	3%
Other party	1%	4%	0%	0%

Vote intention in Ontario (Decided and leaning voters, excluding not sure)

(unweighted sample sizes]	ON Total (755)	Ontario subregion		
		City of Toronto (198)	Rest of GTA (147)	Rest of ON (408)
Conservative Party	34%	22%	38%	38%
Liberal Party	32%	37%	30%	30%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	16%	23%	15%	13%
Green Party	13%	11%	11%	15%
People's Party of Canada	3%	4%	5%	3%
Other party	1%	4%	0%	1%

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Vote intention in Quebec (Decided and leaning voters, excluding not sure)			
(unweighted sample sizes]	QC Total (535)	Quebec subregion	
		Greater Montreal (160)	Rest of QC (375)
Conservative Party	28%	16%	32%
Liberal Party	26%	37%	22%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	13%	17%	11%
Green Party	9%	10%	8%
Bloc Québécois	20%	16%	22%
People's Party of Canada	3%	2%	3%
Other party	1%	2%	1%

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