

Premiers' Performance: Legault, Moe enjoy highest job approval; Ford, McNeil round out bottom ranks

Manitoba's Brian Pallister has highest approval in nearly three years after September re-election

September 27, 2019 – With much of the nation's political attention firmly on the federal election, Canada's premiers may well be enjoying some rare time flying under the headline-driven radar.

Others, however, are finding they're indirectly playing a role in the national campaign, to varying degrees.

The Doug Ford factor in the federal election?

More specifically, Ontario premiers, past and present, are looming large on the hustings – whether they desire it or not.

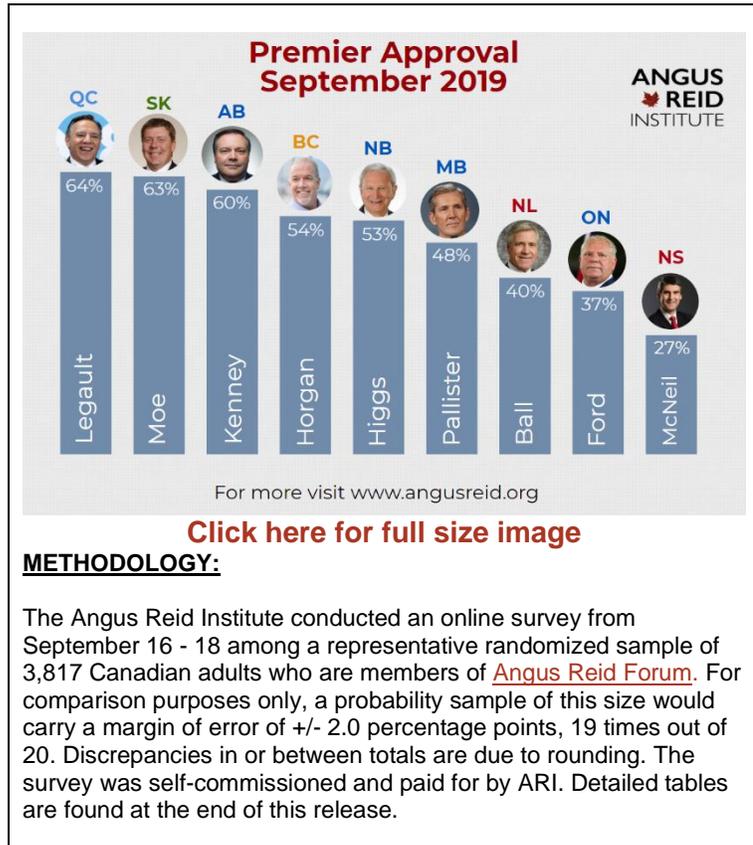
Although Premier Doug Ford announced this summer that his government would take [an extra-long break](#) until after the federal election, and lay low during the campaign, Angus Reid Institute data released this week finds Ford by far the [most likely premier to impact federal race](#), and largely to the detriment of Andrew Scheer.

Justin Trudeau has made a point of invoking Ford at [campaign events in Ontario](#) recently, while opposition leader Andrew Scheer and his Conservative Party launched an ad campaign in the province linking Justin Trudeau to former Liberal Premier Kathleen Wynne. Ford's approval remains close to unchanged this quarter at 37 per cent, ahead of only Nova Scotia's Stephen McNeil (27%).

Legault, Moe, Kenney comprise top tier

Just as was the case last quarter, three provincial leaders have the approval of at least six-in-ten residents. Francois Legault leads at 64 per cent. The Coalition Avenir Québec leader ruffled some feathers at a meeting with the federal party leaders in September, requesting more autonomy for the ["distinct nation"](#) of Quebec and more authority over immigration levels, language requirements and taxation. Evidently, Quebec residents are responding well to Legault's leadership, as his approval has risen in each quarter since winning the election in October of last year.

Another recently elected Premier, Alberta's Jason Kenney, has the approval of 60 per cent of his constituents. Kenney has been outspoken in his criticism of Prime Minister Trudeau and [has commended](#)



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some of his United Conservative MLA's for campaigning on their own time for Andrew Scheer and the federal Conservative Party.

In Saskatchewan, Premier Scott Moe is statistical tied with Quebec's Legault on job approval. Moe has stated that he will not be endorsing a party in the federal election, though few observers are left to wonder which he is hoping will be victorious. The Saskatchewan Party leader noted that the policy that [stands out to him](#) as most important in the federal election is the repeal of the federal carbon tax, a Liberal initiative that the Conservative Party has promised to end.

Majority approval for Horgan and Higgs

Two premiers on opposite sides of the country and the political spectrum share a commonality this quarter. Both British Columbia Premier John Horgan (54%) and New Brunswick's Blaine Higgs (53%) hold slightly more than majority approval in their respective provinces. B.C.'s Horgan praised Prime Minister Trudeau in late August, and has faced [criticism from some NDP supporters](#) for appearing to support the Liberal rather than the New Democratic cause federally.

In New Brunswick, home to Canada's largest oil refinery, Conservative Premier Blaine Higgs has joined Andrew Scheer in promoting a plan to move oil east through his province. Higgs [recently blamed](#) Trudeau for the failure of the initial Energy East pipeline.

Pallister celebrates another term

The Manitoba election was called a year ahead of schedule but for Premier Brian Pallister, the political gamble paid off handsomely. His Progressive Conservatives coasted comfortably to another majority government earlier this month. Pallister now turns his attention to another (expected) four years of governance, and he does so with an approval rating of 48 per cent – the highest such personal rating he has garnered since the end of 2016. Pallister has stated that he will [abstain from campaigning](#) for any federal party.

Ball and McNeil

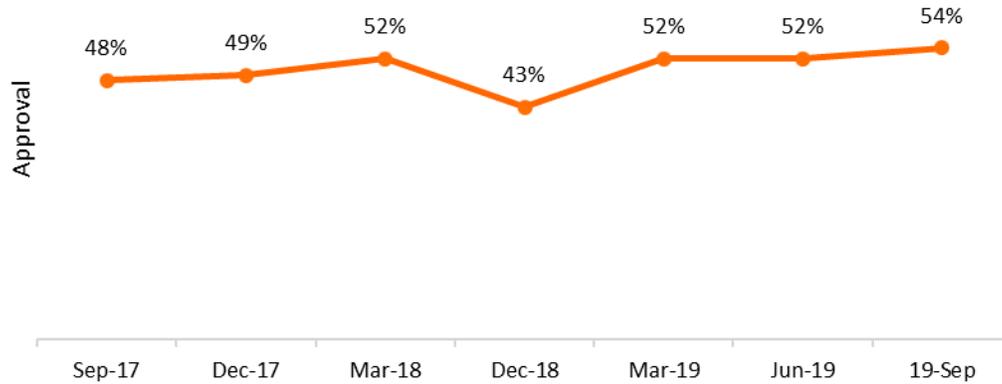
Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball's approval rises for the third consecutive quarter, now up to 40 per cent. The Premier used a recent campaign stop by the Prime Minister to push for more federal [funding commitments](#) related to the Muskrat Falls energy project and a new wastewater facility.

Stephen McNeil, Premier of Nova Scotia, emerges again as Canada's least popular provincial leader. That said, his approval has rebounded to 27 per cent this quarter. McNeil has stated that he is ["more than happy"](#) to hit the campaign trail for the federal Liberals if called upon, while the provincial Conservatives have [maintained more distance](#) between themselves and Andrew Scheer.

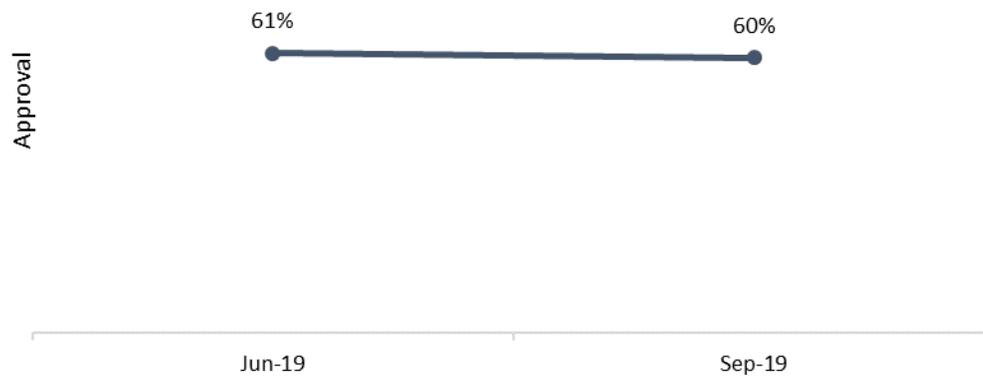
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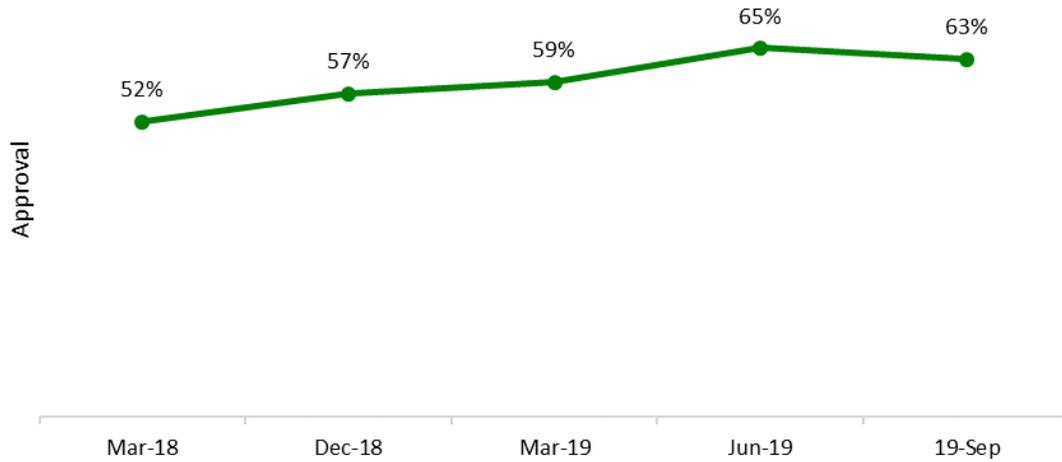
British Columbia Premier John Horgan (NDP)



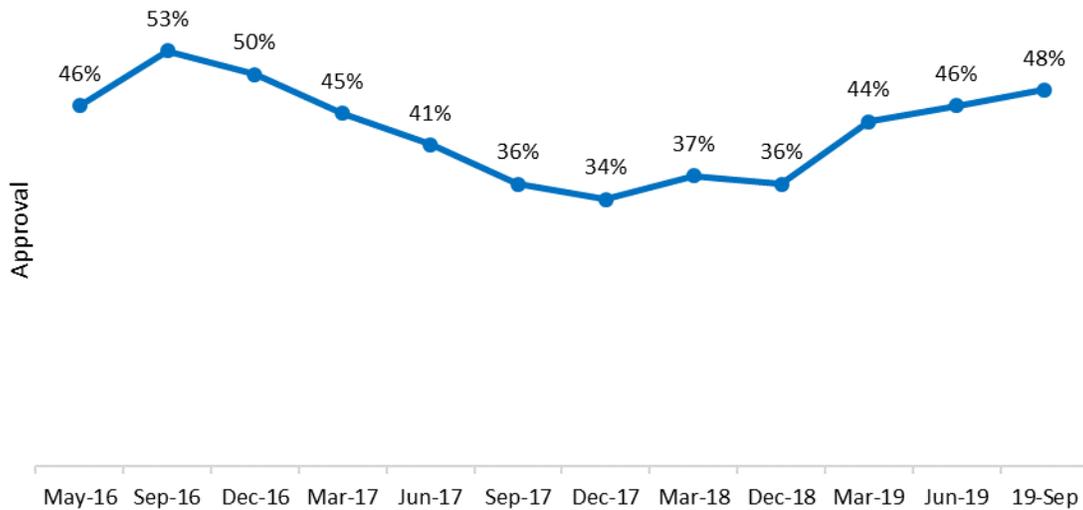
Alberta Premier Jason Kenney (UCP)



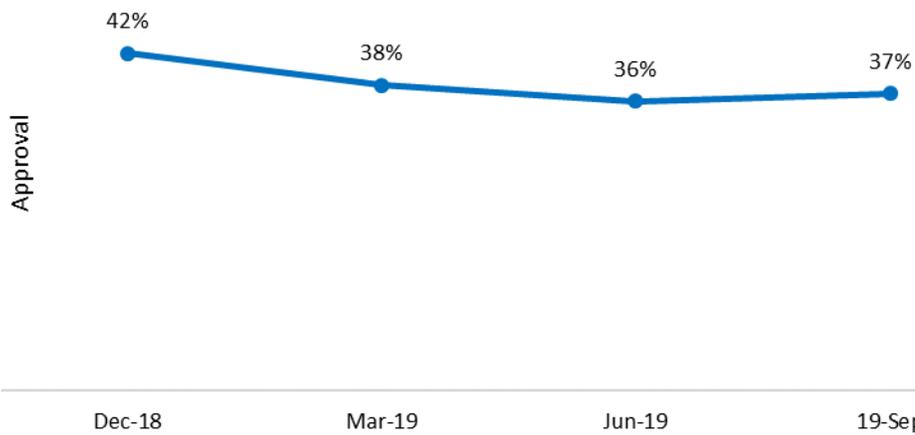
Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe (Saskatchewan Party)



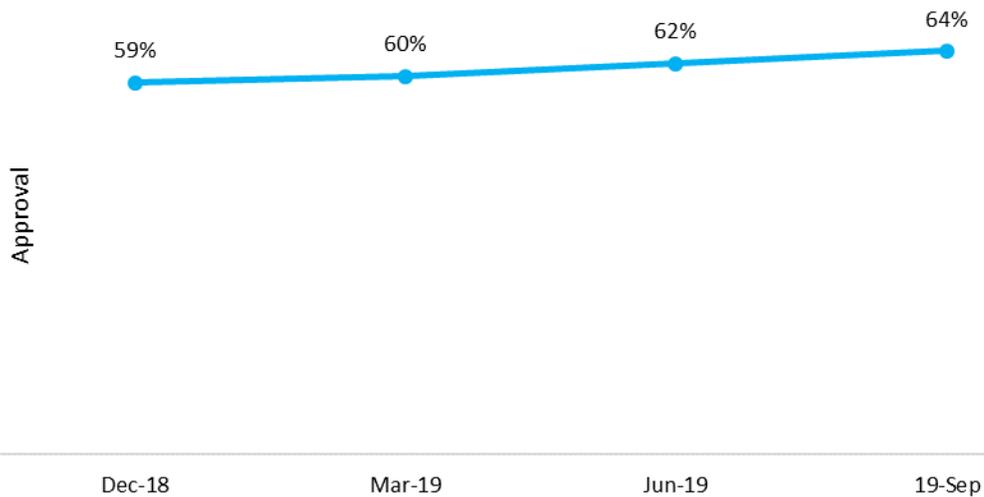
Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister (Progressive Conservative)



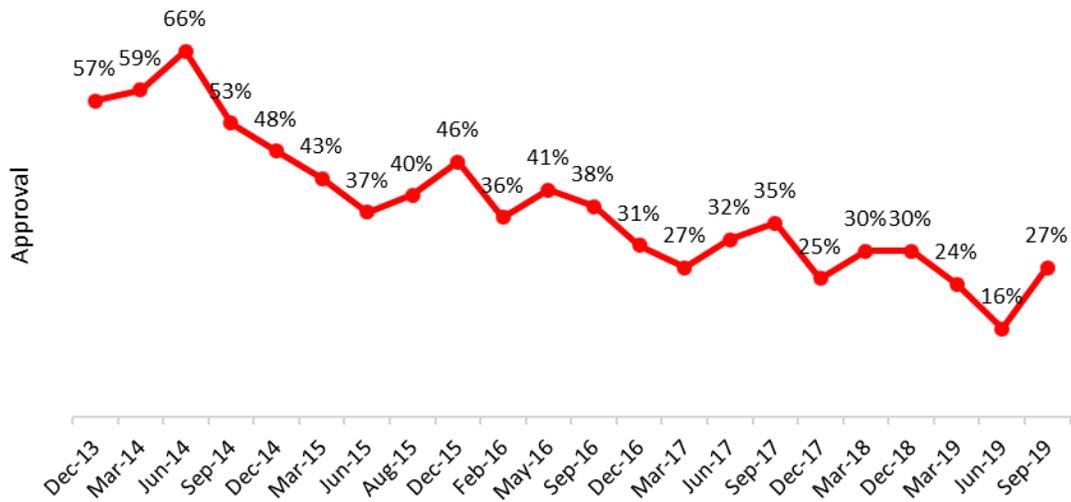
Ontario Premier Doug Ford (Progressive Conservative)



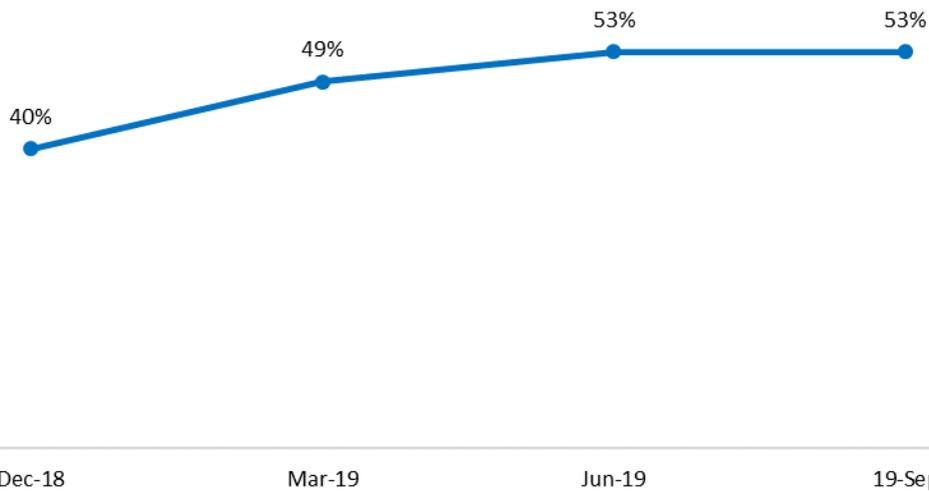
Quebec Premier François Legault (Coalition Avenir Quebec)



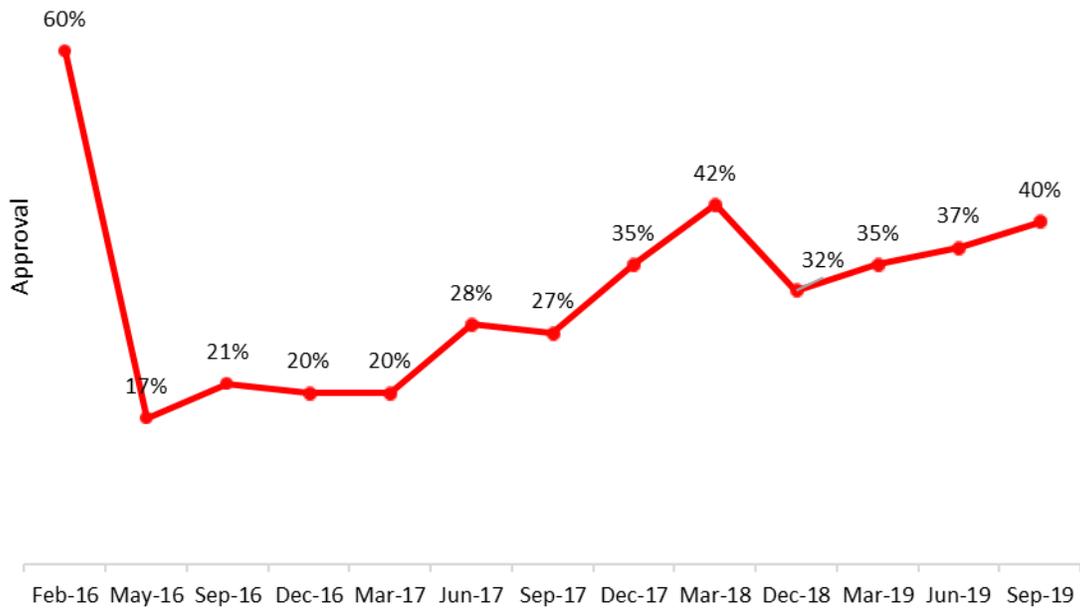
Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil (Liberal)



New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs (Progressive Conservative)



Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball (Liberal)



| Margins of error | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| BC (523) | AB (272) | SK (589) | MB (487) | ON (745) | QC (610) | NB (225) | NS (248) | NFL (172) |
| +/- 4.0% | +/- 6.0% | +/- 4.0% | +/- 4.0% | +/-4.0% | +/- 4.0% | +/-7.0% | +/-6.0% | +/-7.0% |

**Because its small population precludes drawing discrete samples over multiple waves, data on Prince Edward Island is not released.*

| Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following people? | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| (Totals may not equal 100 due to rounding) | | | |
| (unweighted sample sizes) | Approve | Disapprove | Not sure/Can't say |
| British Columbia (N=523): Premier and New Democratic Party leader John Horgan | 54% | 40% | 6% |
| Alberta (N=272): Premier and United Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney | 60% | 39% | 1% |
| Saskatchewan (N=589) Premier and Saskatchewan Party leader Scott Moe | 63% | 36% | 1% |
| Manitoba (N=487) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Brian Pallister | 48% | 50% | 2% |
| Ontario (N=745) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford | 37% | 62% | 1% |
| Québec (N=496) Premier and Coalition Avenir Québec leader François Legault | 64% | 32% | 3% |
| New Brunswick (N=225) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Blaine Higgs | 53% | 44% | 3% |
| Nova Scotia (N=248) Premier and Liberal Party leader Stephen McNeil | 27% | 70% | 4% |
| Newfoundland and Labrador (N=172) Premier and Liberal Party leader Dwight Ball | 40% | 59% | 1% |

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| Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following people? (Percent Approval) | | | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| (unweighted sample sizes) | December 2018 | March 2019 | June 2019 | September 2019 |
| British Columbia (N=523): Premier and New Democratic Party leader John Horgan | 43% | 52% | 52% | 54% |
| Alberta (N=272): Premier and United Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney | - | - | 61% | 60% |
| Saskatchewan (N=589) Premier and Saskatchewan Party leader Scott Moe | 57% | 59% | 65% | 63% |
| Manitoba (N=487) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Brian Pallister | 36% | 44% | 46% | 48% |
| Ontario (N=745) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford | 42% | 38% | 36% | 37% |
| Québec (N=496) Premier and Coalition Avenir Québec leader François Legault | 59% | 60% | 62% | 64% |
| New Brunswick (N=225) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Blaine Higgs | 40% | 49% | 53% | 53% |
| Nova Scotia (N=248) Premier and Liberal Party leader Stephen McNeil | 30% | 24% | 16% | 27% |
| Newfoundland and Labrador (N=172) Premier and Liberal Party leader Dwight Ball | 32% | 35% | 37% | 40% |

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