

## Singh sizzles in English debate, but will NDP momentum solidify, or ultimately fizzle?

*NDP makes gains in voter intention, but certainty of new supporters remains soft*

**October 10, 2019** – Singh's the thing, at least for now. The tight federal election campaign has witnessed few breakout moments or true collapses for the parties and their leaders thus far but NDP leader Jagmeet Singh's performance in Monday night's English language leaders debate appears to be having – at minimum – a short-term beneficial impact on New Democrat fortunes.

The latest public opinion survey from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute indicates a three-point bump for the NDP to 17 per cent of leaning and decided voters – the highest the party has been since the writs were drawn. The party now puts more daylight between itself and the Greens, while narrowing what had earlier been a significant gap between itself and the incumbent Liberals.

This move to the left is defined by two factors: Singh's personal favourability ratings, which continue to exceed that of every other party leader, and the continued, wobbly indefinite vote dynamic evident among those on the left of the political spectrum. Indeed, only one-in-three (32%) NDP supporters say they are "absolutely certain" that the party will earn their choice at the ballot box.

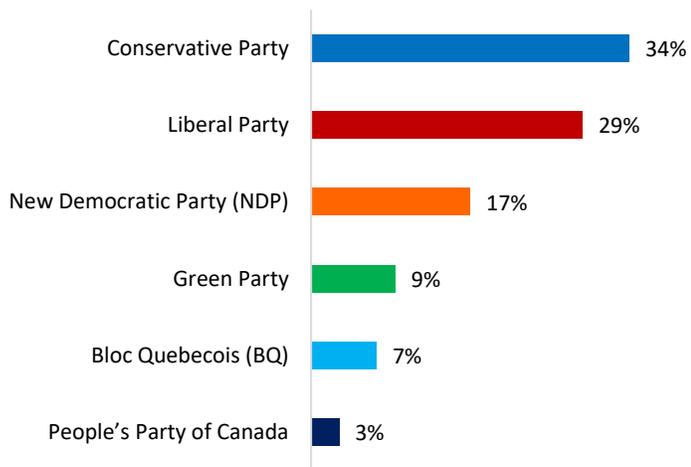
### **Related: Centre-Left Scuffle**

Overall, it is the Conservative Party of Canada that continues to hold a narrow lead over the Liberal Party, 34 per cent to 29 per cent respectively. Recent days have seen declines for the CPC – down three points since last week, while the Liberals stand still – statistically unchanged over the same period of time.

### **More Key Findings:**

- Jagmeet Singh's favourability has increased 20 points, from 39 per cent to 59 per cent since the campaign began. Meanwhile, CPC leader Andrew Scheer is down six points in that period to 38 per cent, and Justin Trudeau is unchanged at 35 per cent.

### Federal vote intention, leaning and decided October 8 - 10, n = 2,926



### **METHODOLOGY:**

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from October 8-10, 2019 among a representative randomized sample of 3,031 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 1.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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- NDP support is up significantly among women aged 18-34, but also finds a boost among men over the age of 34. Young people are the same cohort who turned out big for the Liberals in 2015 and propelled Justin Trudeau's Liberals to victory, but this group traditionally votes at lower rates than the rest of the population.
- Among voters who have not fully committed to their first-choice party and who say that the Liberals are currently their second choice, six-in-ten (59%) say it is at least somewhat likely that they will support the Liberals.

### **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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#### **Post-debate picture**

Many Canadians watched, listened to, or otherwise followed the official English debate last week in search of clarity. If anything, however, the macro picture of this election is muddier than ever.

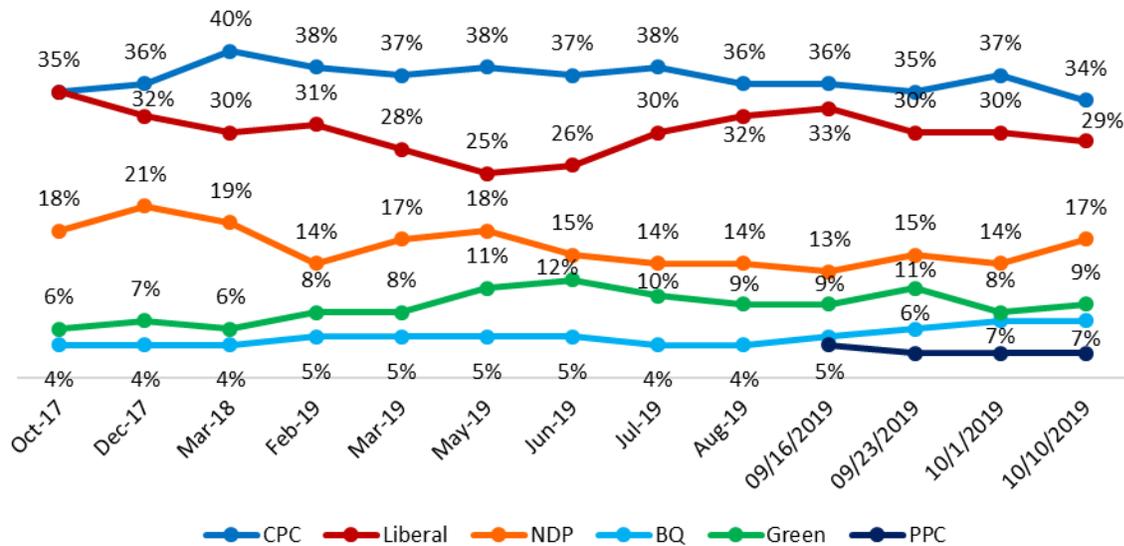
On the strength of Singh's performance in the debate, the NDP see their vote intention numbers rise to a six-month high, as 17 per cent of Canadians now say they will support the party. The news is more disappointing for the Conservative Party. While their lead over the incumbent Liberals still sits at five points nationally, the party now generates support from just one-in-three Canadians (34%). The Liberals are the choice for three-in-ten (29%):

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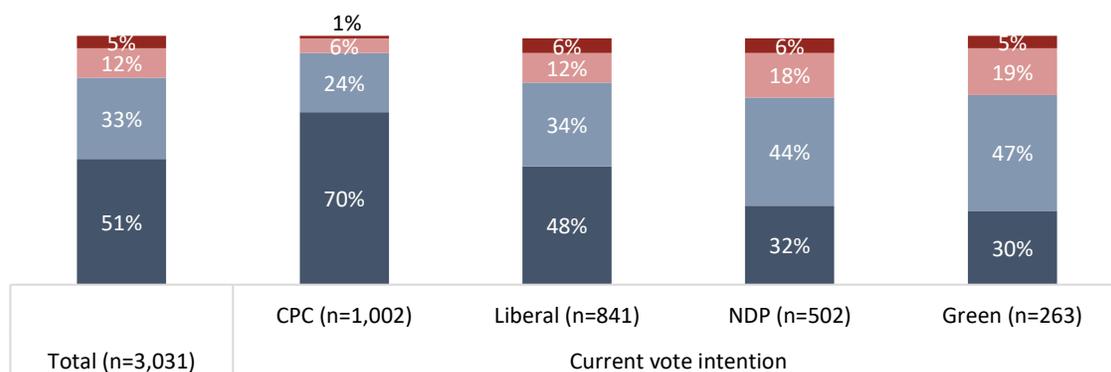
**Federal vote intention over time, decided voters including leaners**



**Vote certainty remains fickle**

While New Democrat campaign headquarters may be buzzing with the party’s newfound momentum, there is, nonetheless, a case for caution. The centre-left vote continues to be anything but decided. Consider that just three-in-ten of those who said they will support both the NDP (32%) and the Green Party (30%) also said that their vote is absolutely certain. Meanwhile, half of those who support the Liberals (48%) and seven-in-ten Conservatives (70%) are locked in:

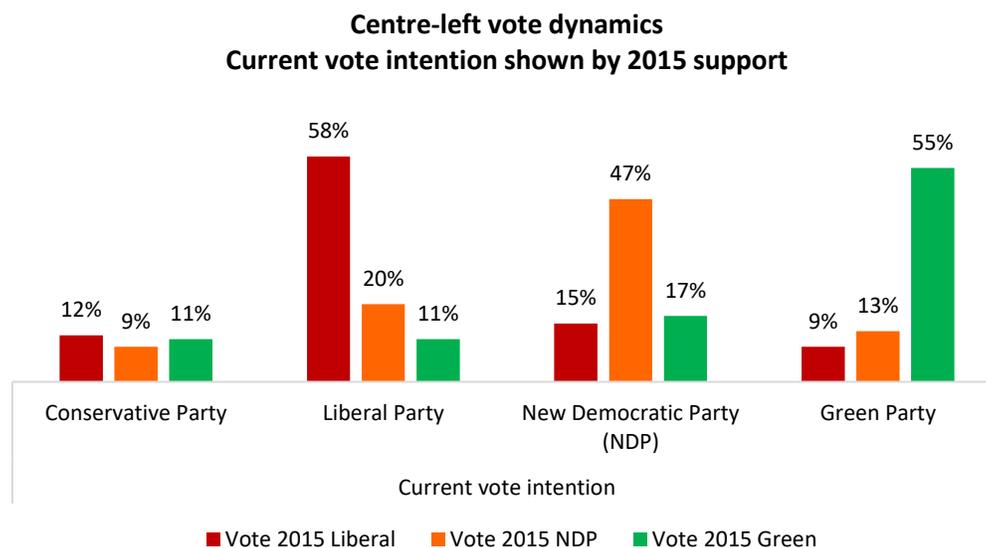
**Vote certainty by party**



- Not certain at all – You have no idea who you’ll support
- Less certain – You could change your mind
- Fairly certain – You feel like you’ve made up your mind
- Absolutely certain of who you will support – no way you could change your mind

### Centre-left dynamics

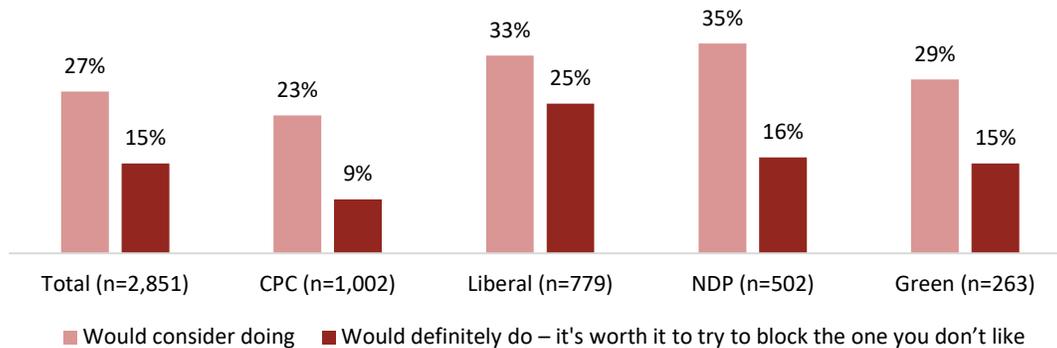
Notably, there is significant cross-pollination within the centre-left universe. Among those who supported Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberals in the last election, six-in-ten (58%) say they will support the party again. A considerable number, however, have shifted to the NDP (15%) and CPC (12%). For Singh’s New Democrats to cash in on post-debate momentum, the party will likely need to draw back portions of the one-in-five 2015 voters *in its own base* who have shifted to the Liberals, as well as those who have moved into the Green (13%) and Conservative (9%) camps:



### Considerable number would vote strategically

The situation on the ground, in individual ridings, may also play a role as voting begins. This idea comes from the apparent willingness of Canadians across all parties to consider a second choice if they felt that it would lead to the defeat of a less favourable candidate. A staggering six-in-ten Liberal supporters (58%) say they would consider changing their vote intention for strategic purposes, while half of New Democrats say the same (51%). Conservatives are least likely to compromise, again showing the instability of the centre-left vote:

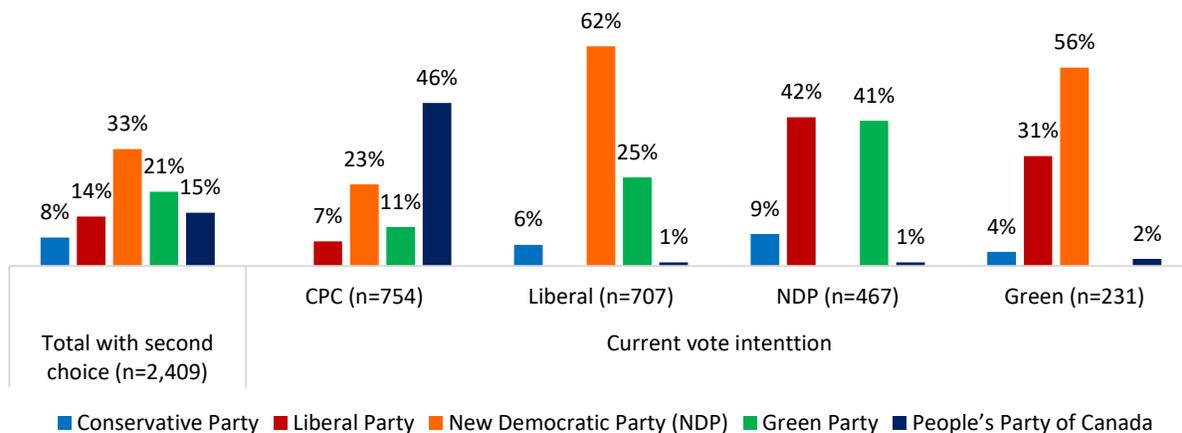
**How likely is it that you would consider shifting your own support towards another candidate who has a better chance of beating that candidate you don't like?**



**NDP most preferred second choice**

What all this means for the Liberals, New Democrats and Greens remains to be seen. Jagmeet Singh's party has momentum, while the Conservative and Liberal Parties appear unable to create considerable traction in their quests for their own majorities. If, indeed, many Canadians do go with a second choice in a strategic voting scenario, it appears that the NDP stands to gain the most. One-in-three voters with a second choice say that the NDP is their backup plan, including six-in-ten Liberals (62%) and Greens (56%).

**Second choice by current vote intention**



**Young women back NDP**

While it is perhaps too soon to declare this bump for the NDP an “orange wave” – the party's momentum is propelled by a demographic that proved to be the Liberals ace in the hole four years ago. As young voters rallied around Justin Trudeau in the 2015 election, this time, they appear to be drawing inspiration and excitement from Singh.

Comparing vote intention across age groups to the Angus Reid Institute's report from October 1, Singh now generates support from 38 per cent of women between the ages of 18 and 34. However, his party's vote intention has also risen among men over the age of 34. The Conservative Party's slight dip in vote intention is drawn from men between the ages of 35 and 54, and women across all age groups:

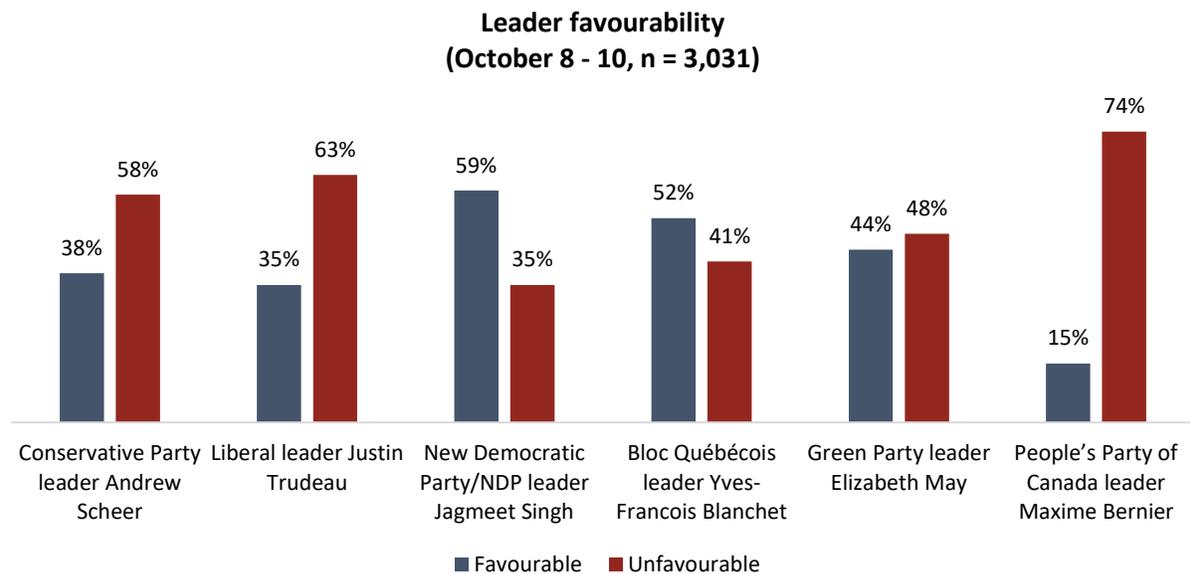
Federal vote intention decided and leaning voters							
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (2,926)	Men			Women		
		18-34 (385)	35-54 (504)	55+ (570)	18-34 (353)	35-54 (515)	55+ (599)
Conservative Party	34% (-3)	31% (-)	42% (-8)	51% (+4)	14% (-3)	27% (-2)	32% (-8)
Liberal Party	29% (-1)	24% (-4)	28% (+1)	23% (-7)	31% (-)	32% (-1)	34% (+1)
New Democratic Party (NDP)	17% (+3)	17% (-4)	14% (+8)	8% (+4)	38% (+6)	23% (+1)	12% (+2)
Green Party	9% (+1)	14% (+6)	7% (-2)	5% (-2)	13% (-)	9% (-)	8% (+2)
Bloc Quebecois (BQ)	7% (-)	5% (-1)	4% (+1)	11% (-)	3% (+1)	6% (+1)	13% (+3)
People's Party of Canada	3% (-)	8% (+2)	4% (+1)	1% (-1)	1% (-3)	3% (+1)	2% (-)

Regionally, the NDP is now competitive with the Liberal Party in British Columbia, but remains a non-factor in Quebec, where it had most of its electoral success in 2015. Ontario remains a neck and neck race between the Liberal Party and Conservatives. In Quebec, the Bloc Quebecois has drawn even with the Liberals. Both parties receive support from three-in-ten Quebec residents.

Federal vote intention decided and leaning voters							
(Unweighted sample sizes)	Total (2,869)	Region					
		BC (472)	AB (293)	SK/MB (390)	ON (820)	QC (606)	ATL (287)
Conservative Party	34%	36%	59%	49%	36%	15%	32%
Liberal Party	29%	23%	16%	23%	33%	30%	35%
New Democratic Party (NDP)	17%	22%	15%	21%	19%	12%	16%
Green Party	9%	15%	5%	4%	8%	8%	15%
Bloc Quebecois (BQ)	7%	-	-	-	-	31%	-
People's Party of Canada	3%	3%	5%	2%	3%	4%	2%

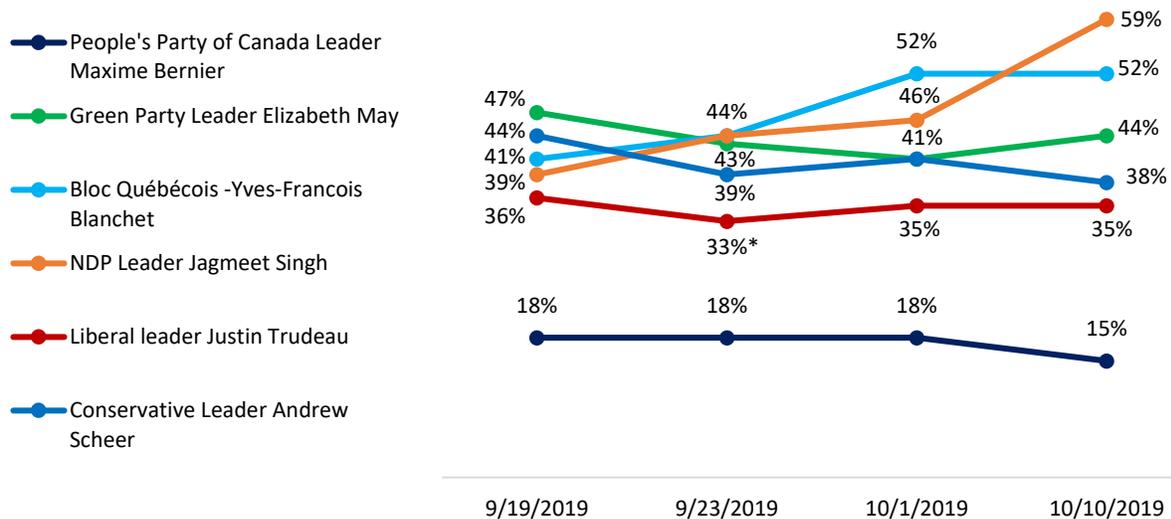
**Leadership: Singh buoyed by post-debate boost, Scheer falters, Trudeau stuck**

Canada’s English language debate received mixed reviews, as much of the night featured shorter than ideal periods for discussion and more cross-talk than substantive debate. Indicators suggest that Canadians perceived a winner, however, and crown Singh king of the event. This sentiment is evident in his approval rating considerably outperforming that of all other federal leaders:



The boost in favourability for Singh is even more striking when compared with the previous three weeks. While Andrew Scheer’s favourability has declined six points, and Justin Trudeau’s has barely moved one way or the other, Singh has enjoyed a 20-point increase:

**Leader favourability  
(September 19 - October 10, 2019)**



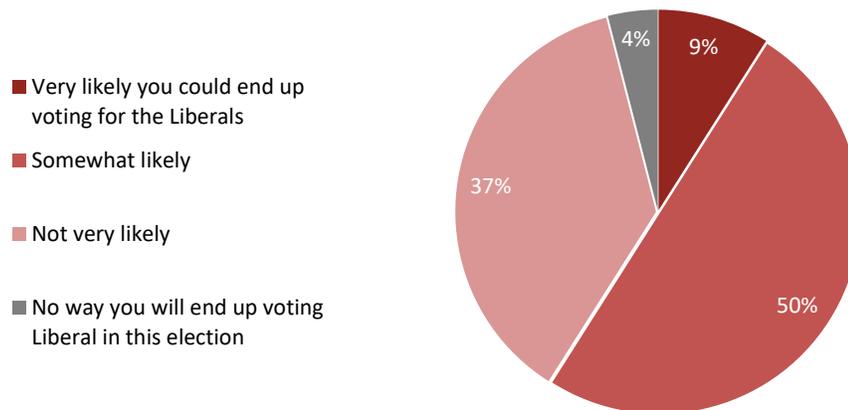
\*represents approval of Trudeau on this wave, not favourability

**But will soft, non-Liberals yet come around?**

With so much of the vote base uncertain, it is worthwhile to consider potential room for the Liberal Party – stuck in momentum – to grow. When respondents who indicate they do not have a party they will absolutely vote for, and who say that the Liberal Party is a second choice for them, were subsequently asked how likely it is that they’ll end up supporting Trudeau’s party when it comes down to election day, the answers are revealing.

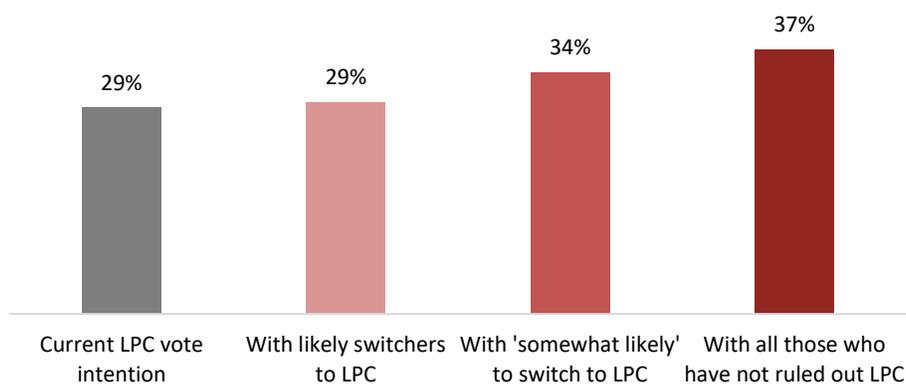
Among this subset of voters – approximately nine per cent of the total decided voting base – a considerable number say that they are at least somewhat likely to support the party when they fill their ballot, and just 4 per cent rule the Liberals out entirely.

**How likely is it that you will ultimately support the Liberal party  
Among those who have Liberals as 2nd choice and are not  
committed to their 1st choice (n=244)**



In the absence of any other movement that may occur between parties as the campaign continues to unfold, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the Liberals attract a significant number of supporters – and increase their vote share. Consider the following:

**Liberal support scenarios when responses applied from those  
who have Liberals as 2nd choice and are not committed to  
their 1st choice (n=244)**

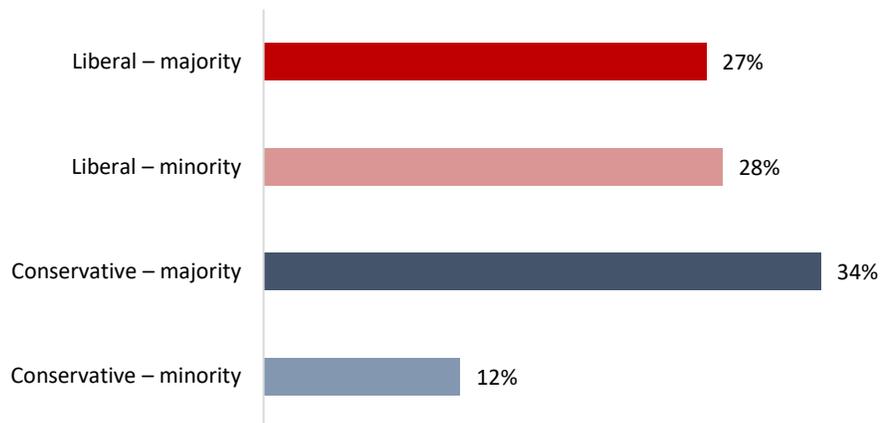


**Slight majority prefer a Liberal govt over CPC, four-in-ten want a minority**

By some [seat estimates](#), the result of a minority or majority government is as good as a coin flip on October 21. Numerous scenarios are still in play. If they had their preference between the Liberals or the Conservatives forming government and the form that government would take, a majority CPC government

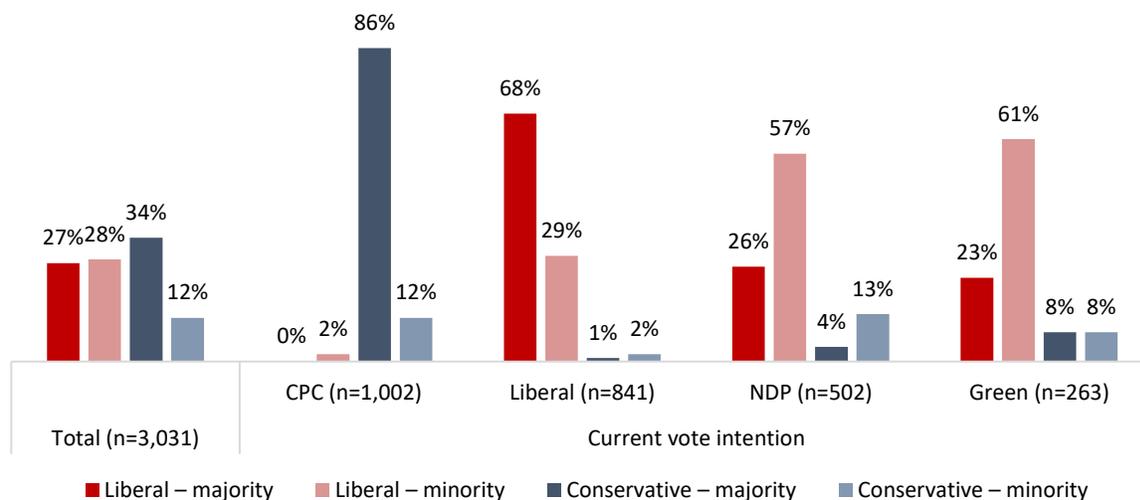
is the top overall choice. This finding is accompanied by the strength of near-unanimous sentiment among Conservatives that a majority CPC government would be the best arrangement. Overall, however, the Liberals are preferred to form government, with the same number of Canadians saying a Liberal majority (27%) or minority (28%) would be the best outcome:

**Which of these four possible outcomes would you yourself most prefer?**



Conservative supporters would clearly prefer a CPC majority, but the situation is far different for those who would prefer a Liberal government. Six-in-ten NDP (57%) and Green (61%) voters say that they would prefer a Liberal minority, while three-in-ten Liberal voters themselves agree (29%).

**Which of these four possible outcomes would you yourself most prefer?**



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