

WE Scandal: Half of Canadians approve of Trudeau as base stays committed, anger among non-Liberals grows

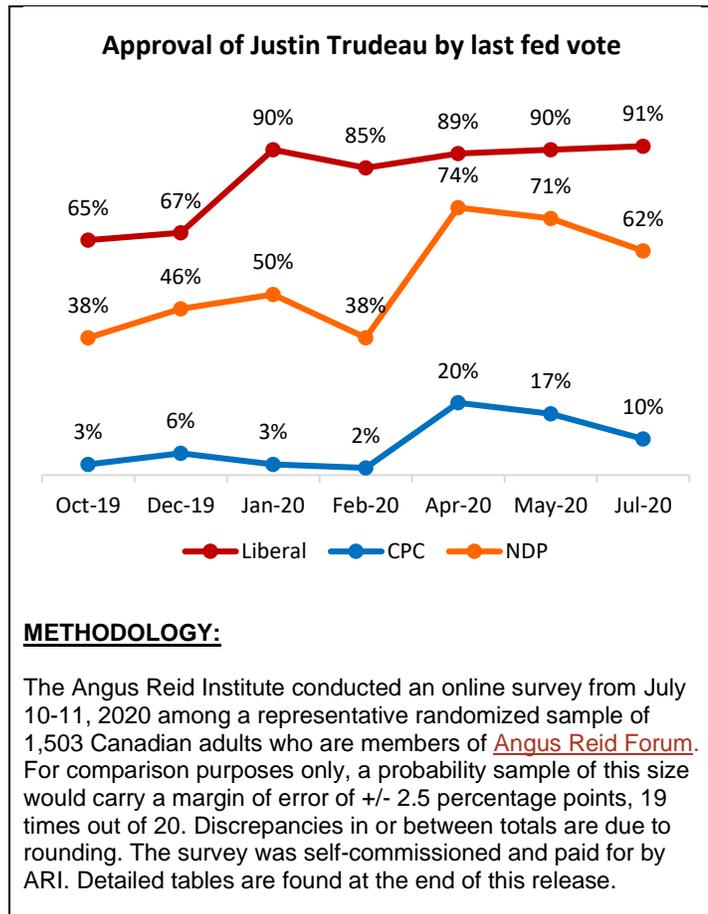
Proportion voicing strong disapproval of PM (34%) now doubles those voicing strong approval (16%)

July 13, 2020 – New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute shows Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's approval has dropped five points in the first reading of public opinion since questions arose regarding his government's – and family's – ties to the WE group of organizations.

The study indicates that half of Canadians (50%) are in approval of the prime minister's performance while nearly the same number (48%) disapprove. This represents a slight drop from his 55 per cent approval in May but still a considerable increase over his pre-COVID-19 era approval in February (33%).

The intensity of positive versus negative appraisal is striking – twice as many Canadians now say they strongly disapprove (34%) of Trudeau's performance as strongly approve (16%).

This slip in approval is largely attributable to diminishing praise from non-Liberals. While 91 per cent of his party's voters say they approve of the PM, his approval is down nine points among NDP voters and seven points among CPC voters since May.



That Trudeau's approval is still at fully half may be driven by the issues on which Canadians are focused most. Overall, Canadians say they are most concerned with the response to the COVID-19 outbreak (38%) and the economic (33%) and healthcare (29%) challenges that the country is facing. That said, one-third of past Conservative voters (32%) identify ethics and corruption as a top issue, compared to just four per cent of past Liberal voters and seven per cent of past NDP voters.

More Key Findings:

- Women are significantly more likely to approve of Prime Minister Trudeau (58%) compared to men (41%). This is true across all age groups
- Half of men, however, say that Trudeau has done a good job of handling the COVID-19 outbreak (50%). This jumps to two-thirds (67%) among women

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

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.

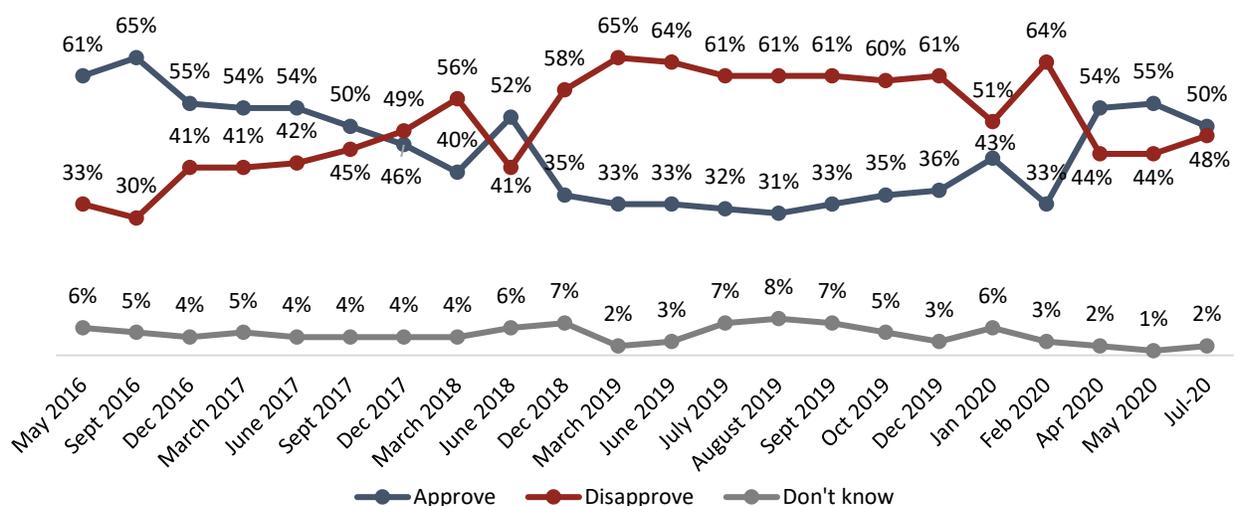
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Headlines last week were dominated by the WE Charity saga emerging from Ottawa. The Prime Minister was reportedly involved in discussions that led to the Canadian charity earning a \$19.5 million no-bid contract to oversee a new student-volunteer program, funded by the government, worth more than \$900 million. WE has since stepped away from the grant, and the federal ethics investigator has opened an investigation into a potential conflict of interest.

Last week it emerged that Trudeau’s mother and brother had been paid speaking fees totalling more than \$350 thousand dollars to appear at WE Charity events. Trudeau has faced calls from the Bloc Quebecois to step aside as prime minister until the investigation has run its course, and Conservatives have requested that a criminal investigation be opened and that Trudeau testify in front of a parliamentary committee as to what role he played in the decision.

Prime Minister Trudeau has promised to collaborate with the investigation, the third of his five years in office. Overall, half of Canadians (50%) approve of his performance, and half (48%) disapprove:

Do you approve or disapprove of Justin Trudeau?

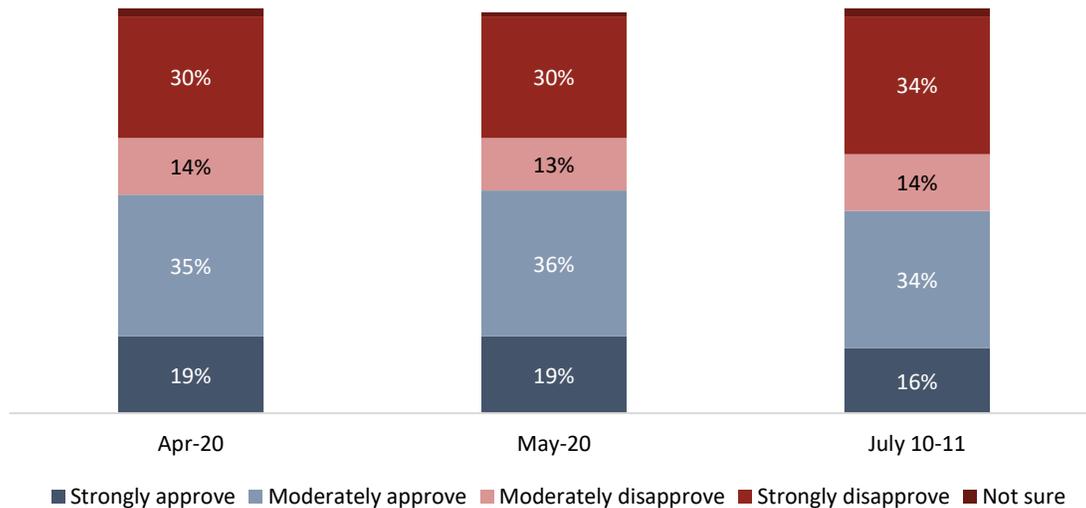


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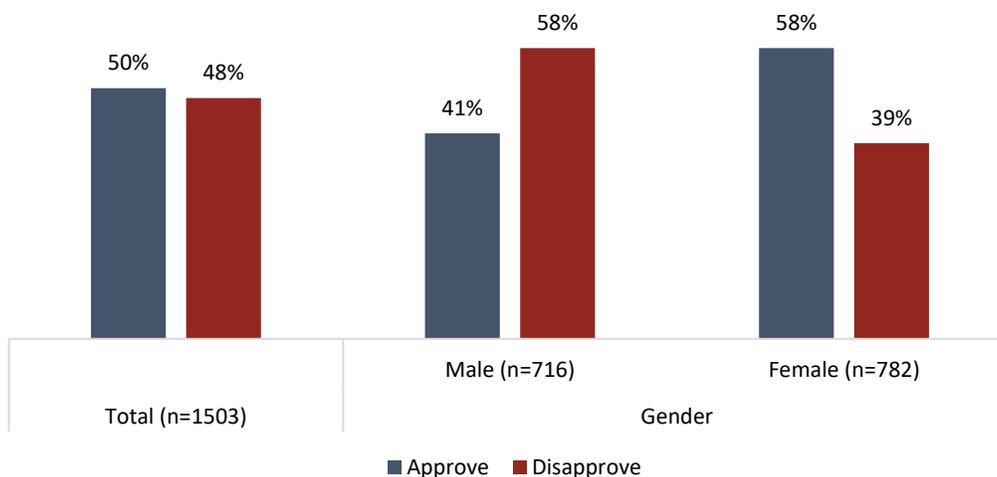
Support for the Prime Minister is by no means vociferous. Just 16 per cent of Canadians say they strongly approve of his performance, half the number who strongly disapprove (34%):

Approve or Disapprove of Prime Minister Trudeau



Trudeau's popularity is concentrated among women, with three-in-five (58%) approving of him compared to just two-in-five men (41%). This proportion holds across age groups as well ([see detailed tables for more](#)).

Do you approve or disapprove of Justin Trudeau?

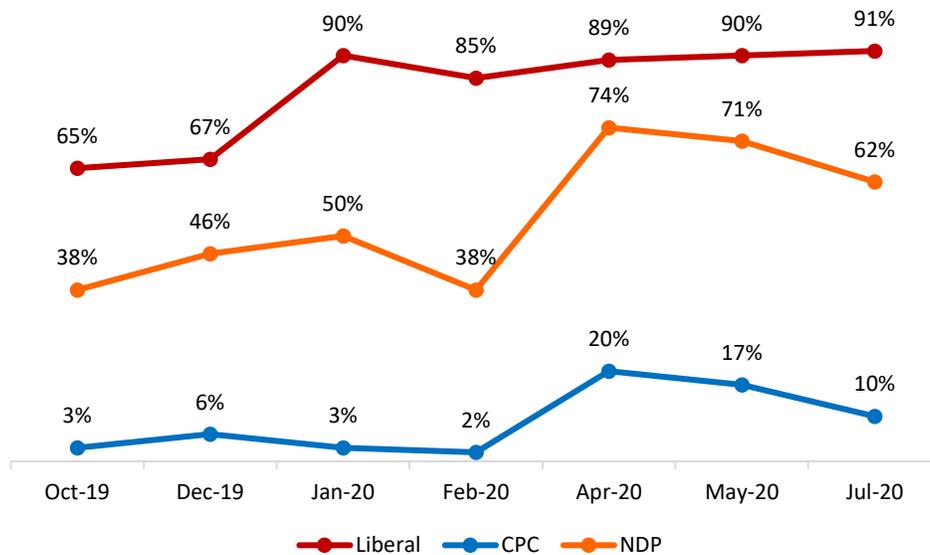


Some of Trudeau's lost approval is attributable to fading good will among non-Liberals. Opinions of him are stable among his own party's voters but he has lost 12 points among past NDP voters and 10 points among past CPC voters since April:

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Approval of Justin Trudeau by federal vote last



While the scope and potential damage of the WE Charity saga remains to be seen, currently it appears to be a much bigger issue among Conservatives than Liberal or NDP supporters. Consider the top issues facing the country as chosen by Canadians. While 32 per cent of past CPC voters say ethics and corruption is among their top three concerns, only four per cent of Liberals and seven per cent of New Democrats agree. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing health and economic challenges it has brought appear to be taking up most of the air in the room for past Liberals, while past NDP voters cite income inequality and climate change as their top two priorities:

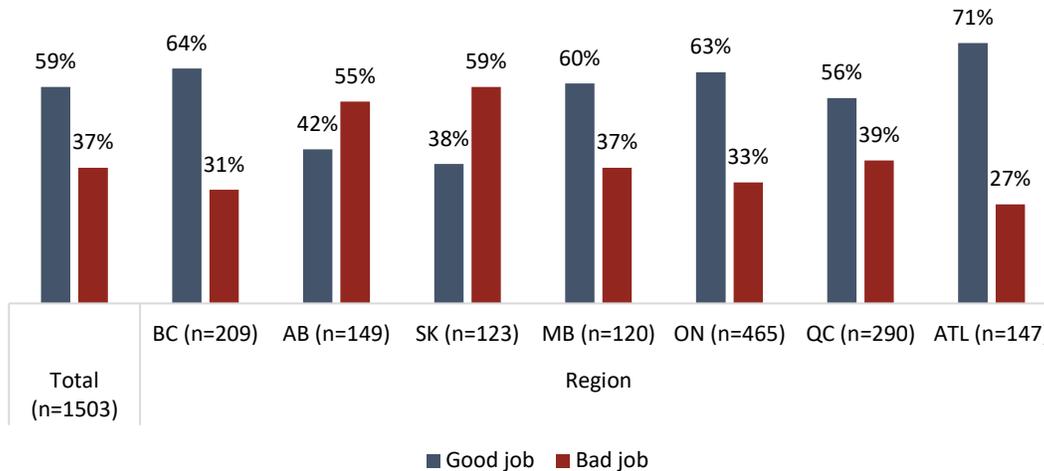
What are the top issues facing the country? (Select up to three)				
Red Box = 40% or higher/Pink Box = 20% - 39%				
	Total (n=1,503)	Federal vote 2019		
		CPC (n=471)	Liberal (n=444)	NDP (n=219)
COVID-19 response	38%	23%	52%	39%
The Economy	33%	47%	32%	13%
Health Care	29%	16%	41%	35%
The Deficit / Government spending	28%	53%	15%	8%
Environment / Climate Change	28%	4%	38%	45%
Jobs / Unemployment	21%	21%	26%	17%
Income inequality/Poverty	21%	3%	24%	47%
Ethics / Corruption	16%	32%	4%	7%
Housing affordability	15%	8%	16%	24%
Taxes	12%	21%	6%	6%
Energy / Natural Resources / Pipelines	11%	21%	6%	7%
First Nations / Indigenous issues	10%	2%	12%	24%

On his handling of the COVID-19 outbreak – three-in-five (59%) say they feel the PM has done a good job over the past months, while 37 per cent say he has done a poor job. Majorities in each region, with the exception of Alberta and Saskatchewan, offer praise:

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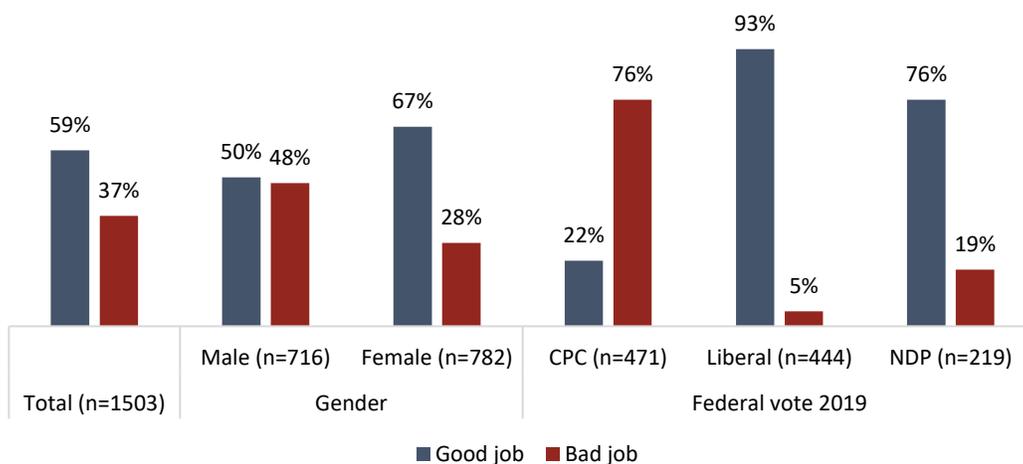
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Do you think Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good or bad job handling this whole issue regarding the coronavirus?



On this important issue, Trudeau receives higher marks across each of the previously discussed gender and political categories compared to his overall approval:

Do you think Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good or bad job handling this whole issue regarding the coronavirus?



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