

Not just another brick in the Wall: Most say departing Saskatchewan premier will be remembered fondly

Men and older residents give outgoing Saskatchewan Party leader Brad Wall highest marks

September 26, 2017 – As Brad Wall prepares to step down after nearly a decade as Canada’s most popular premier, a new analysis of quarterly polling data from the Angus Reid Institute finds Saskatchewan residents anticipating a positive legacy for their departing leader.

Though [budget cuts](#) and [scandals](#) have troubled Wall in recent months, a full majority of provincial residents (54%) say he will go down in history as either an “above average” (29%) or “outstanding” (25%) premier, while more think his accomplishments will outweigh his failures than the other way around.

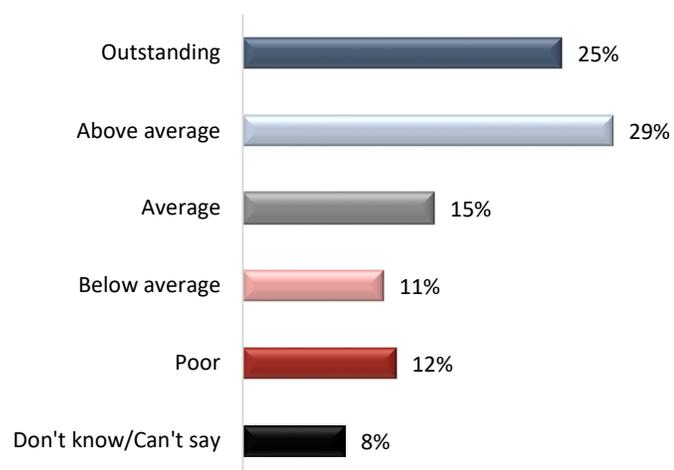
These findings come alongside a four-point uptick in Wall’s approval rating since last quarter, before he had announced his intention to step down. At 49 per cent approval, Wall will leave politics more popular with residents of his own province than any other premier in Canada.

[Related: Premiers’ Performance: As Horgan enters office on a high, Wall is set to depart on top](#)

More Key Findings:

- Asked to consider Wall’s impact on the biggest problems facing Saskatchewan today, twice as many say the premier made progress solving them during his tenure (46%) as say he tried to solve the problems, but failed (23%)
- Roughly half of Saskatchewan’s citizens (47%) say Wall’s accomplishments as premier will ultimately outweigh his failures, while 30 per cent say his failures will outweigh his accomplishments. One-in-six (17%) say it is too soon to tell

How do you think Brad Wall - as Premier of Saskatchewan - will go down in history? Will he be remembered as ...



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute analyzed the results of an online survey conducted from September 5 – 19, 2017, among a representative randomized sample of 1,056 Saskatchewan residents who are members of the [Angus Reid Forum](#). The survey data were donated by MARU/Matchbox. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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- Men and residents ages 55 and older will remember Wall especially fondly. Six-in-ten in each group say he will go down as either an “above average” or “outstanding” premier

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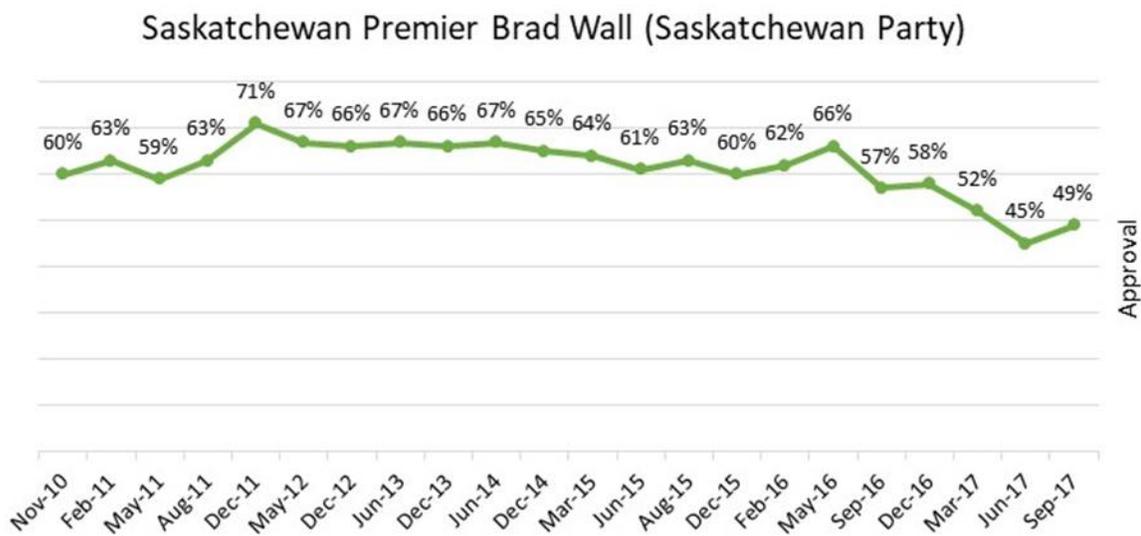
- **Most think Wall will be remembered fondly**
- **Accomplishments and failures**
- **Progress on solving Saskatchewan’s problems**

Most think Wall will be remembered fondly

Brad Wall came to power in 2007 [promising to bring investment](#) and economic confidence to a prairie province that, at the time, was lacking in both. Wall’s rise coincided with – and he would argue caused – an economic boom in the province, driven largely by the resource sector.

In 2008, the Economist proclaimed Saskatchewan “[the new Alberta](#).” Economic growth in the province between 2008 and 2013 [rivalled that of British Columbia and Ontario](#), and Saskatchewan’s population [has grown](#) during Wall’s government, as people moved – or moved back – to the province for work.

Wall’s popularity soared with his province’s fortunes. He was [the most popular premier](#) in Canada – according to the Angus Reid Institute’s quarterly approval survey – for the better part of seven years. Though his approval rating has slipped in recent months, he retains that title in ARI’s [most recent sounding](#):



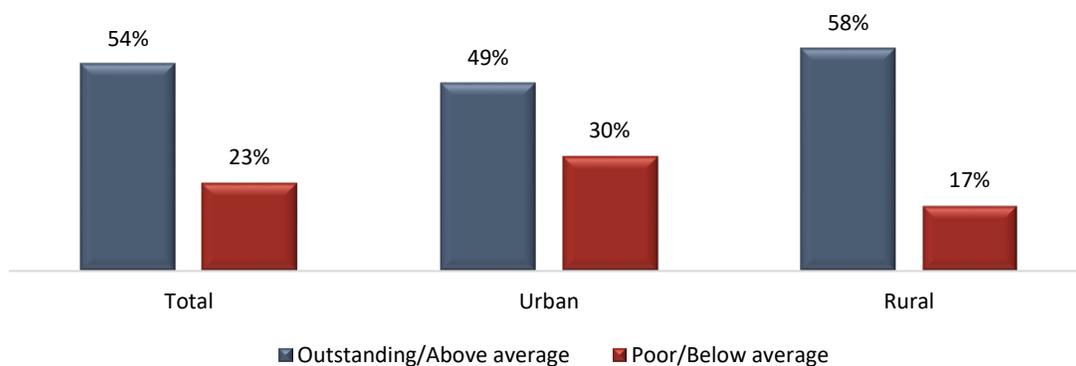
Given this legacy, it’s perhaps not surprising that most respondents say they believe Wall will be remembered in a positive light. Some 54 per cent of Saskatchewan residents say Wall will go down in history as an “above average” or “outstanding” premier, while fewer than one-in-four (23%) say he will be remembered as “below average” or “poor.”

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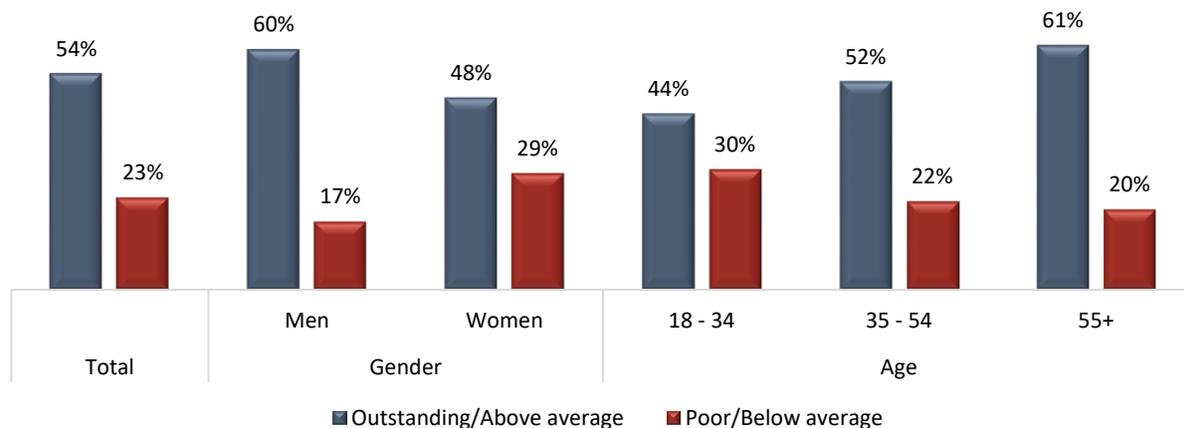
The rural residents that make up much of the Saskatchewan Party's base feel especially positively about Wall's legacy, though those who think he will be remembered fondly also outnumber those who think the opposite in urban areas:

How do you think Brad Wall - as Premier of Saskatchewan - will go down in history? Will he be remembered as ...



Older respondents (those ages 55 and older) and men are also more likely to say Wall will come to be seen as above average or outstanding, while women and younger respondents are less uniformly convinced of the outgoing premier's tenure and legacy:

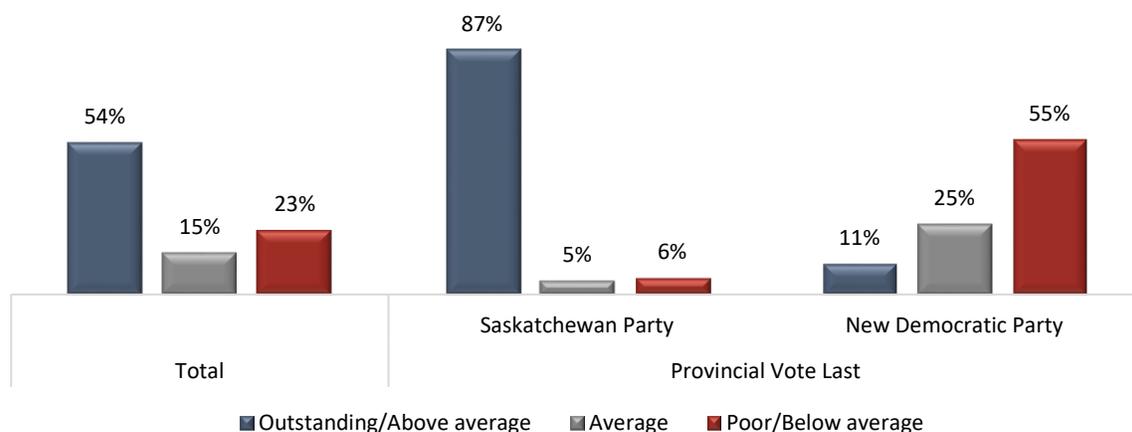
How do you think Brad Wall - as Premier of Saskatchewan - will go down in history? Will he be remembered as ...



Political leanings obviously play a major role in views on Wall's legacy. Those who voted for the New Democratic Party in the 2016 election tend to feel strongly that the premier will be remembered as "below

average or poor, but fully one-in-four (25%) say he will be seen as average, and more than one-in-ten (11%) say he will be viewed even more favourably. Past Saskatchewan Party voters, meanwhile, are overwhelmingly positive. Almost nine-in-ten say Wall will be remembered as above average or outstanding:

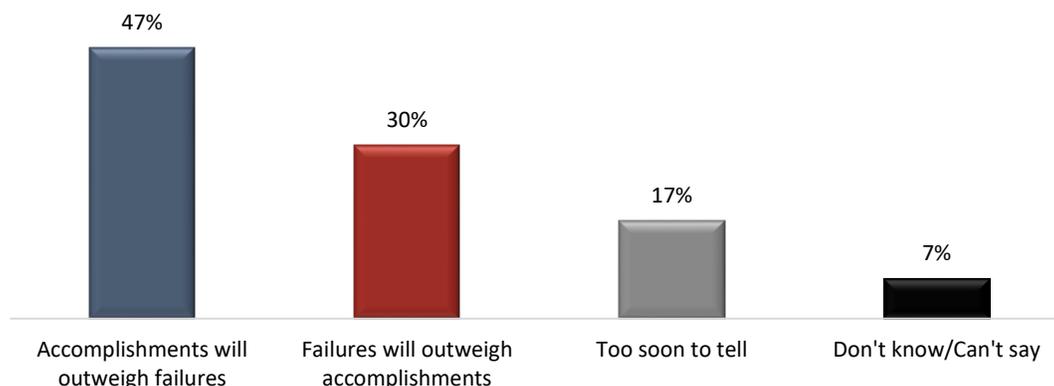
How do you think Brad Wall - as Premier of Saskatchewan - will go down in history? Will he be remembered as:



Accomplishments and failures

Given the widespread belief that Brad Wall's time as Premier of Saskatchewan has been better than most, it would stand to reason that respondents also tend to say his government's accomplishments will outweigh its failures, as seen in the following graph:

In the long run, do you think the accomplishments of the Saskatchewan Party government under Brad Wall will outweigh its failures, or will the failures outweigh the accomplishments?



In recent years especially, however, the Wall government has had its share of missteps and failures. While Wall's Saskatchewan Party easily won the April 2016 election, the premier's third majority mandate has been marked by struggles with deficits, strained relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents, and a scandal over a crown corporation apparently over-paying for land owned by a Saskatchewan Party donor.

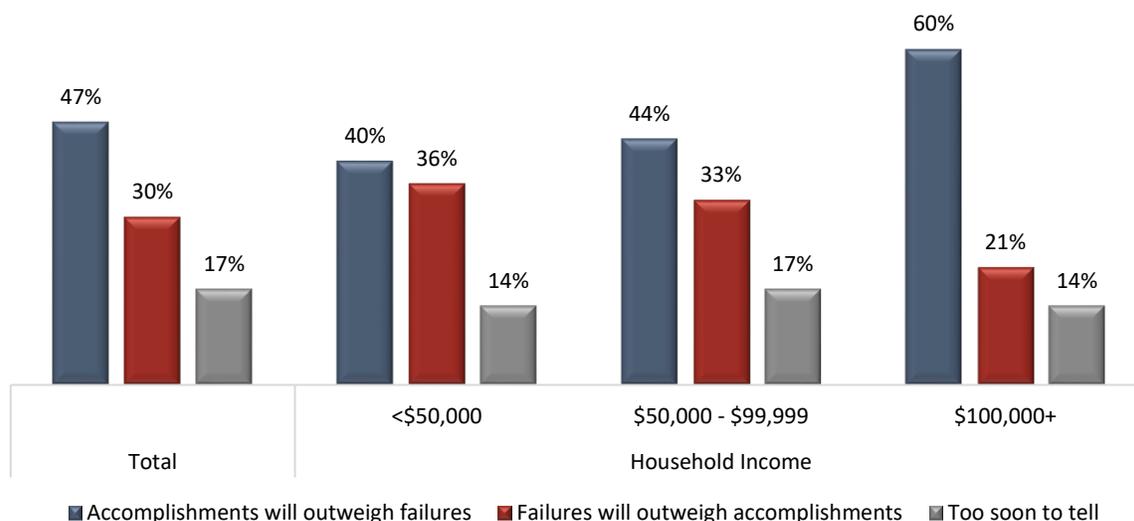
When Wall's replacement is chosen in January of next year, these problems will cease to be his direct responsibility, but there is a good chance they will remain unresolved.

This lingering uncertainty may help to explain the gap between the majority who think Wall's legacy will be better than average and the plurality who think his government's accomplishments will outweigh its failures. The one-in-six who take a wait-and-see approach to answering this question could be anticipating further deficits, spending cuts, and scandals. Or, they could be expecting a future government to undo some of Wall's achievements.

Demographically, the same groups that are more likely to view Wall as an "above average" or "outstanding" premier are also more likely to say that his government's accomplishments will outweigh its failures (see summary tables at the end of this release).

Respondents from households with annual incomes of \$100,000 or more are also especially likely to say the Wall government's accomplishments will outweigh its failures – a finding that may reflect satisfaction with economic gains they made during his decade of leadership.

In the long run, do you think the accomplishments of the Saskatchewan Party government under Brad Wall will outweigh its failures, or will the failures outweigh the accomplishments?



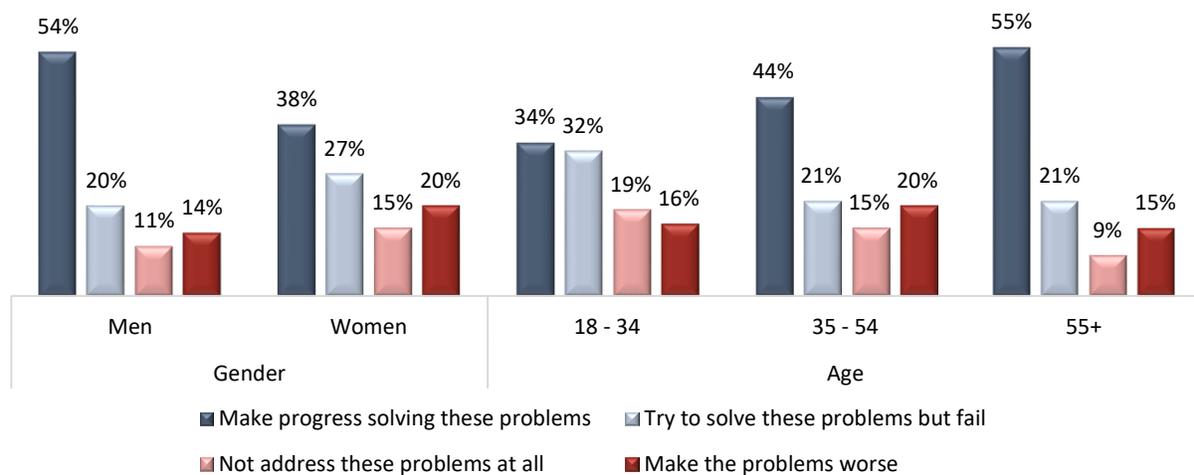
Progress on solving Saskatchewan's problems

In the end, Saskatchewanians are inclined to see Brad Wall as a problem-solver – and a successful one. Asked to consider Wall's impact on whatever they perceive to be the biggest problems facing the province these days, respondents are twice as likely to say he made progress on solving these problems than to offer any other response.

Almost half (46%) say Wall made progress, while fewer than one-in-four (23%) say he tried to solve the problems, but failed. Fewer still say he didn't address the province's problems (13%) or made them worse (17%).

Again, gender and age are key fault lines for opinion on this question, though respondents across demographics are more likely to say Wall made progress than to say anything else:

Take a moment to think about the biggest problems facing Saskatchewan today. What do you think Brad Walls impact was on these problems? Did he ...



*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.*

Summary tables follow.

How do you think Brad Wall – as Premier of Saskatchewan – will go down in history? Will he be remembered as ...						
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (1056)	Gender		Age		
		Men (514)	Women (542)	18 – 34 (74*)	35-54 (235)	55+ (747)
Outstanding	25%	30%	21%	20%	24%	30%
Above average	29%	31%	26%	24%	29%	31%
Average	15%	17%	14%	15%	17%	13%
Below average	11%	8%	14%	21%	8%	8%
Poor	12%	9%	15%	9%	14%	12%
Don't know/Can't say	8%	6%	9%	11%	8%	5%

How do you think Brad Wall – as Premier of Saskatchewan – will go down in history? Will he be remembered as ...			
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (1056)	Sub-Region	
		Urban (604)	Rural (452)
Outstanding	25%	20%	30%
Above average	29%	28%	29%
Average	15%	15%	15%
Below average	11%	16%	7%
Poor	12%	14%	10%
Don't know/Can't say	8%	6%	9%

How do you think Brad Wall – as Premier of Saskatchewan – will go down in history? Will he be remembered as ...			
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (1056)	2016 Provincial Vote	
		Saskatchewan Party (597)	NDP (281)
Outstanding	25%	44%	2%
Above average	29%	42%	9%
Average	15%	5%	25%
Below average	11%	4%	23%
Poor	12%	2%	32%
Don't know/Can't say	8%	2%	8%

In the long run, do you think the accomplishments of the Saskatchewan Party government under Brad Wall will outweigh its failures, or will the failures outweigh the accomplishments?						
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (1056)	Gender		Age		
		Men (514)	Women (542)	18 – 34 (74*)	35-54 (235)	55+ (747)
Accomplishments will outweigh failures	47%	52%	42%	39%	47%	51%
Failures will outweigh accomplishments	30%	28%	31%	26%	32%	29%
Too soon to tell	17%	15%	18%	23%	12%	17%
Don't know/Can't say	7%	5%	9%	12%	9%	2%

In the long run, do you think the accomplishments of the Saskatchewan Party government under Brad Wall will outweigh its failures, or will the failures outweigh the accomplishments?				
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (1056)	Household Income		
		<\$50,000 (253)	\$50,000 - \$99,999 (379)	\$100,000+ (237)
Accomplishments will outweigh failures	47%	40%	44%	60%
Failures will outweigh accomplishments	30%	36%	33%	21%
Too soon to tell	17%	14%	17%	14%
Don't know/Can't say	7%	10%	5%	5%

Take a moment to think about the biggest problems facing Saskatchewan today. What do you think Brad Wall's impact was on those problems? Did he ...						
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (1056)	Gender		Age		
		Men (514)	Women (542)	18 - 34 (74*)	35-54 (235)	55+ (747)
Make progress solving these problems	46%	54%	38%	34%	44%	55%
Try to solve these problems but fail	23%	20%	27%	32%	21%	21%
Not address these problems at all	13%	11%	15%	19%	15%	9%
Make the problems worse	17%	14%	20%	16%	20%	15%