

Premiers' Performance: Kenney joins Conservative surge, Ford's approval ebbs, McNeil's plunges

Scott Moe and Francois Legault maintain their place as top two most approved of provincial leaders

June 7, 2019 – The squad of conservative provincial leaders grew in Canada this quarter with the addition of Jason Kenney in Alberta, supplying another voice to a coalition of premiers vowing to fight federal carbon pricing.

Kenney, who led his United Conservative Party to a majority government on April 16, is very much in the honeymoon phase of his relationship with Albertans – six-in-ten (61%) of whom approve of his job performance thus far.

Remarkably, three provincial premiers find themselves above the sixty per cent approval mark among their respective electorates. Time spent in office may have something to do with this. Indeed, five of the most popular premiers in the country are less than two years into their first term.

Kenney enters with six-in-ten approval, joins Moe, Legault

Albertans voted for a return to their long-held tradition of Conservative government at the provincial level, electing members of the UCP to 63 of the 87 seats in the province, and ending Rachel Notley and the NDP's time in government after just one term.

Kenney's first action as premier was to introduce the [Carbon Tax Repeal Act](#) to remove the consumer tax on gasoline and fossil fuel heated homes. The bill was passed and signed into law, foretelling perhaps a legal battle with the federal government, which reserves the right to implement its own carbon pricing mechanism in provinces that do not generate their own plan.

Kenney is joined by Canada's most approved of provincial leader, Scott Moe (65% of people in Saskatchewan endorse his job performance, a six-point increase since last quarter), in his fight against the Trudeau government's federal carbon pricing program. They have [agreed to work together](#) to appeal the carbon tax in federal court. In May, Saskatchewan's Court of Appeal ruled [in favour of the federal government](#) on the issue, stating that the tax is constitutional. Minister of Environment Catherine McKenna called the ruling "[a win for Canadians](#)".

Among Canada's most approved of premiers, Quebec's François Legault continues to enjoy strong support in his province, holding the approval of more than six-in-ten residents (62%) for the third-



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute analyzed the results of an online survey between May 28 – June 4, 2019, among a representative randomized sample of 5,807 adult Canadian residents who are members of the [Angus Reid Forum](#). Probability samples of this size would carry varying margins of error based on each province's sample size. Please view the tables below for that information. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was conducted by Angus Reid Global and donated to the Angus Reid Institute. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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consecutive quarter since the election of the Coalition Avenir Quebec. This, while his party's signature legislation, Bill-21, which seeks to ban religious symbols for public servants in positions of authority, [inches closer to becoming law](#).

Highpoints for Higgs and Horgan

After his party's first six months in government, New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs has found relative comfort in his minority government, with [steadfast co-operation](#) from three People's Alliance MLAs. Higgs' government has begun discussions about reviving the failed Energy East pipeline, and passed regulatory changes to open up shale gas development (fracking) in the province, something that has [drawn protest](#) from Indigenous groups. Higgs' approval is above the majority line this quarter at 53 per cent.

Another premier very familiar with the inter- and intra-provincial tensions of the resource industry is British Columbia's John Horgan. The NDP leader saw his government lose a unanimous decision in the B.C. Court of Appeal, which stated that B.C. does not have the right to restrict the flow of undiluted bitumen from Alberta. As Horgan's government prepares to [appeal the decision](#), he holds the approval of 52 per cent of residents in the province, unchanged since last quarter. Horgan is likely earning some good will based on his government's recent announcement that it would be launching an inquiry into money laundering in the province, [something widely supported by residents](#).

Manitoba's Brian Pallister's approval sits at 46 per cent. The Conservative premier has suggested that he may call an election soon, though not for [at least several weeks](#). Pallister recently sat down with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to discuss approval of Manitoba Hydro's proposed Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project. The federal government has [pushed back the deadline](#) to approve the project over concerns that Indigenous consultations were not adequately completed.

Ball, Ford, below two-in-five, McNeil trails the pack

Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball managed to retain its government but lost its majority in May. In fact, the riding of Labrador West may have swung the balance of power in the province, after the NDP's Jordan Brown won the seat by five votes. A [recount continues](#) to ensure that result. Ball's approval this quarter is 37 per cent, a few points lower than the 43.9 his party received in the election.

Meantime, in Ontario, Premier Doug Ford holds the approval of just over one-in-three residents (36%) as he approaches one year in office. Ford has faced continued criticism over cuts to [health care and education](#) as his party tackles the province's deficit. Ford appears to be retaining support among most of his base – he won 40.5 per cent of the vote last year – but is having difficulty growing his approval elsewhere.

The country's least popular premier this quarter is again Nova Scotia's Stephen McNeil. One of two remaining Liberal premiers, McNeil is at his lowest mark in nearly six years of tracking, at just 16 per cent approval. McNeil's government has been at odds with [the Nova Scotia Health Authority](#) and the [Teachers Union](#) in recent months. McNeil is Canada's longest serving premier and does not face re-election until 2021.

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*

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administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

About ARG

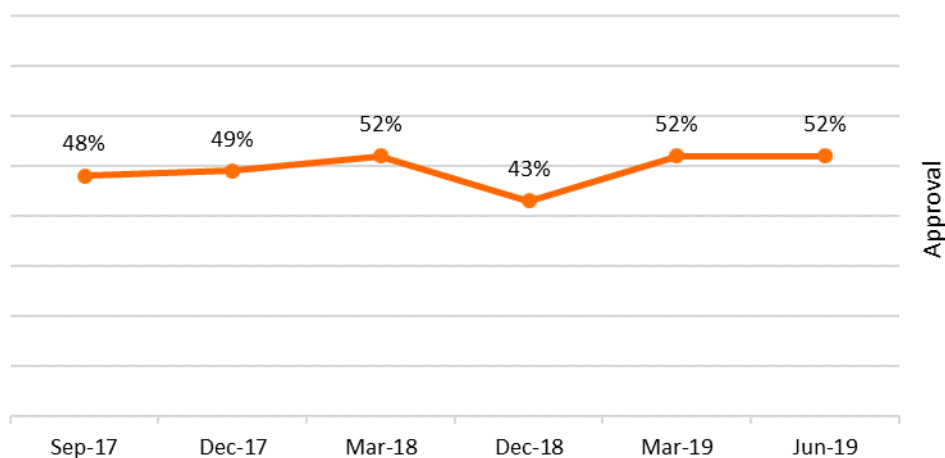
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Margins of error								
BC (605)	AB (608)	SK (617)	MB (601)	ON (812)	QC (610)	NB (252)	NS (260)	NFL (254)
+/- 4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/- 3.9%	+/- 4.0%	+/-3.4%	+/- 4.0%	+/-6.2%	+/-6.1%	+/-6.1%

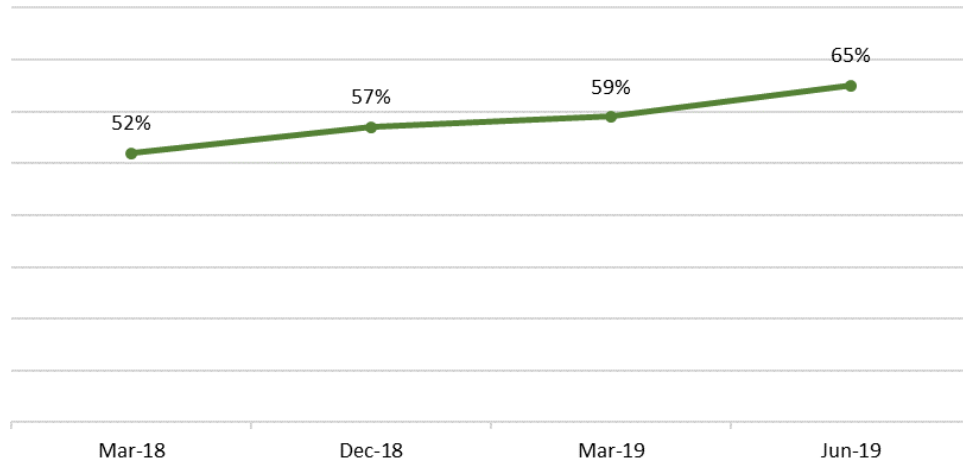
**Because its small population precludes drawing discrete samples over multiple waves, data on Prince Edward Island is not released.*

Because Alberta’s Jason Kenney has only been Premier of Alberta for one quarter, his trend line is not shown.

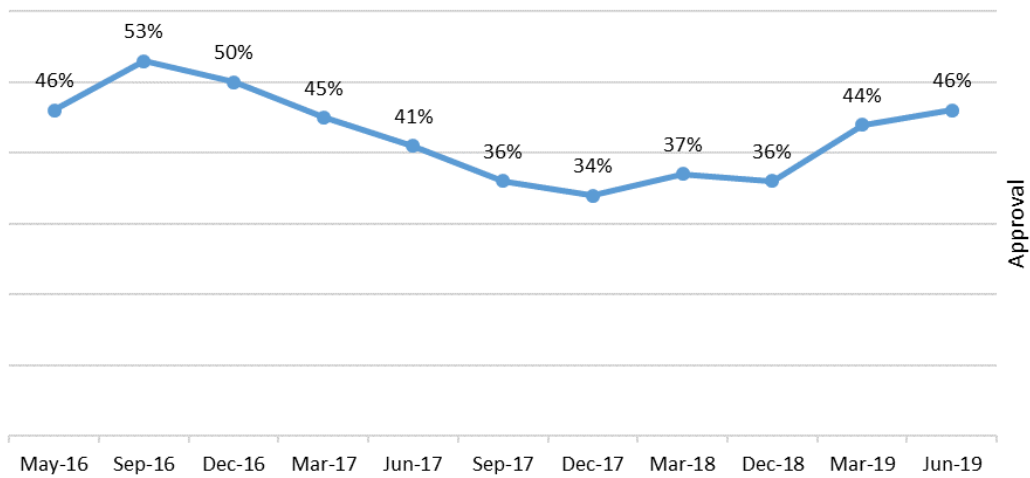
British Columbia Premier John Horgan (NDP)



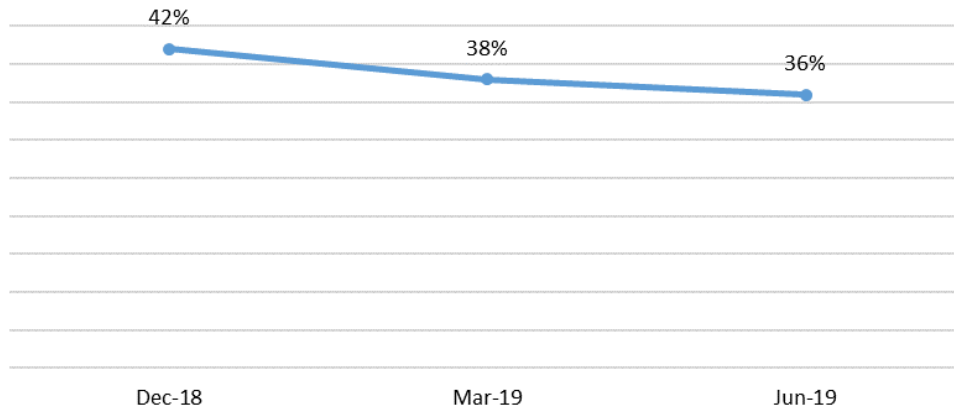
Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe (Saskatchewan Party)



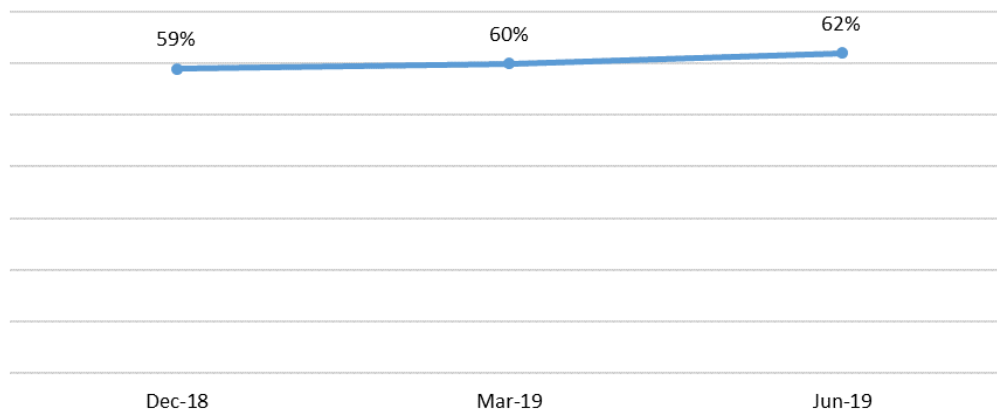
Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister (Progressive Conservative)



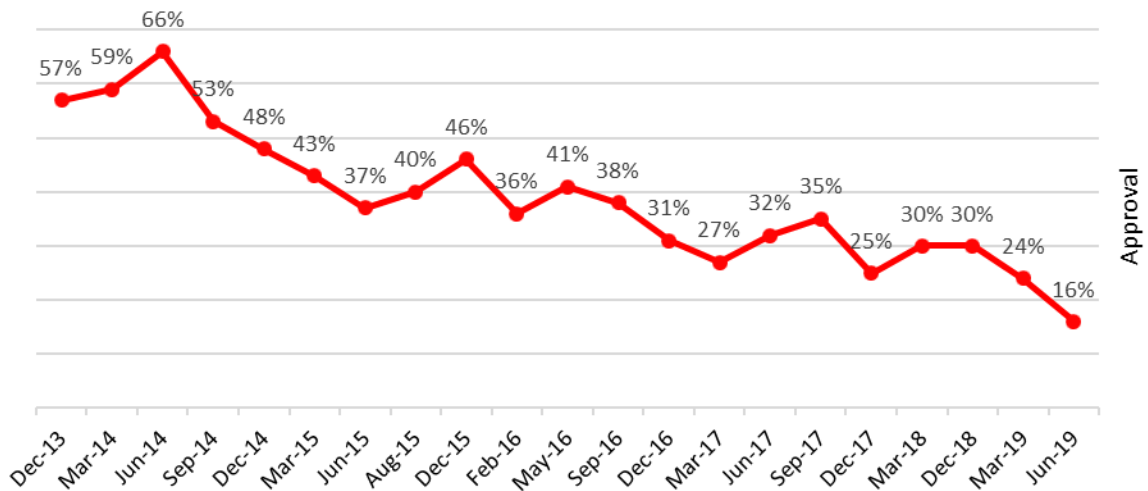
Ontario Premier Doug Ford (Progressive Conservative)



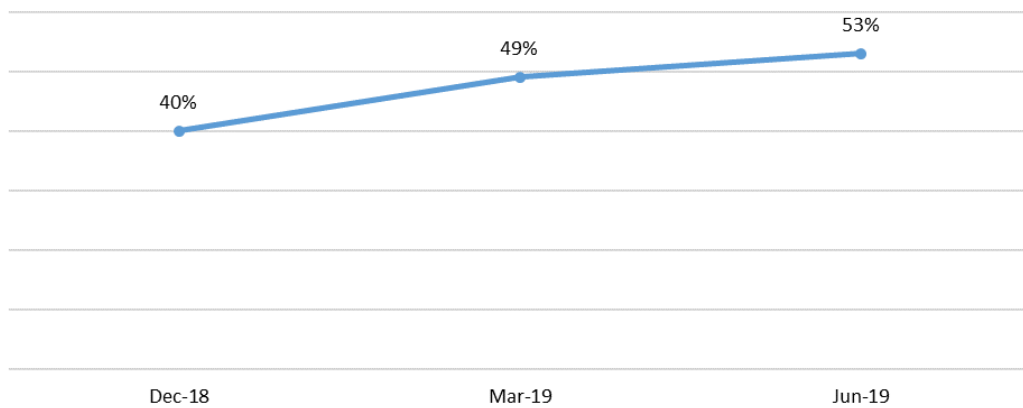
Quebec Premier François Legault (Coalition Avenir Quebec)



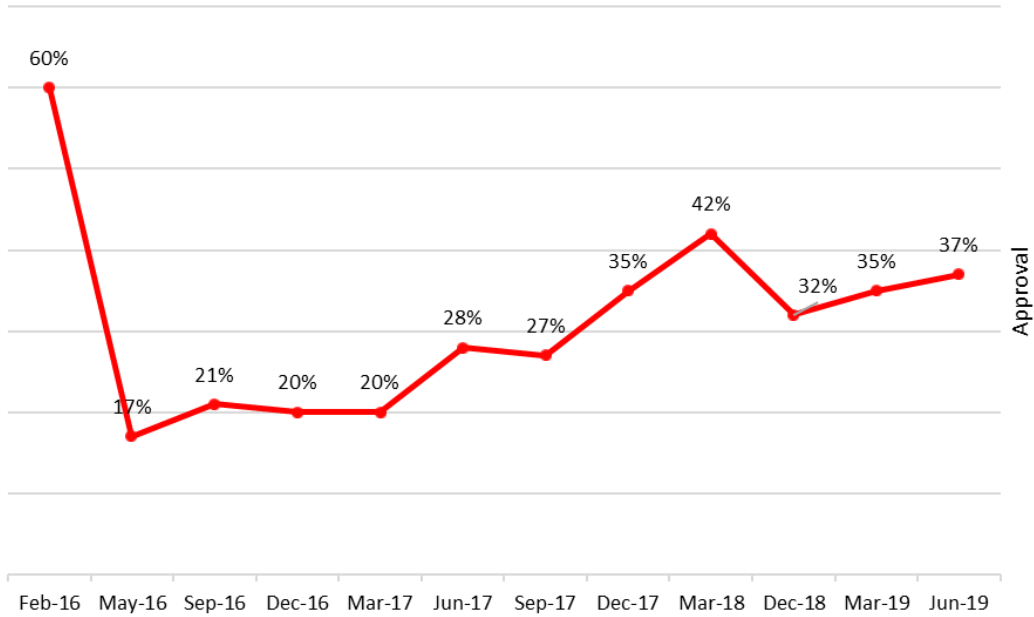
Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil (Liberal)



New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs (Progressive Conservative)



Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball (Liberal)



Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following people?			
(unweighted sample sizes)	Approve	Disapprove	Not sure/Can't say
British Columbia (N=605): Premier and New Democratic Party leader John Horgan	52%	41%	7%
Alberta (N=608): Premier and United Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney	61%	36%	3%
Saskatchewan (N=617) Premier and Saskatchewan Party leader Scott Moe	65%	29%	6%
Manitoba (N=601) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Brian Pallister	46%	51%	3%
Ontario (N=812) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford	36%	61%	3%
Québec (N=610) Premier and Coalition Avenir Québec leader François Legault	62%	32%	6%
New Brunswick (N=252) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Blaine Higgs	53%	43%	4%
Nova Scotia (N=260) Premier and Liberal Party leader Stephen McNeil	16%	82%	2%
Newfoundland and Labrador (N=254) Premier and Liberal Party leader Dwight Ball	37%	62%	*%

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Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following people?				
(Percent Approval)				
(unweighted sample sizes)	March 2018	December 2018	March 2019	June 2019
British Columbia (N=605): Premier and New Democratic Party leader John Horgan	52%	43%	52%	52%
Alberta (N=608): Premier and United Conservative Party Leader Jason Kenney	-	-	-	61%
Saskatchewan (N=617) Premier and Saskatchewan Party leader Scott Moe	52%	57%	59%	65%
Manitoba (N=601) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Brian Pallister	37%	36%	44%	46%
Ontario (N=812) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford	-	42%	38%	36%
Québec (N=610) Premier and Coalition Avenir Québec leader François Legault	-	59%	60%	62%
New Brunswick (N=252) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Blaine Higgs	-	40%	49%	53%
Nova Scotia (N=260) Premier and Liberal Party leader Stephen McNeil	30%	30%	24%	16%
Newfoundland and Labrador (N=254) Premier and Liberal Party leader Dwight Ball	42%	32%	35%	37%

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