

Leadership litmus test: Conservative voters evenly divided over whether Scheer should stay or go

Canadians divided about minority government result, more than half expect election within two years

November 6, 2019 – As strategists, grassroots members and volunteers take stock of the campaigns that were, some partisans are more sanguine about their leaders' futures than others.

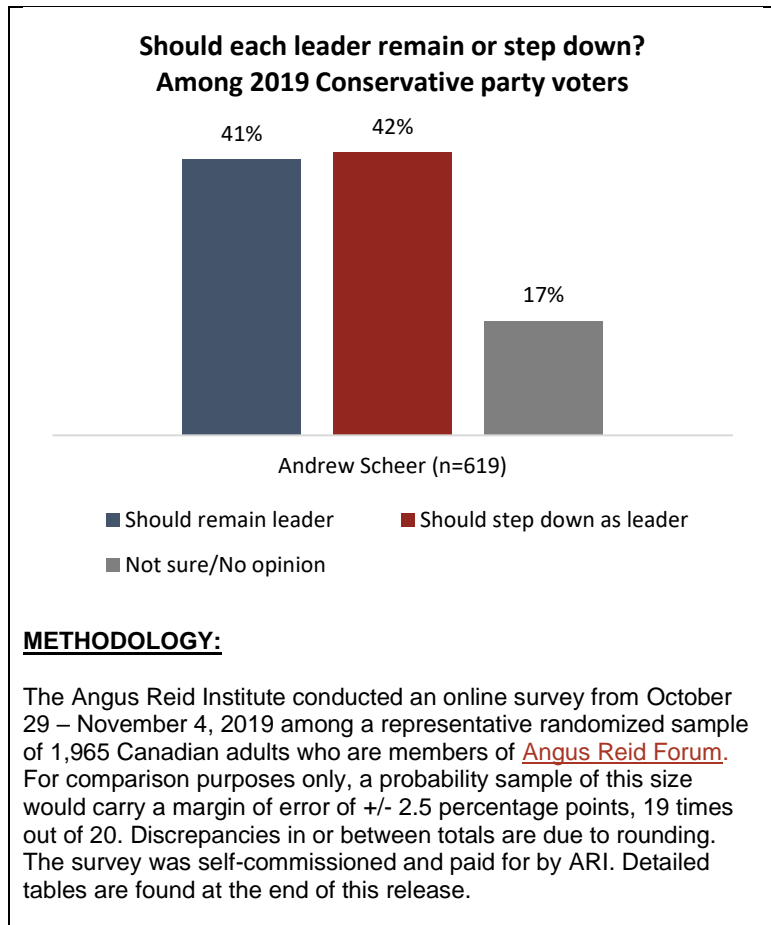
While Liberal and NDP bases enthusiastically back the prospects of Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh leading each respective team into the next federal campaign – whenever that is – many of those who cast ballots for the Conservative Party on October 21 are in a decidedly fouler mood.

Indeed, after an election outcome that saw the party win the popular vote but fall short on seat count in Parliament, the latest public opinion survey from the not-for-profit Angus Reid Institute shows approaching half of CPC supporters now say Andrew Scheer should not be the person to lead the party into battle again.

The findings of the post-election opinion poll reveal a slight east-west divide on the matter, with Conservative voters living in Ontario and east of the province marginally more likely to say the leader must ultimately go, while those in Canada's four westernmost provinces are slightly more inclined to back his continued leadership. Education also drives opinion on this issue, as CPC voters with college and university education are also more inclined to seek a change at the top.

More Key Findings:

- While 41 per cent of Conservative voters say Scheer should stay on as leader, more than four-in-five supporters say this of Justin Trudeau (85%) and Jagmeet Singh (87%)
- Most Canadians are ambivalent about the result of the election. One-in-four (23%) say they feel neither pleased nor upset about the Liberal minority, while another three-in-ten are *pleased* (31%). Notably, led by residents of Alberta and Saskatchewan, one-in-five (22%) are *very upset*.



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- Asked how long they feel the Liberals will be able to govern with a minority in parliament, one-in-three Canadians (34%) say they will surpass the two-year mark, while 55 per cent disagree

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.

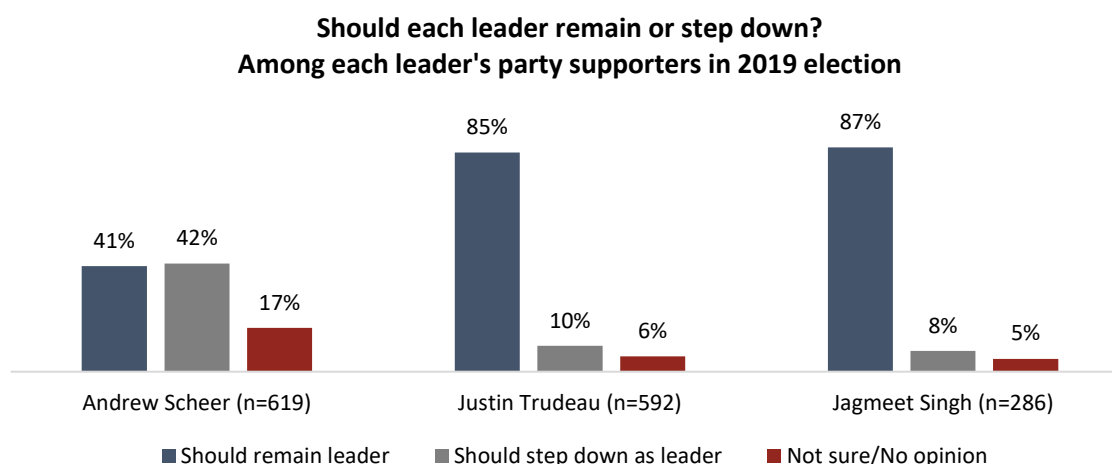
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Which leaders should stay or go?

The results of the federal election were subject to considerable spin based on whose perspective was being considered. The Liberal Party formed government again but lost their majority, and the popular vote. The Conservative Party garnered the most votes but fell short of its goal of toppling Trudeau in the House of Commons. The NDP generated late momentum and arguably saved face after a tough start to the campaign, but ultimately lost ground compared to its 2015 results.

The Angus Reid Institute asked whether each of the main party leaders should stay or go. While Elizabeth May ended her tenure as leader this week (see what Green voters had to say before her [announcement here](#)), the futures of others remain a topic for discussion. CPC voters are split over Scheer. The same number say he should step down (42%) as stay on (41%). Comparatively, both Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh receive a considerably higher level of affirmation from their recent voters:

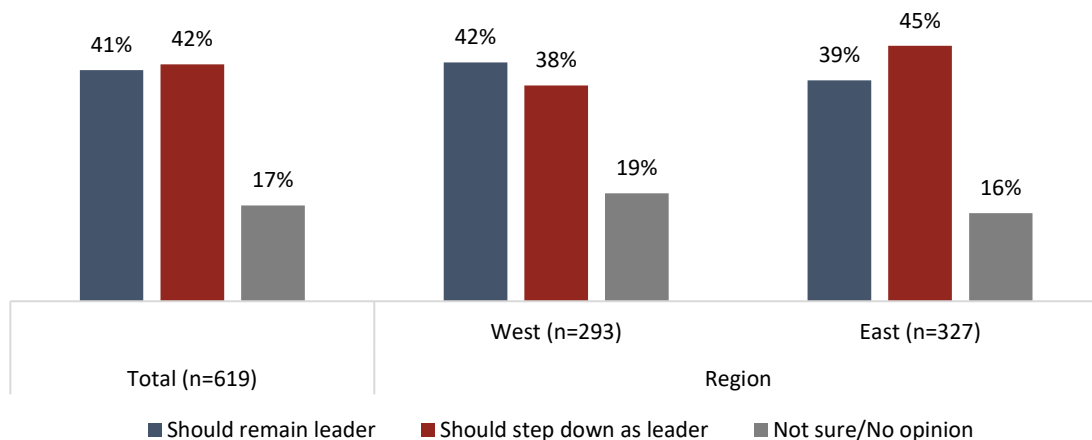


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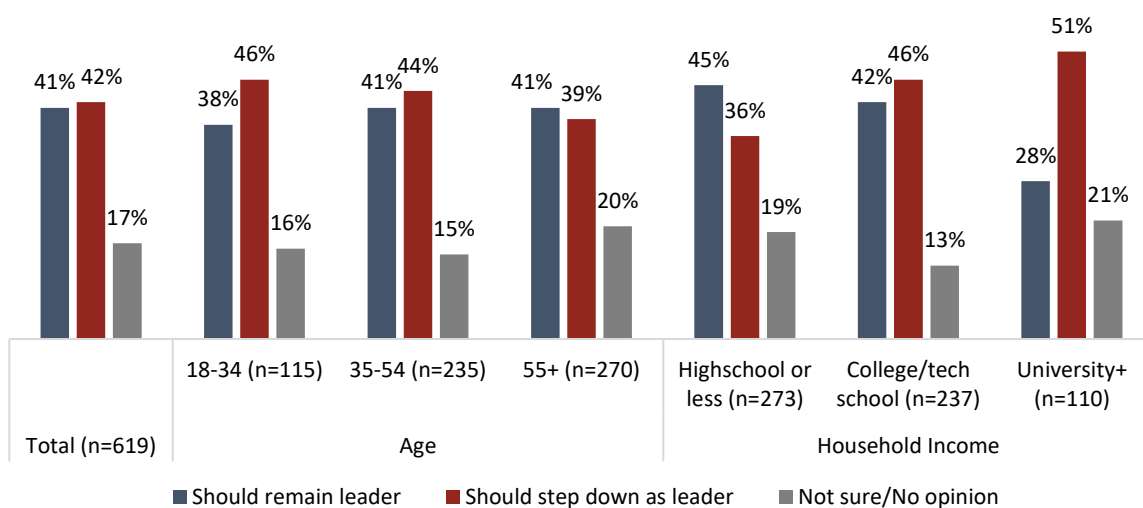
Scheer will face a review of his leadership in the coming months, with the party's convention set for April of 2020. And while party voters across the country are divided over his fate, those in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba lean slightly toward keeping the current leader. By contrast, those in Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada, lean towards seeing him step down:

**Conservative leader Andrew Scheer should...
Among 2019 CPC voters**



Another factor drives opinion on the matter: Scheer faces the most opposition from more formally educated Conservatives, as well as younger ones, perhaps in acknowledgement of the party's inability to break through in vote-rich urban centres:

Conservative leader Andrew Scheer should...

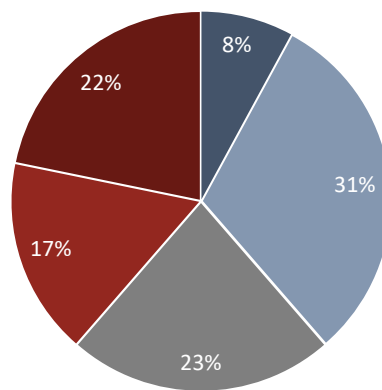


Canadians divided between being pleased and disappointed about election result

The 43rd Canadian federal election yielded a result that isn't wholly unfamiliar: a minority government. The federal Liberals will form the 14th such minority in Canada's history. It comes after two consecutive majorities: The Conservatives under Stephen Harper held a majority after the 2011 election, and the Liberals, of course, under Justin Trudeau since 2015. Canada had three consecutive minorities previous to 2011.

Many Canadians have met the reality of another minority government with a collective shrug. Indeed, while one-in-five (22%) say they are "very upset" with the result, more than half (54%) are either "pleased" (31%) or "neutral" (23%).

The election ended with Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party winning a minority government. Overall, would you say you are pleased or upset with this outcome?

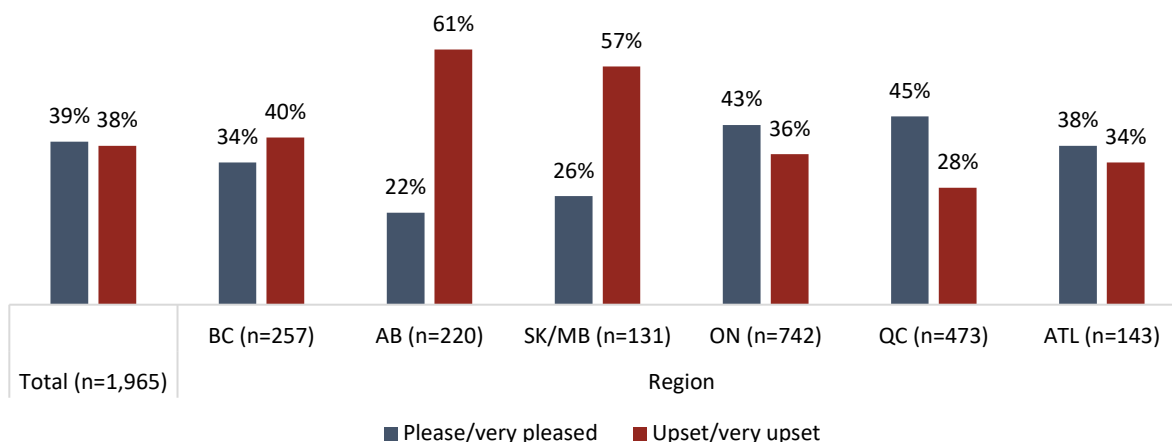


■ Very pleased ■ Pleased ■ Neutral ■ Upset ■ Very upset

Eastern, Central Canada more content, Western Canada troubled, BC more ambivalent

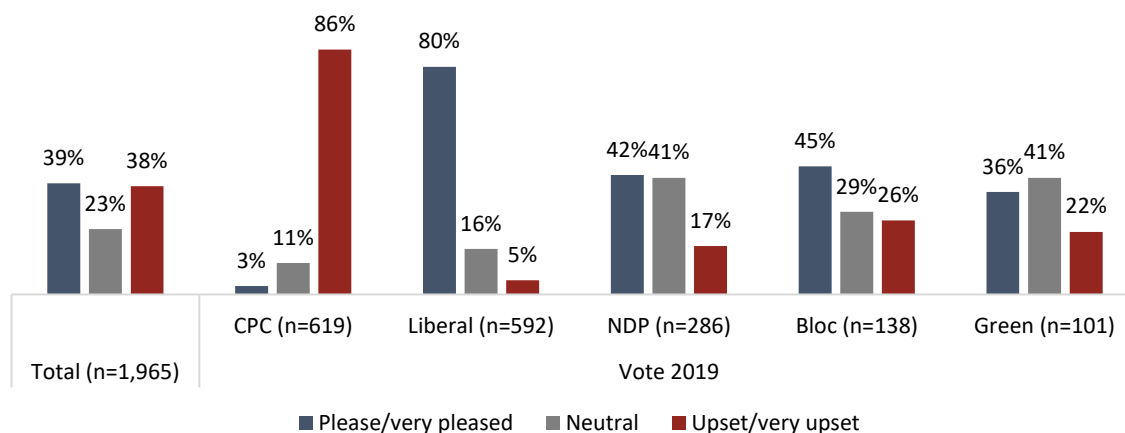
As one might expect, the provinces that were most likely to support the Conservatives – Alberta and Saskatchewan – are most disappointed with the outcome of the election. The rest of the country appears relatively divided. Notably, the highest levels of positivity and lowest levels of negativity are reported in Quebec, where the Liberal Party won 35 seats and Bloc Quebecois 32:

The election ended with Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party winning a minority government. Overall, would you say you are pleased or upset with this outcome?



Looking at Canadians' responses to the recent election through a political lens, two datapoints stand out. The first is that Liberals and Conservatives are starkly at odds, with four-in-five Liberals being pleased and more than four-in-five Conservatives upset. The second, is that the three smaller parties are largely torn between being happy about the result and being indifferent:

The election ended with Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party winning a minority government. Overall, would you say you are pleased or upset with this outcome?



In retrospect, few would change their vote

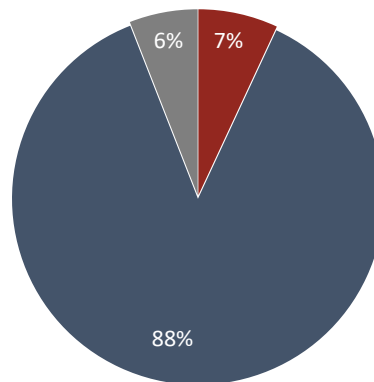
But would Canadians, themselves, have done anything differently? Asked whether they would change their vote, knowing how the election played out, most stand firm. Nine-in-ten (88%) say that they would

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not change their vote with the benefit of hindsight, while a handful say they would change their vote, or that they are not sure what they would do with a do-over:

Based on the outcome of this election, looking back, do you think you would have voted differently

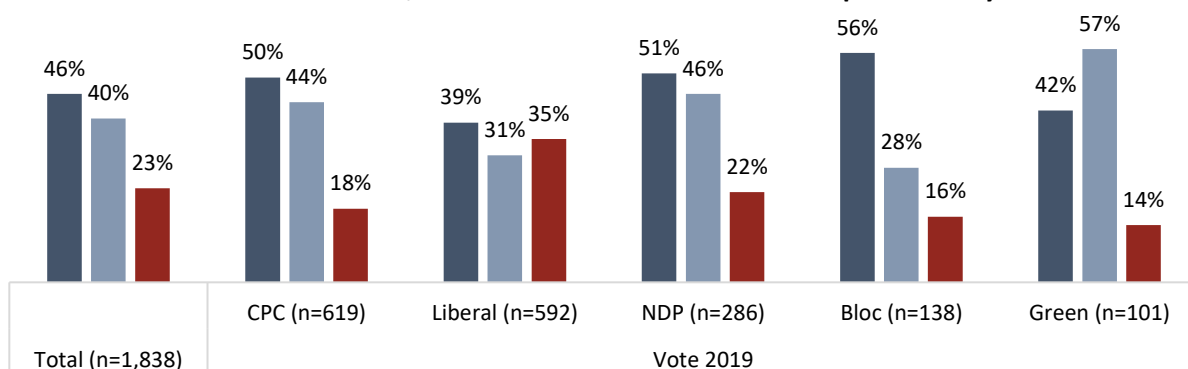


■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know/Can't say

What is particularly interesting about the near-unanimous sentiment that they would not change their vote, is the fact that so many Canadians voted strategically. One-in-five overall (23%), and one-in-three Liberals (35%) say that they voted against a party rather than for one:

Related: Study shows Liberals benefitted most from strategic voting among undecided voters

Thinking about your own decision-making process in making your final choice in this federal election, what considerations were most important for you?



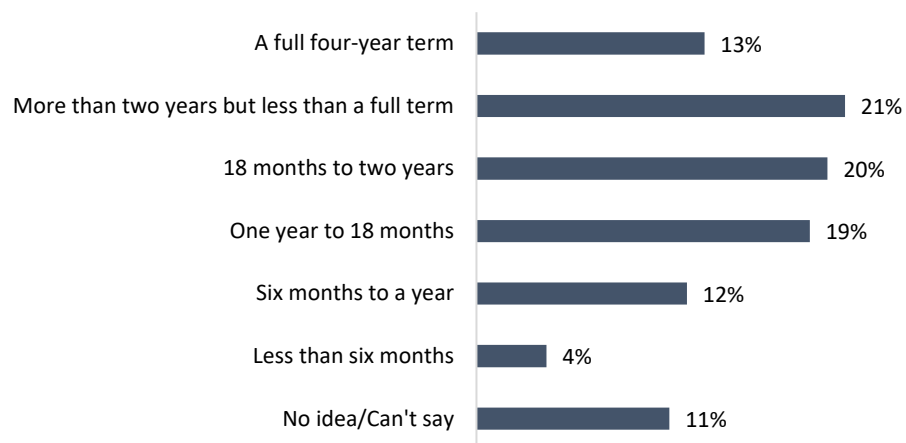
■ Supporting the party that you felt best represented you
 ■ The policies of the party
 ■ Voting strategically for a party you thought had a better chance to win or to stop another party from winning

But how long will the minority government last?

While Canada has had a number of federal minority governments, their lifespans have varied. The minority governments of Prime Ministers John Diefenbaker and Lester Pearson had quicker expiration dates. In fact, the average length of a minority government at the federal level is well shy of two years.

Approximately one-in-three Canadians say they expect this government to last beyond the two-year mark, while just over half (55%) say that Canadians will be back to the polls before then:

How long do you expect the Liberals will be able to govern with this arrangement?

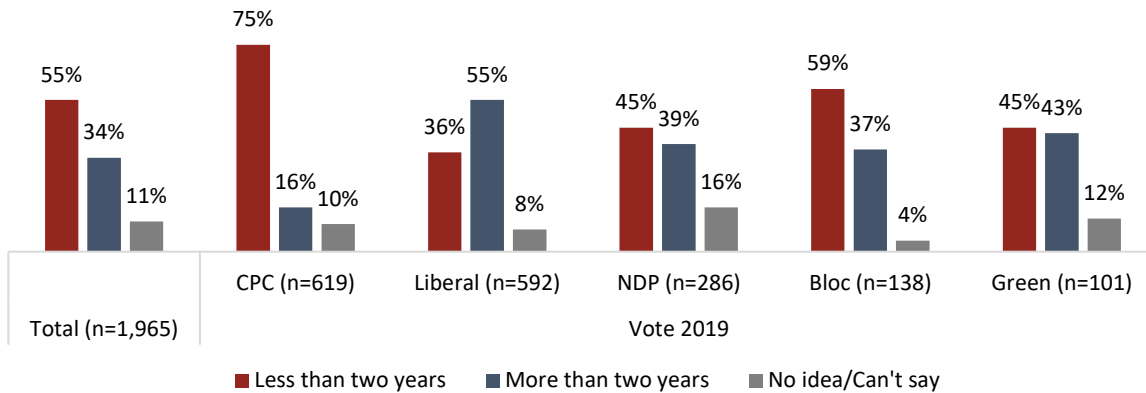


Expectations range considerably based on party affiliation. Among those who supported the Liberals in October, more than half (55%) say they feel the government will last longer than two years. Conservative voters are particularly pessimistic about the longevity of this government, with three-quarters (75%) saying the Liberals will crumble in fewer than two years. However, CPC voters are joined by a plurality of supporters from all other parties in holding this view:

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How long do you expect the Liberals will be able to govern with this arrangement?



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

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