

Premiers' Performance: Legault gets full stocking this Christmas, McNeil, a lump of political coal

Conservative premiers slip in approval after federal election

December 12, 2019 – Canada's premiers have been passing through Ottawa over the last few weeks to meet with the Prime Minister and share their Christmas wish-lists.

While some meetings, like those with Atlantic Canada's Liberal premiers, have been more [festive in tone](#), others, like those between the PM and Saskatchewan's Scott Moe or Alberta's Jason Kenney, have had more than a hint of humbug.

While Conservative provincial leaders navigate their way through a Liberal minority government, they do so with stark differences in support within their home provinces.

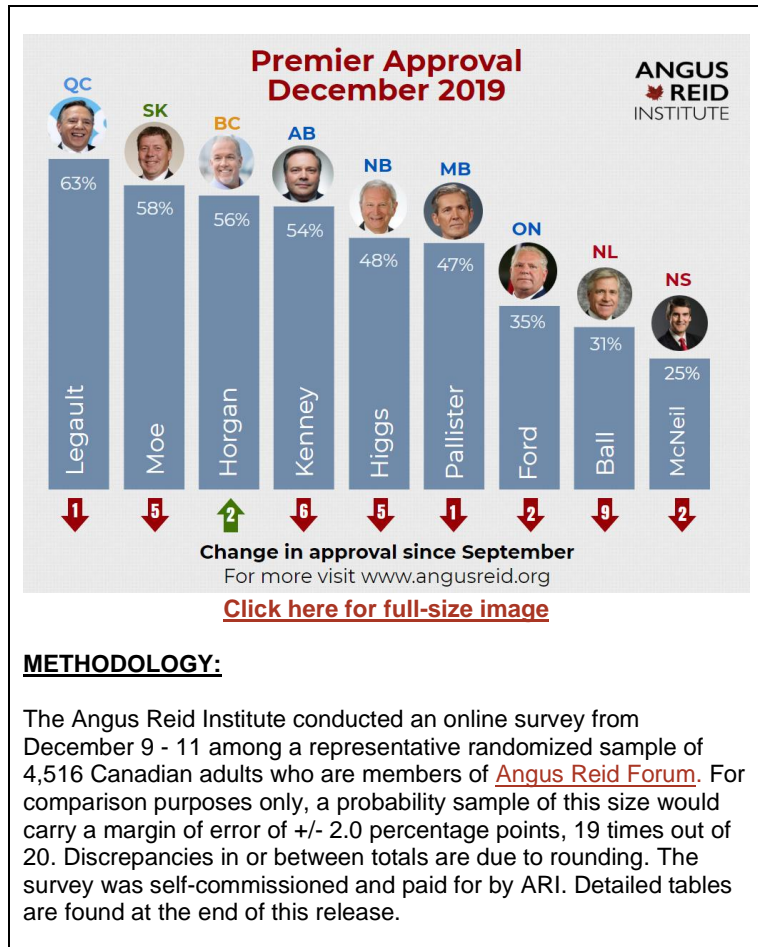
Down quarter for Conservative leaders

Alberta: Jason Kenney

Perhaps no premier has been as vocal over the past three months than Alberta Premier Jason Kenney. The United Conservative Party leader has outlined to Justin Trudeau his vision for a cooperative relationship, along with a [list of demands](#) for the federal government. Kenney seeks action on [energy issues foremost](#), asking the government for a firm date on the TransMountain pipeline expansion completion, and a reversal of the government's ban on tankers on the northern coast of British Columbia, among other requests. Kenney heads back to Alberta with majority approval (54%) but sees a six-point drop this quarter as some of his post-election honeymoon appears to have worn off.

Saskatchewan: Scott Moe

After meeting Prime Minister Trudeau, Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe left frustrated, saying he was expecting "[more of the same](#)" from this term of the Trudeau mandate. Moe was said to be asking for a one-year exemption from the provincial carbon tax and changes to the federal equalization program. Despite his disappointment in Ottawa, Moe garners the approval of 58 per cent of Saskatchewan residents, making him the second-most popular premier this quarter.



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Ontario: Doug Ford

While most Conservative premiers enjoyed relatively high support from their constituents in 2019, that has not been the case for Ontario's Doug Ford. The premier was, in essence, [hidden from public view](#) during the federal election to avoid dissuading voters from choosing the federal branch of the Conservative Party, and appears to be carrying low approval into the coming year. At the end of 2019, one-third (35%) of Ontario residents approve of Ford.

New Brunswick: Blaine Higgs

New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs shifted gears after the federal election. Higgs' Conservative government had been part of a court challenge opposing the federal carbon tax, but after two-thirds of New Brunswick residents endorsed a federal party that supported such a tax, leadership in the province decided to create its own provincial plan. Ottawa approved the plan in early December, and Higgs continues to enjoy relatively high approval from residents this quarter at 48 per cent.

Manitoba: Brian Pallister

Approval of Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister is unchanged this quarter. Pallister's government ruffled feathers in Quebec in late-November after [running ads](#) suggesting those offended by the Quebec government's Bill-21, which bans religious symbols in the workplace, should move to Manitoba. While many in Quebec are likely viewing Pallister negatively, 47 per cent of residents of his own province approve of his performance.

Quebec and B.C.: Legault and Horgan maintain their altitude

In the days following the federal election, Quebec Premier François Legault [offered some advice](#) for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau if he hopes of fostering national unity: offer the provinces more autonomy. Whether or not that advice is helpful is debatable, as interprovincial trade tensions have also been divisive. That said, Legault's push for more autonomy has been popular in his own province. His approval is the highest in the country at 63 per cent.

Premier John Horgan of British Columbia, alongside other premiers this quarter, called for an increase in healthcare transfers from the federal government. [Horgan said](#) he would like to see a commitment "meaningful to our budget so we can deliver the healthcare that people need". Horgan also [pressed Trudeau](#) for assistance in determining why B.C. gasoline prices remain higher than the rest of the country. 56 per cent of British Columbians approve of Horgan this quarter.

Liberal premiers languish

Newfoundland and Labrador: Dwight Ball

Newfoundland Premier Dwight Ball sat down with Justin Trudeau in late November to discuss the ongoing Muskrat Falls project, among other issues like natural resources and unity. Ball is hoping to secure federal funds to mitigate increased power costs, which are expected to rise after the budget for that project ballooned to [\\$6 billion over budget](#). Ball noted that it is "always a real pleasure" to meet with the Prime Minister. His approval, however, remains below one-third (31%).

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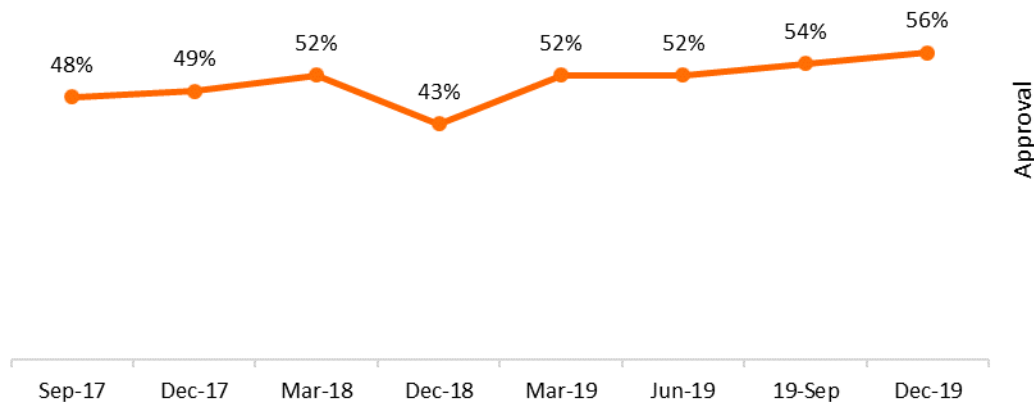
Nova Scotia: Stephen McNeil

Prime Minister Trudeau [referred to](#) Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil as a “great partner in the federation” when the two met on December 10. Despite his positive relationship with Trudeau, McNeil continues to suffer from low approval in his own province. The Liberal leader has [buted heads with unions](#) in recent years, in efforts to [tighten up government spending](#). Just 25 per cent approve of McNeil’s performance.

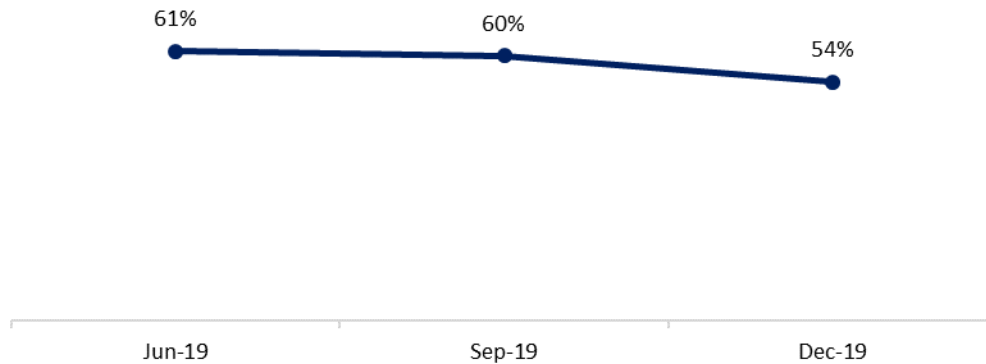
About ARI

*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.*

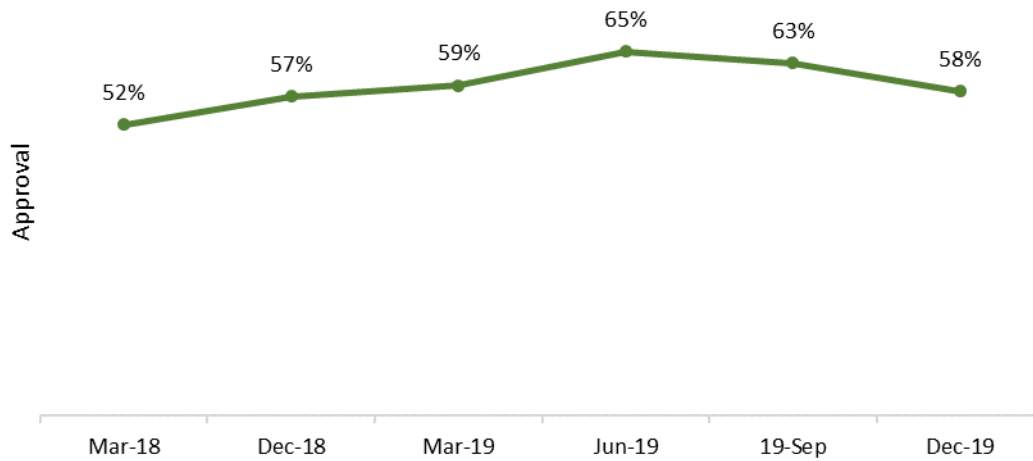
British Columbia Premier John Horgan (NDP)



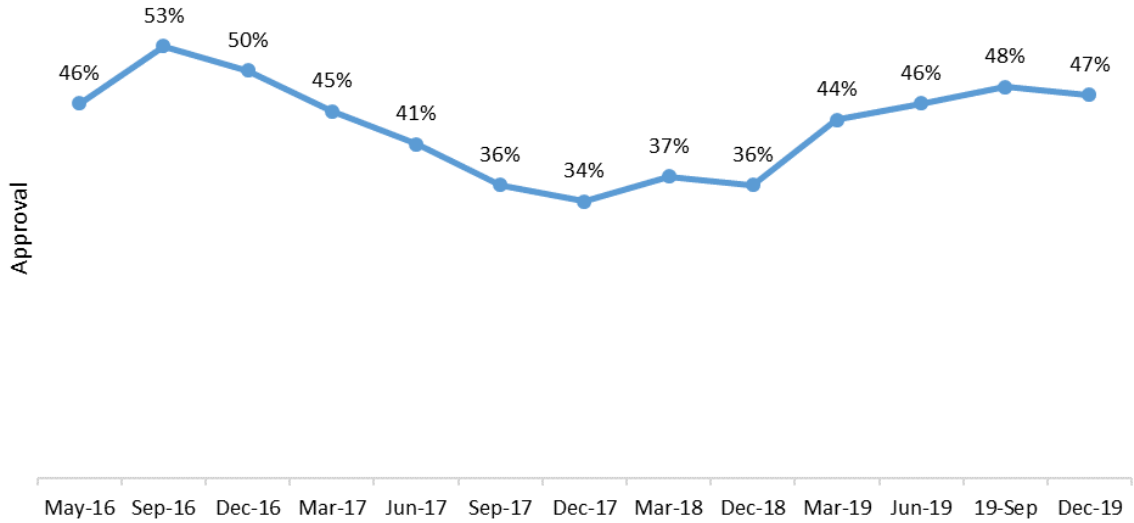
Alberta Premier Jason Kenney (UCP)



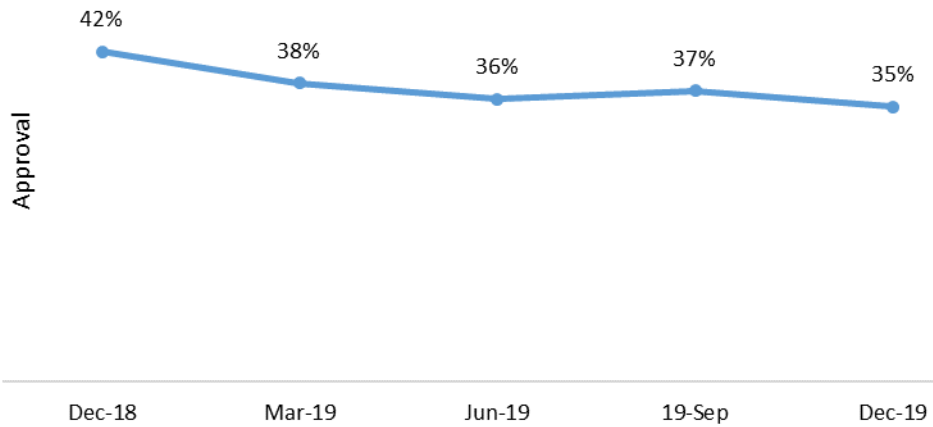
Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe (Saskatchewan Party)



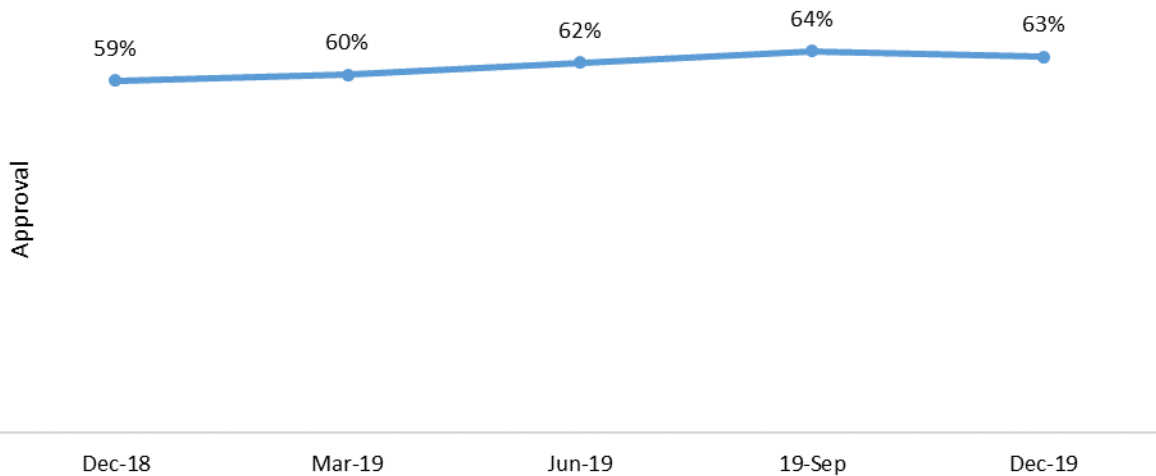
Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister (Progressive Conservative)



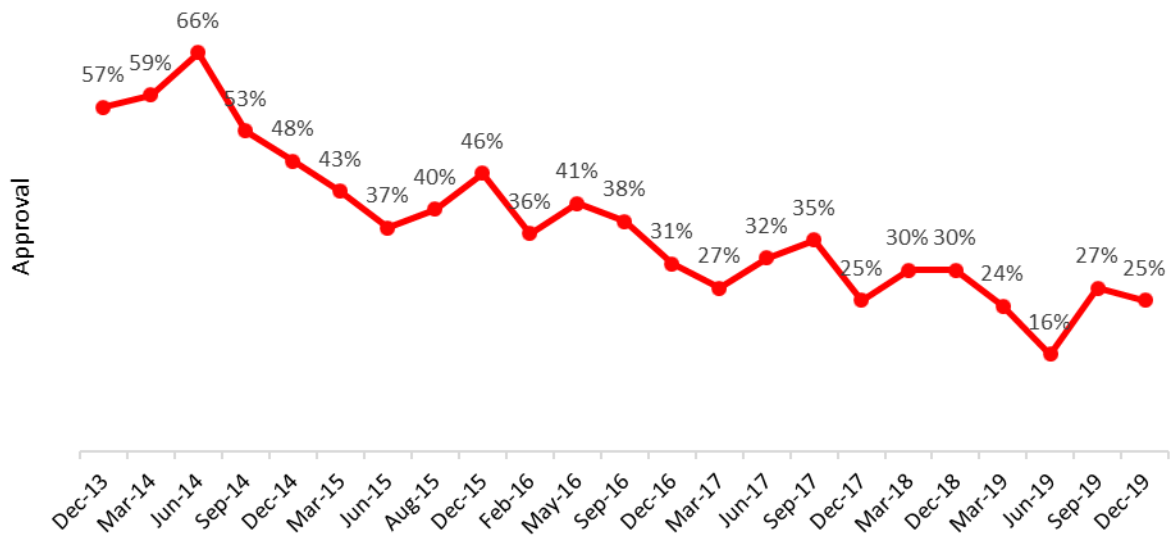
Ontario Premier Doug Ford (Progressive Conservative)



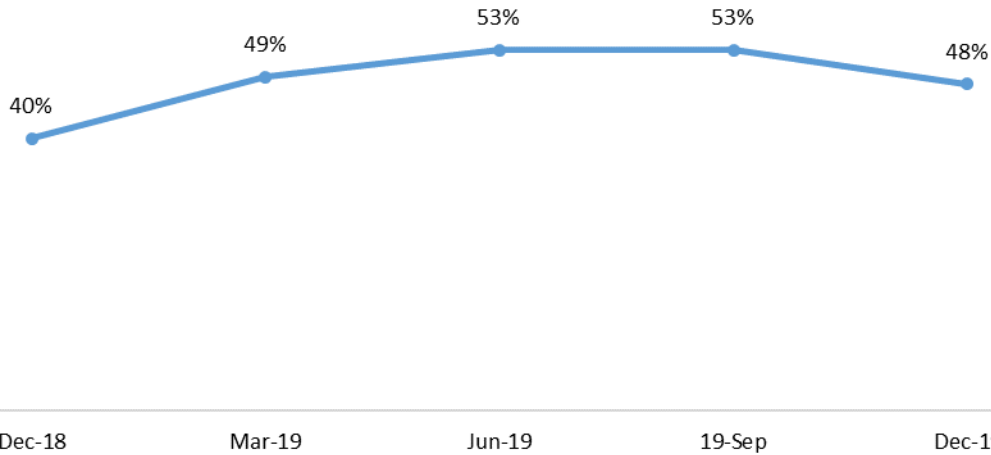
Quebec Premier François Legault (Coalition Avenir Quebec)



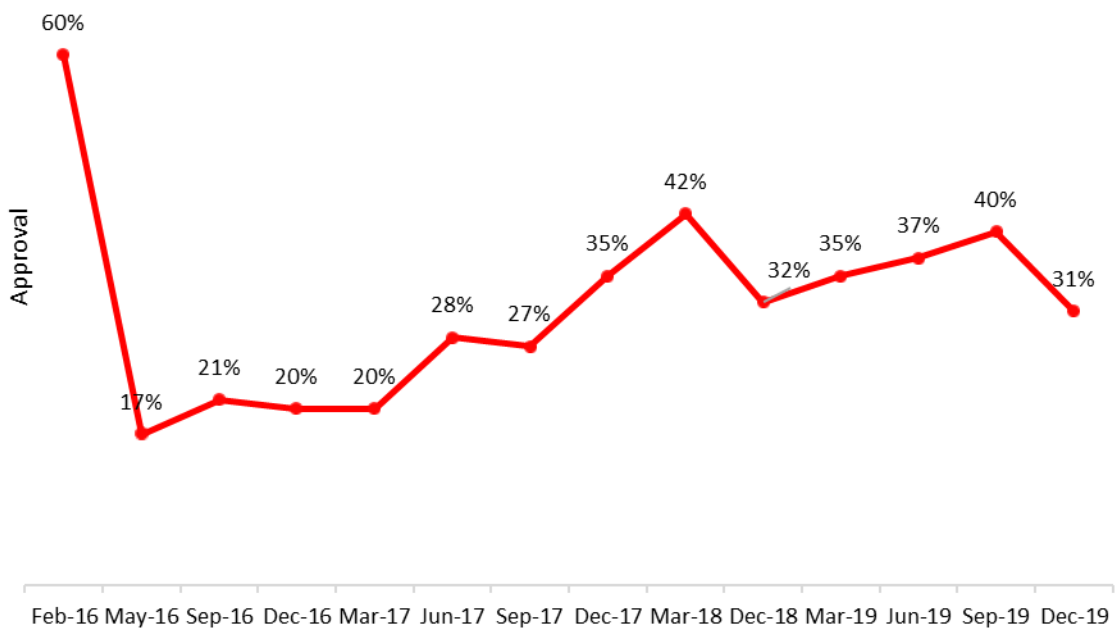
Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil (Liberal)



New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs (Progressive Conservative)



Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball (Liberal)



Margins of error								
BC (588)	AB (585)	SK (610)	MB (600)	ON (693)	QC (623)	NB (251)	NS (259)	NL (213)
+/- 4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/-4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/-6.0%	+/-6.0%	+/-7.0%

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

Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following people? (Percent Approval)				
(unweighted sample sizes)	March 2019	June 2019	September 2019	December 2019
British Columbia (N=588): Premier and New Democratic Party leader John Horgan	52%	52%	54%	56%
Alberta (N=585): Premier and United Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney	-	61%	60%	54%
Saskatchewan (N=610) Premier and Saskatchewan Party leader Scott Moe	59%	65%	63%	58%
Manitoba (N=600) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Brian Pallister	44%	46%	48%	47%
Ontario (N=693) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford	38%	36%	37%	35%
Québec (N=623) Premier and Coalition Avenir Québec leader François Legault	60%	62%	64%	63%
New Brunswick (N=251) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Blaine Higgs	49%	53%	53%	48%
Nova Scotia (N=259) Premier and Liberal Party leader Stephen McNeil	24%	16%	27%	25%
Newfoundland and Labrador (N=213) Premier and Liberal Party leader Dwight Ball	35%	37%	40%	31%

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