

As vaccination rate climbs, Canadians more bullish about Liberals' handling of pandemic; vote intention remains static

34 per cent would vote for Liberal Party if election were held, 32 per cent would support CPC

May 21, 2021 – The medical feat of jabbing hundreds of thousands of Canadians with COVID-19 vaccines is not only bringing Canada closer to the end of a devastating third wave of the pandemic, it is also giving the Trudeau government's perceived handling of the crisis a shot in the arm.

As vaccine willingness [continues to rise](#), the government in charge of procuring and distributing said vaccines is regaining favour in public opinion.

New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds half of Canadians now saying the federal government is doing a good job of handling the COVID-19 response – a six-point increase from April.

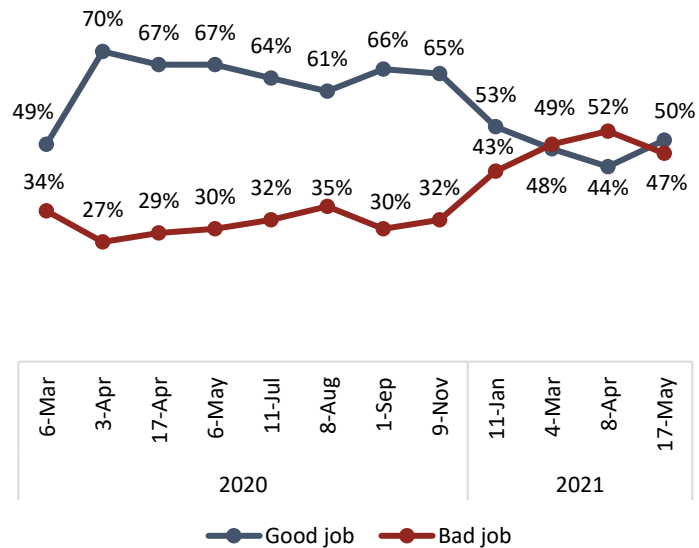
A majority of past Liberal, NDP, and Bloc Quebecois voters now give the government a positive rating on the file, though just one-in-five past Conservative voters feel the same way.

This does not, however, mean that the federal government is in the clear ahead of a widely predicted 2021 federal election. In the event one were called, just 34 per cent say they would support the Liberal Party at this point. This is near-identical to the number who say they would support the CPC. The fortune for Liberals and challenge for Conservatives continues to be where that support is drawn. The Liberal Party continues to hold a considerable advantage in Ontario and Quebec, which offer greater political advantage than Conservative strongholds in the west.

More Key Findings:

- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has an overall approval rating of 43 per cent. This is up marginally from April (+2) though Canadians are still more than three times as likely to strongly disapprove (35%) than strongly approve (10%) of him

Views on the federal government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic over time



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from May 14 – 17, 2021 among a representative randomized sample of 1,601 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

CONTACT:

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

- While the federal government receives an overall positive rating on pandemic performance (+3), with 50 per cent saying the Liberals have done a good job and 47 per cent saying bad, the Prime Minister receives more negative (50%) than positive reviews (46%) for an overall rating of -4
- Conservative Party leader Erin O'Toole continues to lag behind in favourability. While NDP leader Jagmeet Singh is viewed favourably by 46 per cent of Canadians, just 27 per cent say the same of O'Toole

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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Part One: Pandemic Performance

Federal government

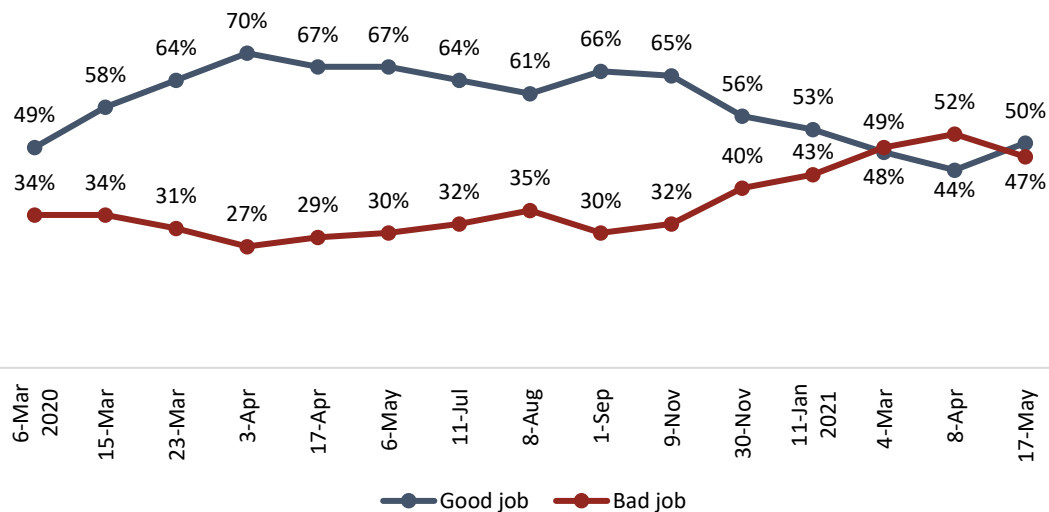
Over the past week, Canada has been administering COVID-19 vaccines at a rate of 0.9 per cent of the population per day – a daily average of more than 340,000. As of [May 20](#), nearly 49 per cent of Canadians have been vaccinated with at least one dose.

Amid hopes for a [“one-dose summer”](#) and the potential loosening of restrictions that have worn on Canadians for well over a year, views of the federal government’s handling of the pandemic have improved. While ratings are still well below where they were throughout 2020, half (50%) now say the Liberals are doing a good job. Slightly fewer disagree and feel the government is doing a poor job (47%)

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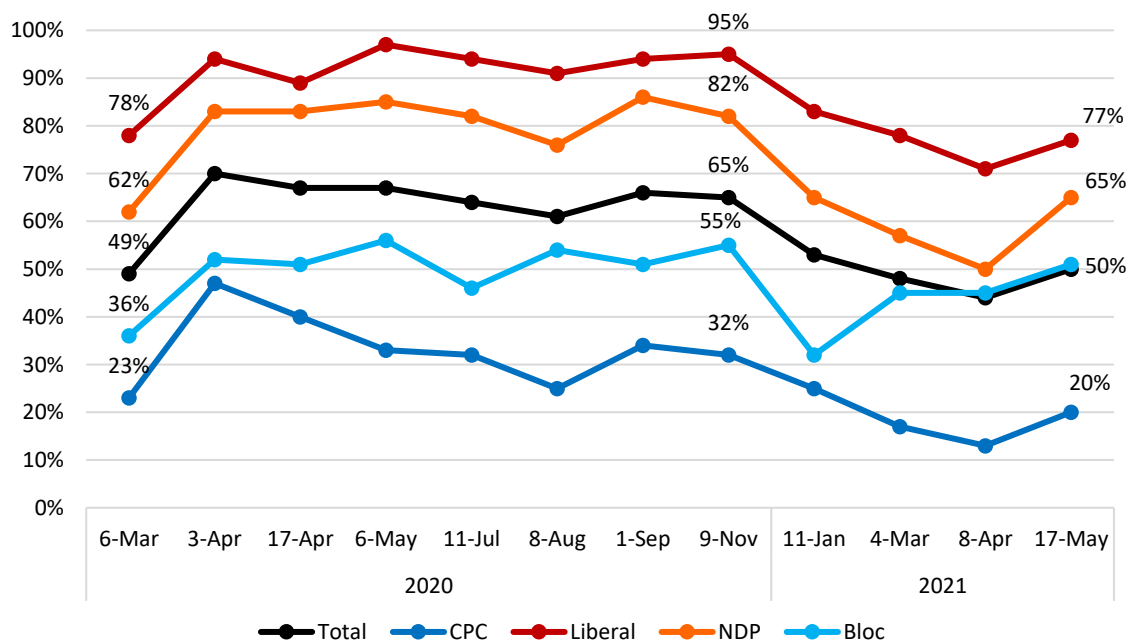
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Views on the federal government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic over time



Past Conservative voters continue to be the most critical of the Liberal government on this file, as has been the case throughout the entirety of the pandemic. At least half of other major party supporters say the government is handling the pandemic well, including 77 per cent of the government's 2019 voters:

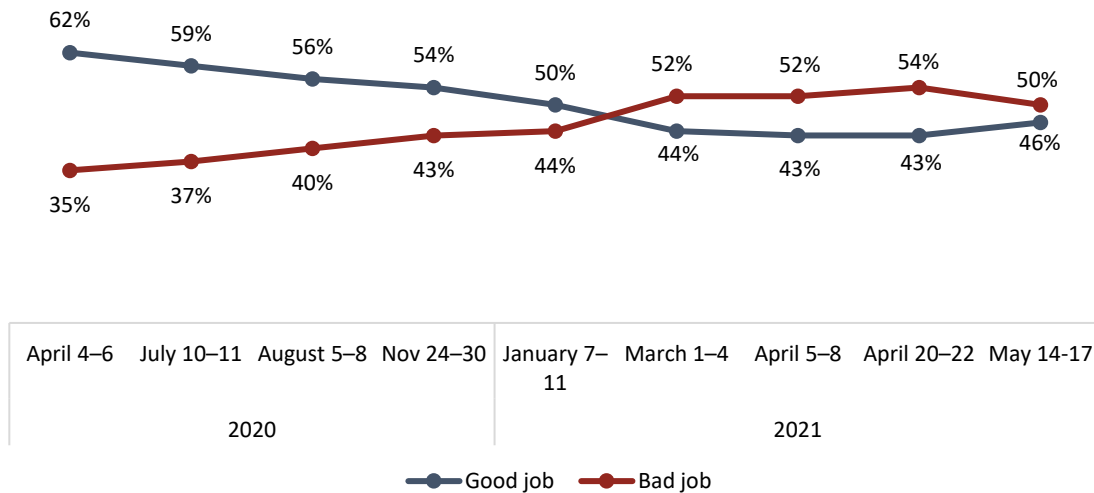
Percentage saying federal government has done a 'good job' in handling COVID-19 outbreak by 2019 federal vote



Trudeau trails party on COVID-19 management

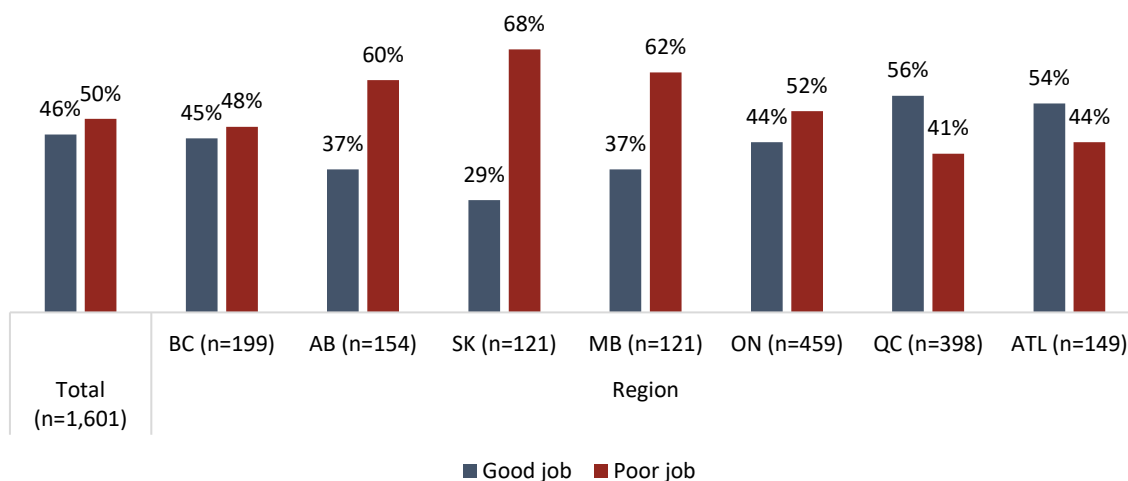
The Prime Minister's COVID-19 response is viewed slightly less positively than that of his party by the public. Approaching half (46%) say he is doing a good job, while exactly half say he is doing a poor one:

Do you think [Prime Minister Justin Trudeau] is doing a good or bad job handling the COVID-19 pandemic overall?

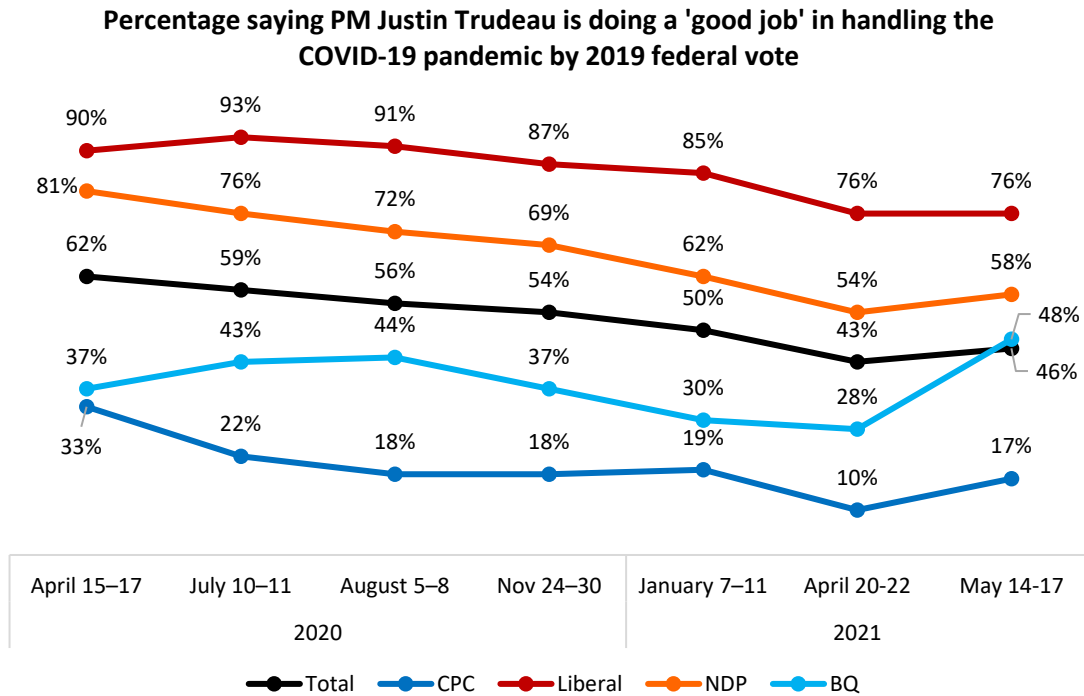


Trudeau is viewed favourably in Quebec and Atlantic Canada on this issue, while British Columbians are divided close to evenly, and other regions view his performance as more negative than positive:

Do you think [Prime Minister Justin Trudeau] is doing a good or bad job handling the COVID-19 pandemic overall?



The slight uptick in positive review for the PM is driven by a surge in commendation from past Bloc Quebecois voters, and smaller increases from past New Democrats and Conservatives:



Part Two: Views of federal leaders

43 per cent approve of Trudeau

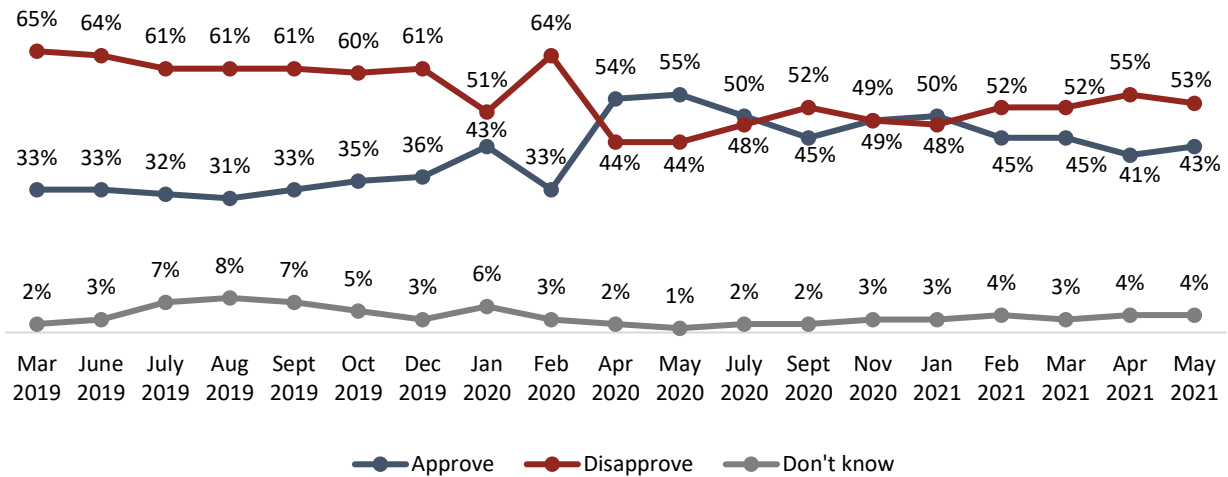
The pandemic, while dominating the attention of many Canadians, is not the only issue facing the Prime Minister. Ongoing [questions](#) into his and his staff's knowledge of sexual misconduct allegations against military personnel have generated [criticism from the opposition](#) and [doubts among Canadians](#).

Currently 43 per cent of Canadians approve of Trudeau, while 53 per cent disapprove.

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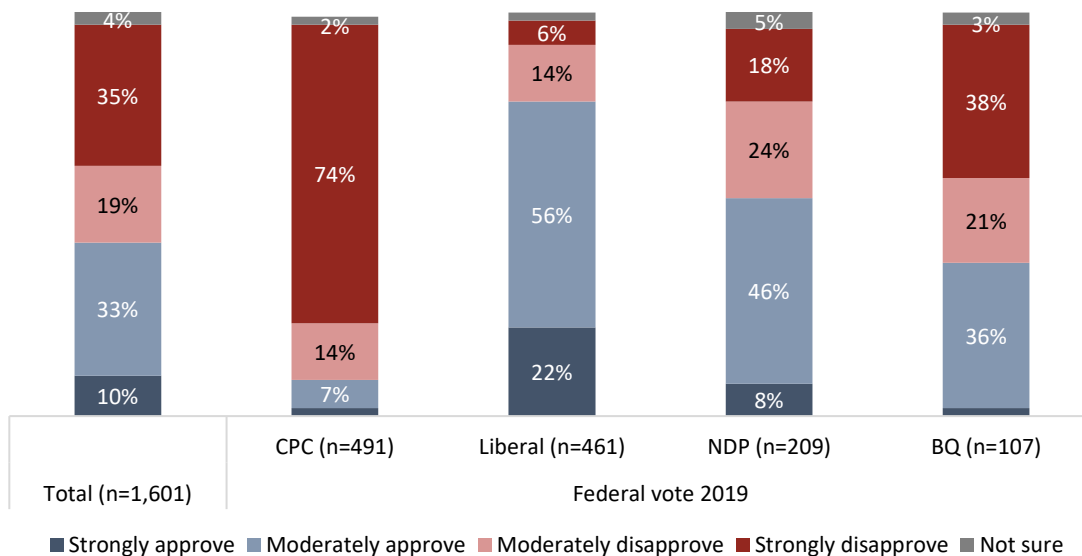
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Do you approve or disapprove of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau?



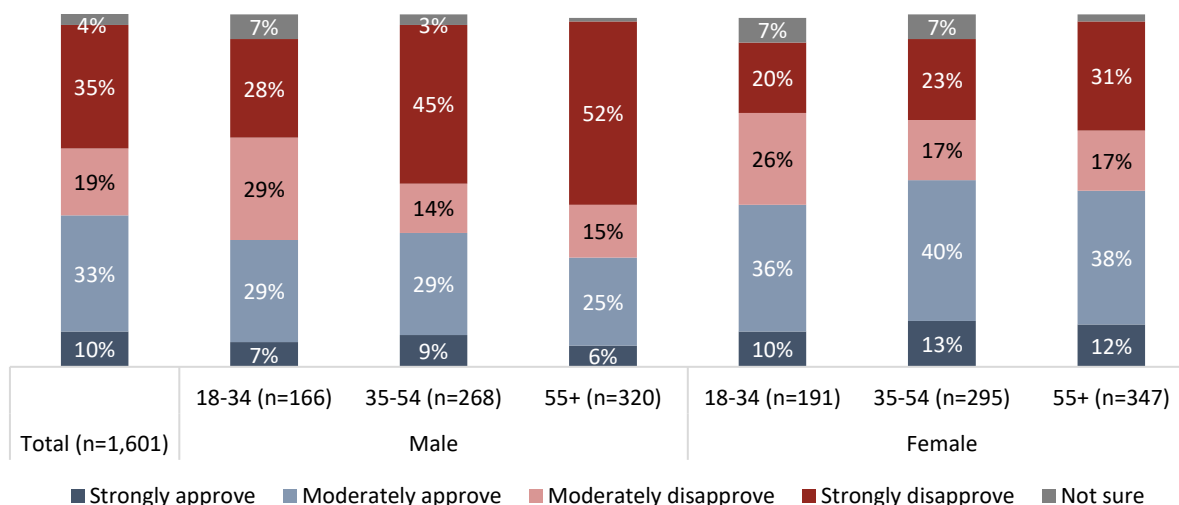
Notably, strong disapproval more than triples strong approval. The PM's performance is reviewed positively by past Liberal and NDP voters, while past Conservatives are overwhelmingly critical:

Approval of PM Justin Trudeau



Trudeau fares better with women of all ages compared to their male counterparts, with men 55 and older voicing the most criticism:

Approval of PM Justin Trudeau

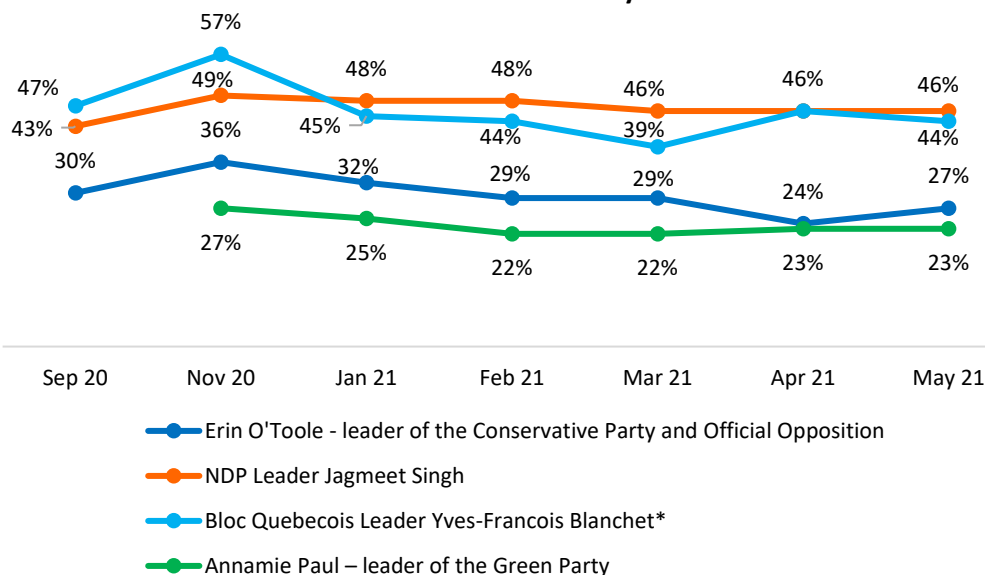


Singh leads in favourability, O'Toole languishes

Turning to other federal party leaders, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh is viewed favourably by 46 per cent of Canadians. Singh's favourable views have been remarkably consistent over the past year and a half. For opposition leader Erin O'Toole, the story is less positive.

Fewer than three-in-ten (27%) say they have a favourable view of O'Toole. He announced his party's [new carbon pricing plan](#) last month, to praise from some and anger from others – [even within his own party](#). While his favourability is up three points, the gambit has not resulted in a significant bump in approval.

Leader Favourability



*Favourability asked in Quebec only

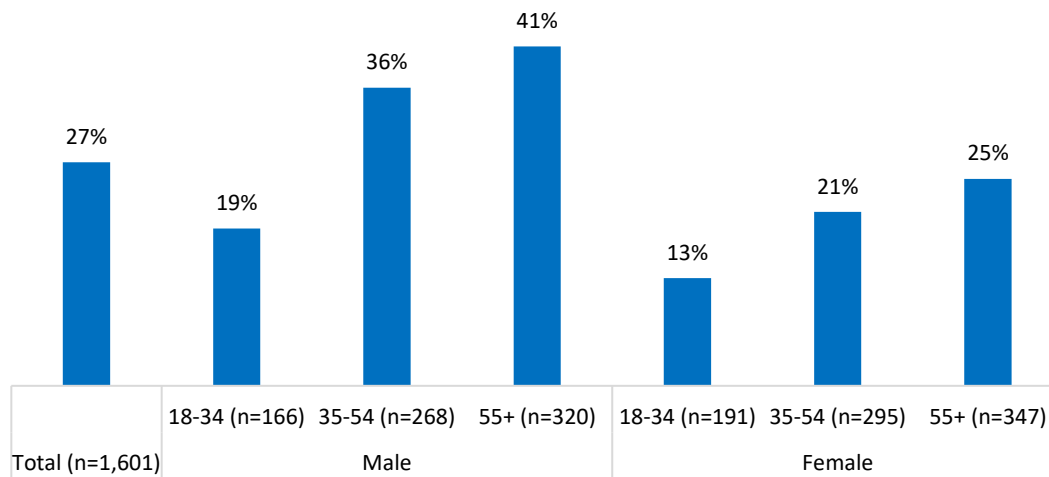
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Women cold on CPC leader

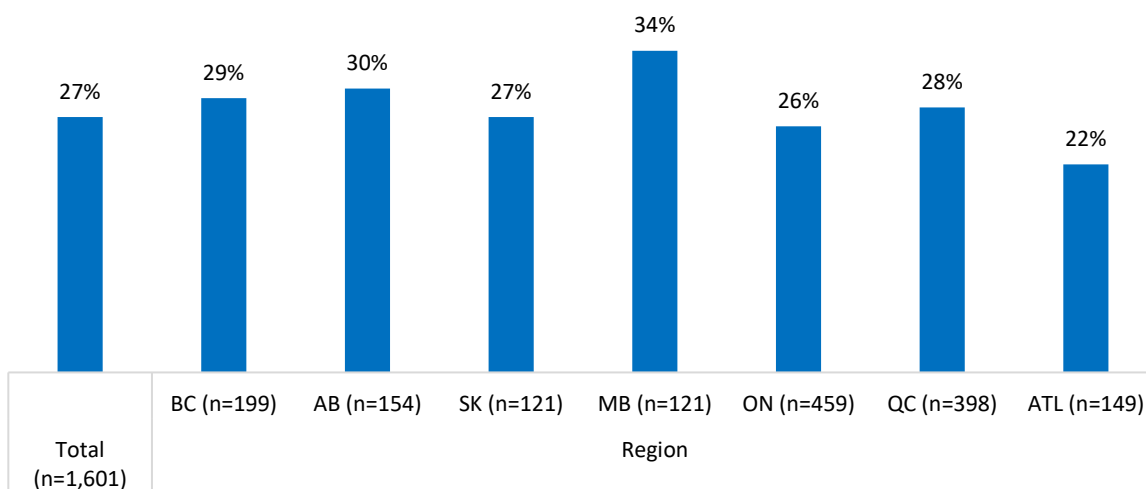
O'Toole's strength thus far appears to be the same as his party's – among men over the age of 34. Few women offer him a favourable view three-quarters of the way into his first year as leader:

Hold a favourable view of CPC leader Erin O'Toole



The CPC leader's favourable ratings are more consistent, but still relatively low, across each region of the country:

Hold a favourable view of CPC leader Erin O'Toole



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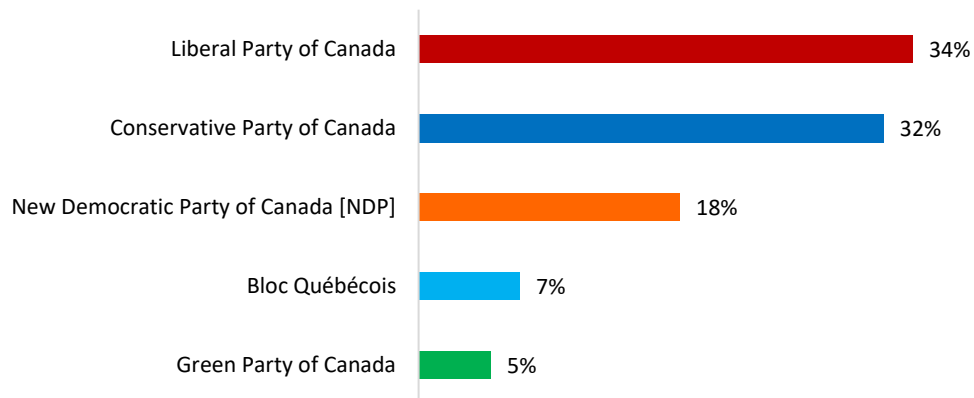
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Part Three: Vote intention

Competitive picture, one-in-three prefer Liberals, CPC

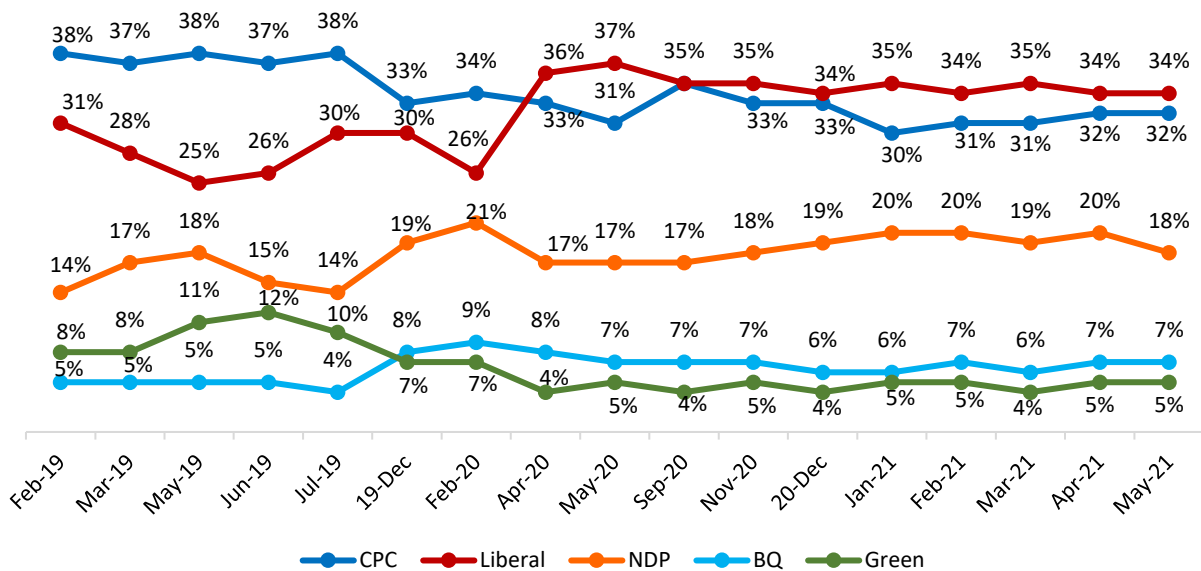
Despite O’Toole’s continued challenges to appeal to those outside of the traditional Conservative base, the electoral landscape in Canada remains competitive. Today, the Liberal Party maintains a two-point advantage over the Conservative Party:

**Federal vote intention
(Decided voters, n=1,427)**



The Liberals’ lead increased to five-points as Canada’s first wave of the pandemic began to ease last May, and again in January when the case counts of the second wave started to improve. Since then, however, support for the Liberal Party, as well as the other major federal parties, has stayed consistent.

**Federal vote intention over time
Leaning and decided voters**



Gender divide drives vote intention

While federal vote intention has remained steady overall during the past month, a deeper analysis at the demographic level reveals a few shifting dynamics. Today, a plurality of men ages 18-34 would support the Liberals, whereas past polling among this group usually reveals a tendency to support the Conservatives. That said, the CPC maintains strong support among men compared to women:

Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:							
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (1,427)	Age and Gender					
		Male			Female		
		18-34 (147)	35-54 (247)	55+ (292)	18-34 (165)	35-54 (249)	55+ (314)
Liberal Party	34%	36%	28%	29%	29%	44%	39%
Conservative Party	32%	22%	38%	48%	12%	25%	32%
NDP	18%	24%	16%	6%	43%	18%	13%
Bloc Québécois	7%	3%	6%	11%	3%	7%	8%
Green Party	5%	8%	5%	4%	9%	4%	3%
Other Party	4%	7%	7%	1%	3%	2%	4%

Liberals hold in Ontario, Quebec

Importantly for the incumbent government, its strength is in the two provinces that would most embolden its electoral chances if Canadians were called to the polls. The Liberals lead by six points over the CPC in Ontario and by 19 points in Quebec – where the Bloc Quebecois offer the most competition (29%). British Columbia continues to be the province most divided between the three major contenders for governance:

Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:								
(unweighted sample sizes)	Total (1,427)	Region						
		BC (176)	AB (141)	SK (109)	MB (109)	ON (404)	QC (362)	ATL (129)
Liberal Party	34%	28%	25%	15%	23%	39%	37%	43%
Conservative Party	32%	34%	45%	48%	44%	33%	18%	32%
NDP	18%	25%	16%	20%	30%	20%	11%	14%
Bloc Québécois	7%	-	-	-	-	-	29%	-
Green Party	5%	11%	2%	2%	1%	4%	4%	10%
Other Party	4%	2%	13%	15%	2%	3%	2%	2%

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

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