

Election 44: O'Toole preferred among leaders on economy, but Trudeau bests CPC leader head-to-head

42 per cent say they're more hopeful than anxious for economic rebuild, 58 per cent say the opposite

August 19, 2021 – Canada's post pandemic economic recovery has occupied politicians, policy makers and Canadians alike over the last year and a half. It is now poised to occupy a significant amount of the 44th federal election campaign.

But putting the domestic economy back on track after an unprecedented deliberate slow down elicits different reactions and different preferences from Canadian voters.

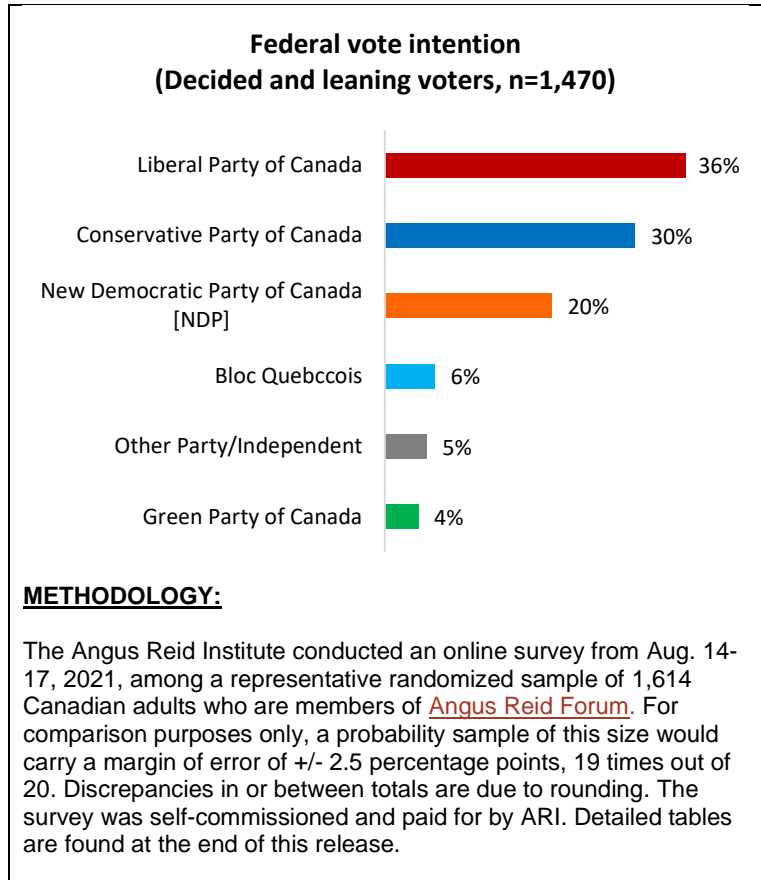
New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute shows the majority (58%) feel more anxious than hopeful (42%) about the country's near-term economic future.

For those leaning toward hope, the choice is clearly the Liberal Party. Half (53%) among this group say that they will vote for the LPC, compared to just 23 per cent among those more anxious. The first choice for that latter group is the CPC – chosen by 39 per cent. Notably, the NDP is chosen close to equally by both the hopeful (22%) and the anxious (19%).

As the first week of the campaign winds down, vote intent remains consistent – support for all major parties is statistically unchanged over last week – with the incumbent Liberal Party of Canada maintaining a six-point lead over the Conservative Party (36% to 30% respectively). The NDP remains in third place at 20 per cent – well behind the Liberals and the CPC, but well ahead of the Greens. The Bloc Quebecois, polling at six per cent nationally, trails the first place Liberals by 16 points in Quebec (41% to 25% respectively).

More Key Findings:

- The top two issues in the 2021 campaign are the same as 2019: climate change and healthcare. COVID-19 rounds out the top three.
- The Liberal Party holds a 10-point advantage in Ontario after winning the province by nine points in 2019. NDP support in that province is currently up five points compared to the previous election (22% from 17%).



CONTACT:

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

- Albertans are least hopeful about an economic recovery in the coming years. Just 28 per cent feel more hopeful than anxious, while 46 per cent say this in Ontario.

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.*

INDEX

Part One: Top issues

- **Concern over climate change intensifies**

Part Two: Canada's near-term economic future generates hope, anxiety

- **Which party and leader are best to lead the rebuild?**

Part Three: Liberals lead by six points in vote intention

Part One: Top issues

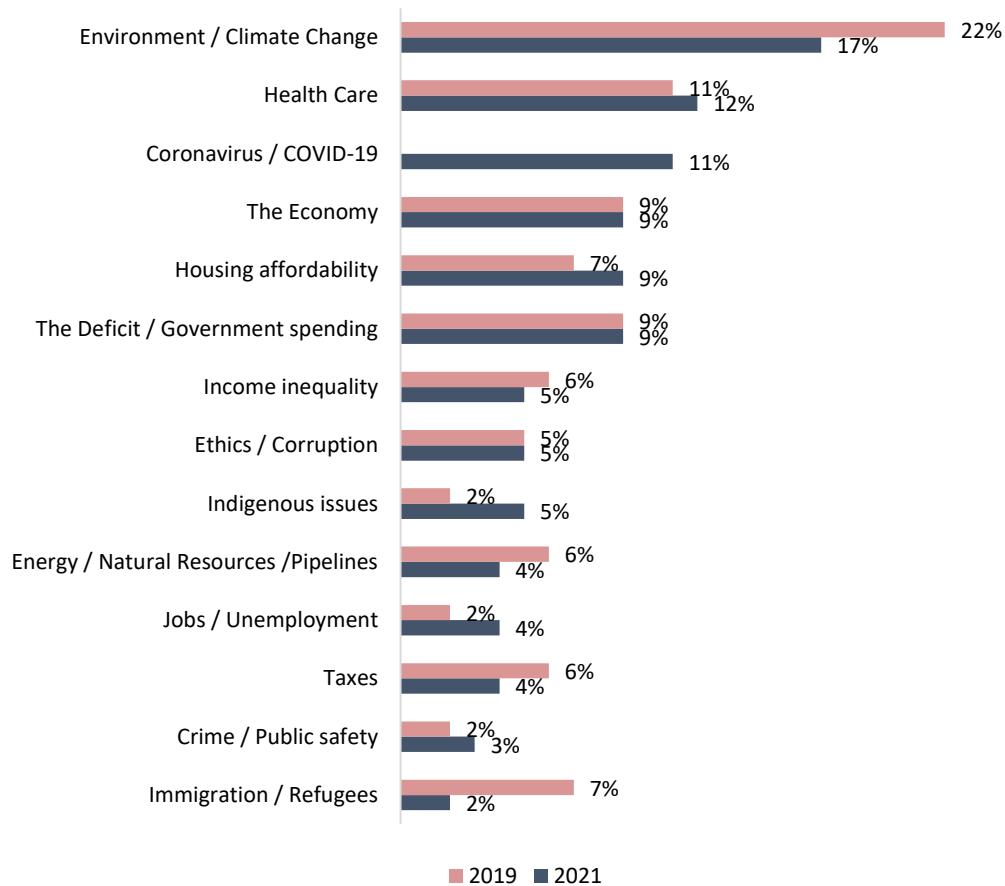
Canada and the world have faced a year and a half of economic, social, and health challenges due to COVID-19. But when Canadians go to the polls on Sept. 20 to decide which federal party will lead them out of the pandemic and into a new, uncertain reality, many of their top priorities look staggeringly similar to those they identified in 2019.

As the 2021 campaign kicks off, Canadians say climate change and health care are the top two issues facing the country that they care most about. These two issues were most galvanizing in 2019. The new addition: COVID-19 response, chosen by 11 per cent of Canadians as their top national concern. Despite the pandemic, it is climate change that has intensified in the minds of voters over the last two years:

CONTACT:

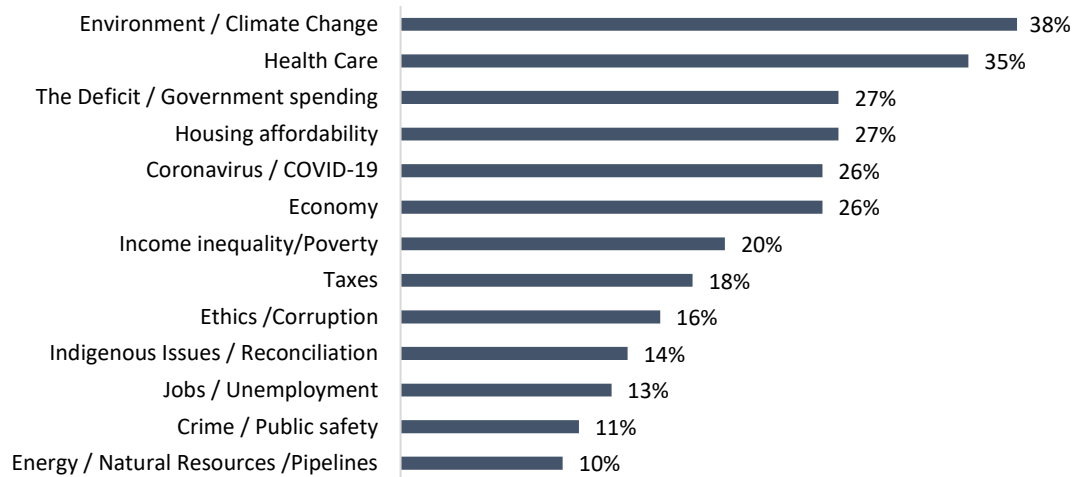
Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

**Top Issue - First Choice
Sept 2019 vs Aug 2021**



Asked to expand their list of national priorities, a suite of economic issues is chosen by one-in-four Canadians as top concerns in a second tier, alongside the COVID-19 response:

Top issues facing Canada, Aug. 2021
(All respondents, n=1,614)
(Top three selected, issues with more than 10% shown)



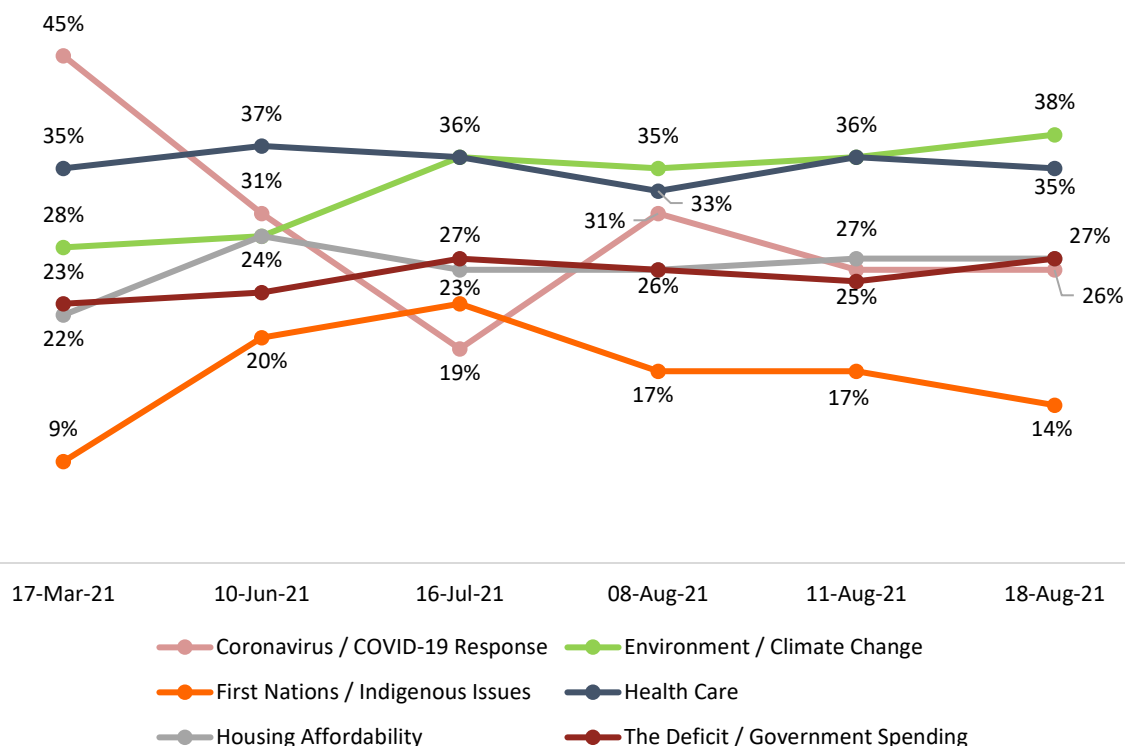
Concern over climate change intensifies

As COVID-19 concern has diminished compared to the beginning of the year, worry about climate change has risen in its wake. [Summer wildfires](#) in parts of the country have only further elevated these levels of concern to their highest mark of the year. Meantime, while the priority for Indigenous issues rose precipitously after the confirmation of [unmarked graves](#) at former residential school sites early in summer, levels of concern have declined:

CONTACT:

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

Canadians' top three issues over time



For most voters, climate change is paramount among those who currently say they will support the Liberal Party, NDP or Bloc Québécois. That said, the federal deficit is now a top issue for both Conservative and BQ supporters as all parties lay out their plans for economic recovery:

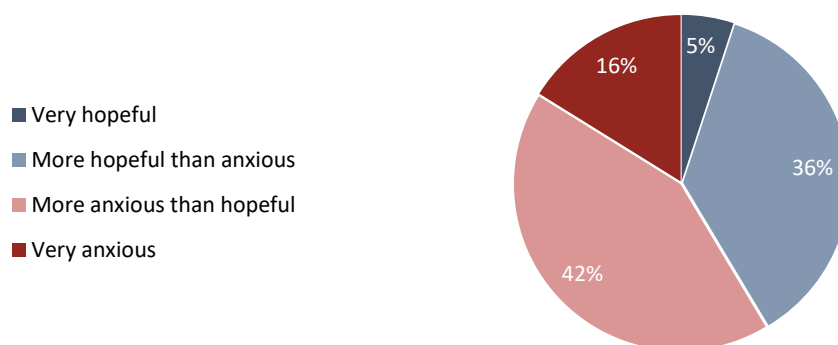
Top three issues by current federal vote intention (Weighted sample sizes)			
Liberal (n=523)	CPC (n=435)	NDP (n=296)	Bloc Québécois (n=90*)
Environment / Climate Change 51%	The Deficit / Government spending 57%	Environment / Climate Change 60%	Environment / Climate Change 55%
Health Care 43%	The Economy 44%	Housing affordability 41%	The Deficit / Government spending 36%
Coronavirus / COVID-19 38%	Taxes 31%	Income inequality / Poverty 35%	Health Care 35%

*Small sample size, interpret with caution. Note: data for the Green party omitted due to too small of a sample size

Part Two: Canada's near-term economic future generates hope, anxiety

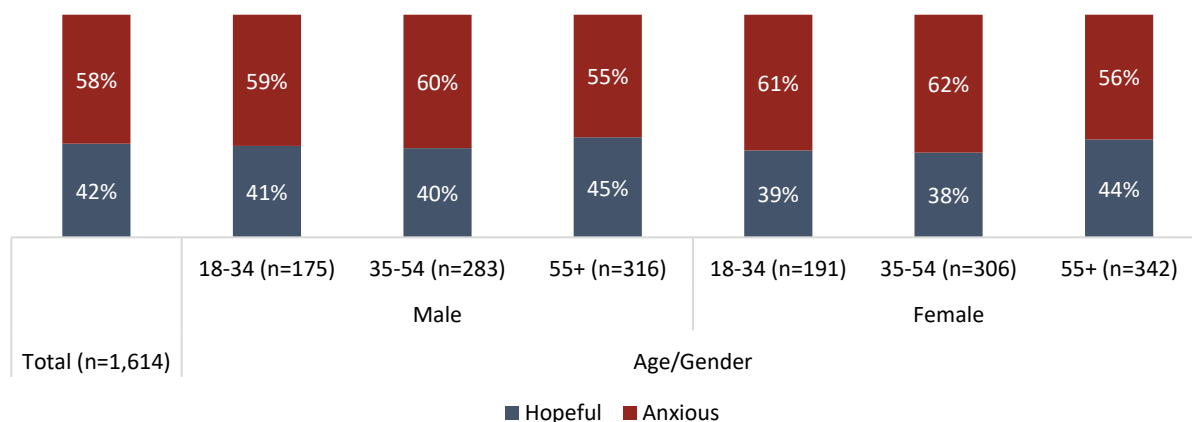
The coming years will present challenge and opportunity for whichever party forms government. After the largest financial crisis since the Great Depression, the mood of the nation, with a fourth wave already surging, is still largely apprehensive. Three-in-five (58%) say they are more anxious than hopeful about what the next couple of years will bring, while two-in-five (42%) are more upbeat:

**And thinking about the next couple of years, are you hopeful or anxious about the economic situation of the country?
(All respondents, n=1,614)**



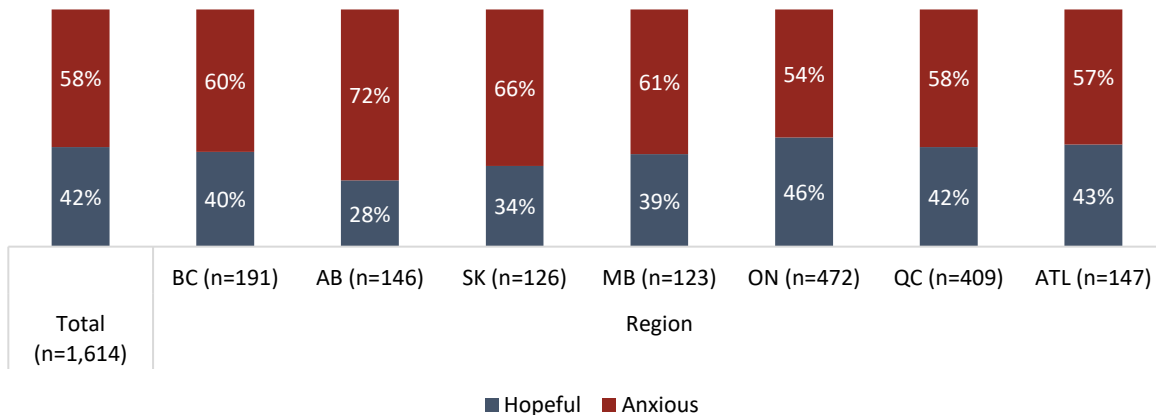
Notably, Canadians are remarkably consistent across age and gender demographics when considering the hope versus anxiety question. Those over the age of 54 show a slightly more optimistic lean, but all largely voice the same level of anxiety about their country's economic prospects:

And thinking about the next couple of years, are you hopeful or anxious about the economic situation of the country?



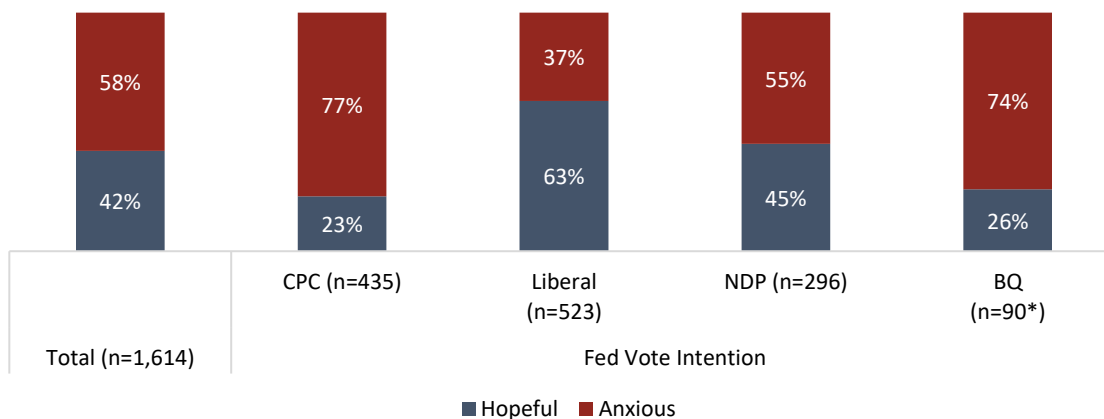
Regionally, Ontario residents lead the nation in hope for the economic recovery, but not significantly. Just under half (46%) in Canada's most populous province feel this way. Albertans are most anxious, though many would likely be buoyed by a Conservative victory on Sept. 20:

And thinking about the next couple of years, are you hopeful or anxious about the economic situation of the country?



Those who say they will support the incumbent Liberals are noticeably more buoyant about the nation's economic circumstances. This group is the only one for which hopefulness is the majority view:

And thinking about the next couple of years, are you hopeful or anxious about the economic situation of the country?



**Small sample size, interpret with caution. Note: data for the Green party omitted due to too small of a sample size*

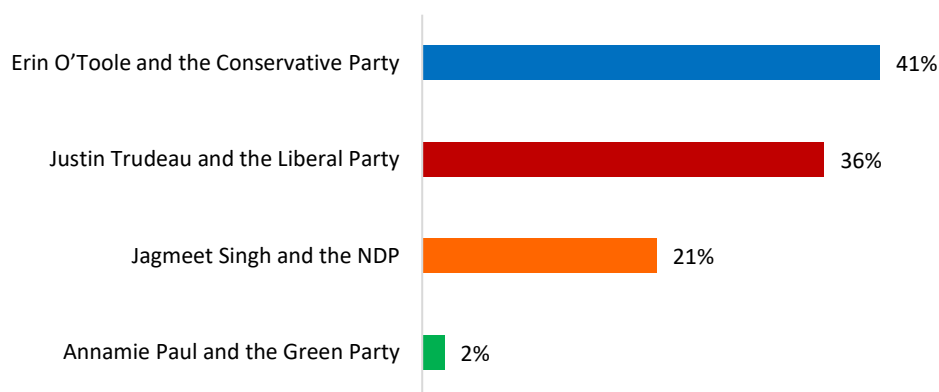
Which party and leader are best to lead the rebuild?

If this were a campaign entirely centred on post-pandemic economic growth, Erin O’Toole would be in a relatively advantageous position. Two-in-five (41%) believe he and his party would be best suited to help the economy rebound from its COVID-19-induced malaise, while Justin Trudeau and the Liberals are at 36 per cent.

The Conservatives have been more concrete about their economic plans than the Liberals in the campaign’s early days. O’Toole’s party has promised to recover the one million jobs lost since the beginning of the pandemic within one year. To do so, a Conservative government will pay half of new hires’ salaries for six months after the end of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, as well as providing tax credits and loans to small- and medium-sized businesses. So far, the Liberals have said they will continue current COVID-19 business supports until March 2022, while also promising to subsidize wages and rent in the tourism industry.

One-in-five say Jagmeet Singh and the NDP would be best to lead the country’s rebuild over the coming years. Singh has most prominently announced a wealth tax of one per cent on Canadians whose worth exceeds \$10 million to help fund the recovery:

Thinking specifically about growing the economy post-pandemic, which of the following do you think is best suited to handle this? (All respondents, n=1,614)

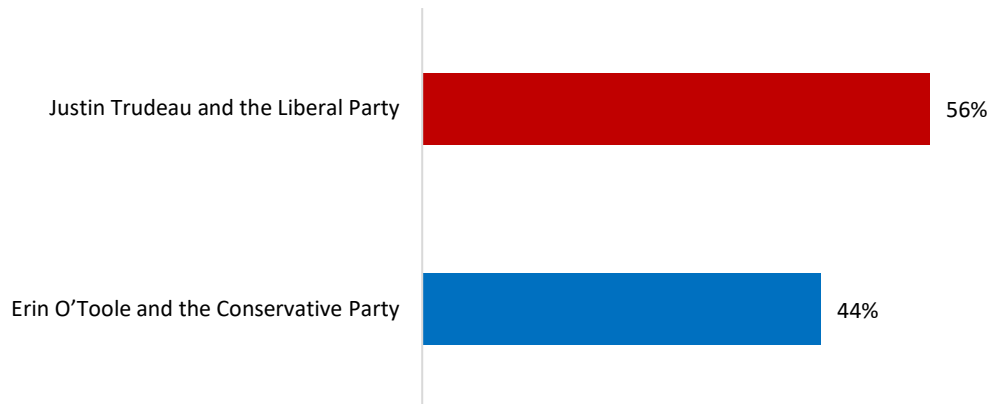


The picture is much less favourable for O’Toole in a direct head-to-head with Trudeau on the question of who is best to rebuild the economy. When presented with the two parties most likely to form government, a majority (56%) of Canadians believe Trudeau and the Liberals are the better choice to “build back better” after the pandemic, while 44 per cent say the same of O’Toole and the Conservatives:

CONTACT:

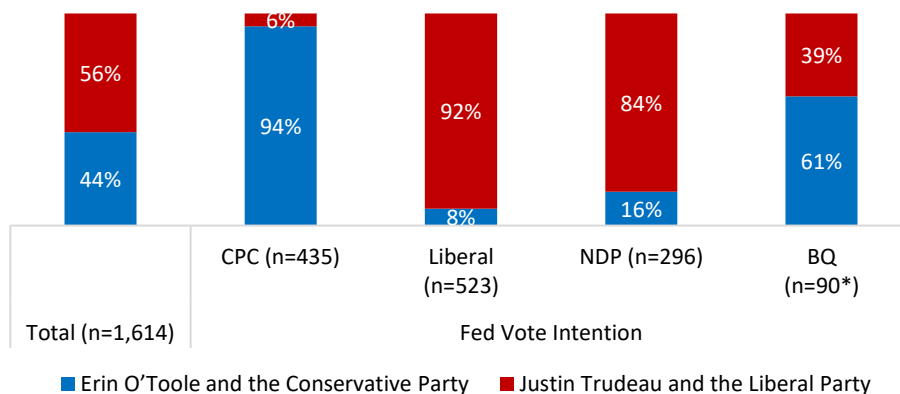
Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

**And what if you had to choose between the two parties most likely to form the next government?
(All respondents, n=1,614)**



NDP supporters hold nearly the same amount of belief in Trudeau's ability to grow the economy post-COVID as Liberal supporters. Meanwhile, there are hints at inroads to be made in Quebec for the Conservative party, as three-in-five (61%) Bloc supporters would choose O'Toole over Trudeau in a head-to-head on moving the economy forward post-pandemic:

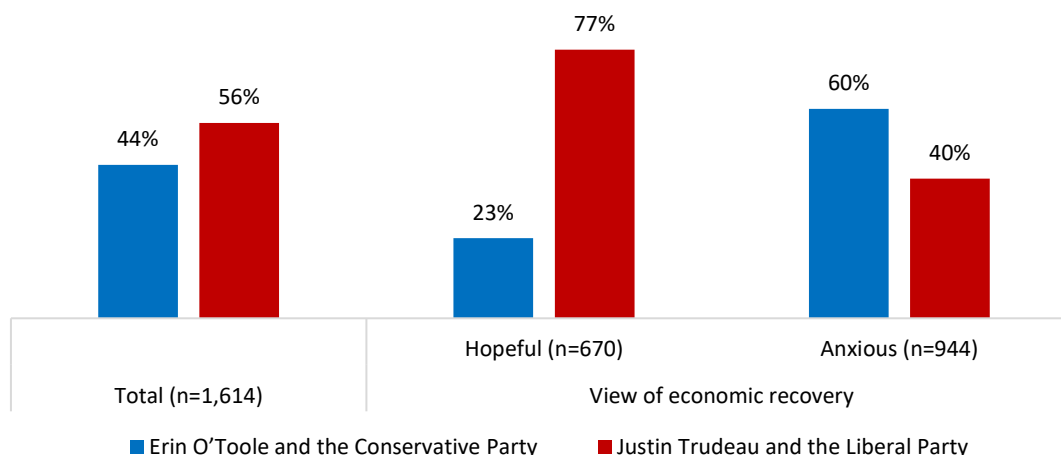
And what if you had to choose between the two parties most likely to form the next government?



**Small sample size, interpret with caution. Note: data for the Green party omitted due to too small of a sample size*

Those who take a hopeful view of the economic recovery are much more likely to say they trust Justin Trudeau to lead through it – though they are a smaller portion of the overall population. Those who take a more anxious view lean toward Erin O'Toole and the Conservative Party:

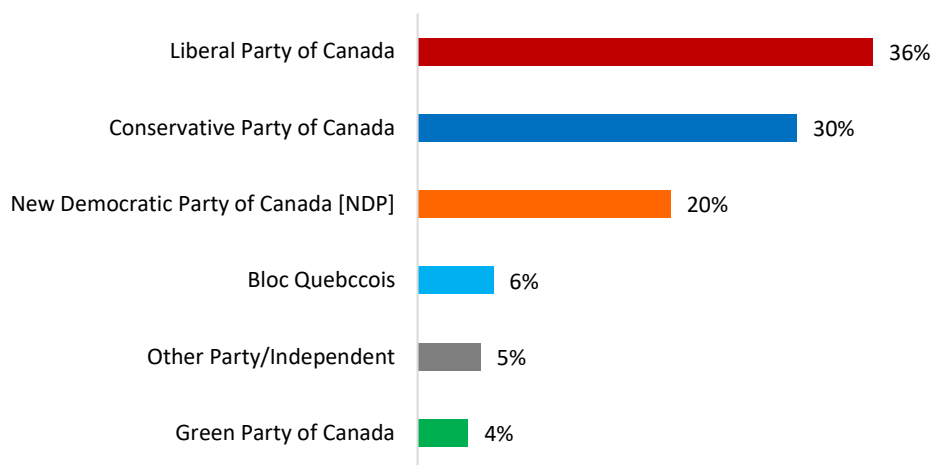
And what if you had to choose between the two parties most likely to form the next government?



Part Three: Liberals lead by six points in vote intention

The official launch of the 2021 federal election campaign has yet to cause significant movement in vote intention. The Liberal Party leads by six points, currently garnering 36 per cent of decided and leaning voters. Three-in-ten say they will support the Conservatives on Sept. 20, while one-in-five say they will be voting for the NDP:

Federal vote intention (Decided and leaning voters, n=1,470)

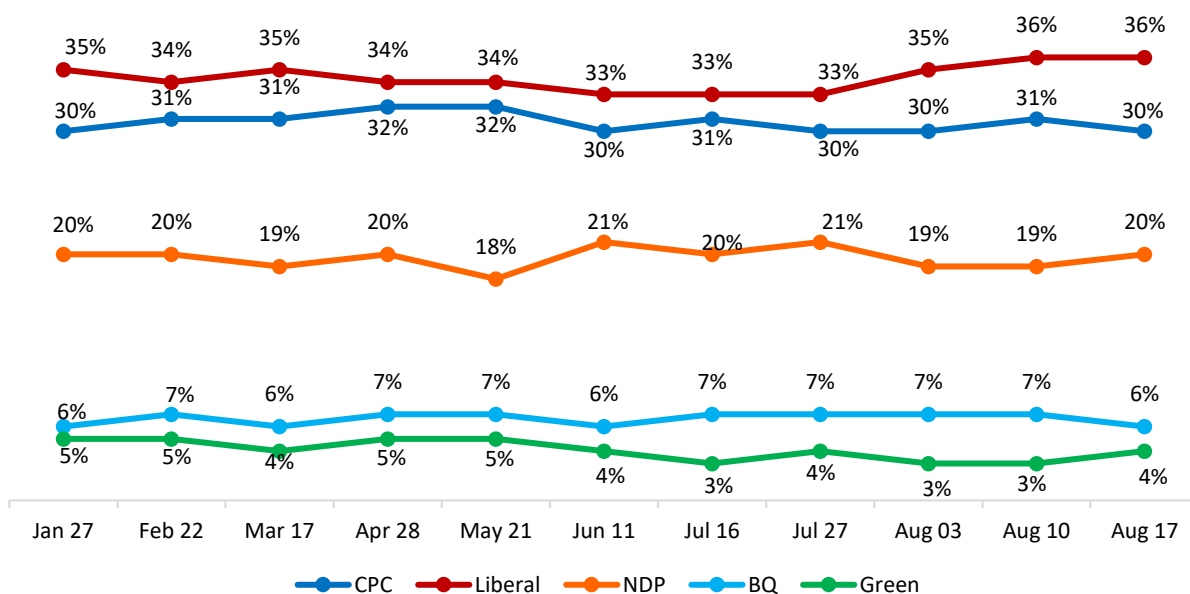


Since the beginning of the month, the gap between the Conservatives and the Liberals has been at least five points in each wave of polling:

CONTACT:

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

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



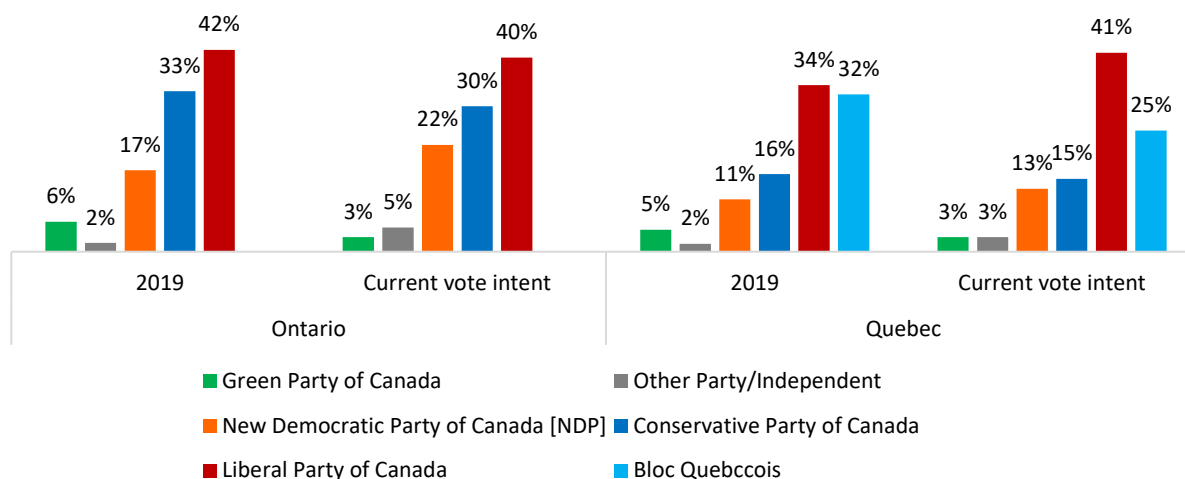
The three major federal parties are in a statistical tie in B.C., while the Conservatives continue to enjoy majority support in Alberta and Saskatchewan and plurality support in Manitoba. The Liberals garner the highest support in seat-rich Ontario and Quebec, as well as in the Atlantic provinces. The NDP's lowest support is in Quebec, a province that once helped the party reach a historically high seat total in 2011:

Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:								
(Unweighted sample sizes)	Total (n=1,470)	Region						
		BC (n=178)	AB (n=134)	SK (n=120)	MB (n=113)	ON (n=424)	QC (n=371)	ATL (n=127)
Liberal Party	36%	31%	20%	16%	22%	40%	41%	41%
Conservative Party	30%	31%	54%	51%	38%	30%	15%	30%
NDP	20%	30%	17%	20%	28%	22%	13%	20%
Bloc Québécois	6%	-	-	-	-	-	25%	-
Green Party	4%	7%	2%	1%	2%	3%	3%	5%
Other Party	5%	3%	8%	12%	10%	5%	3%	5%

While there has been little movement in Ontario for the Conservatives and the Liberals since the 2019 election results, the NDP looks stronger than it did two years ago, currently polling five points higher than its 2019 percentage of popular vote. In Quebec, the Liberals are seven points ahead of where they

landed in terms of popular vote in 2019, a gain largely at the expense of the Bloc Québécois, who are polling seven points lower:

Ontario and Quebec, 2019 results vs. current vote intent



Men aged 18 to 34 are the most divided age-gender group, while women aged 18 to 34 are the only age-gender group that give the NDP a plurality of support. Men over 34 prefer the Conservatives, while women over 34 prefer the Liberals:

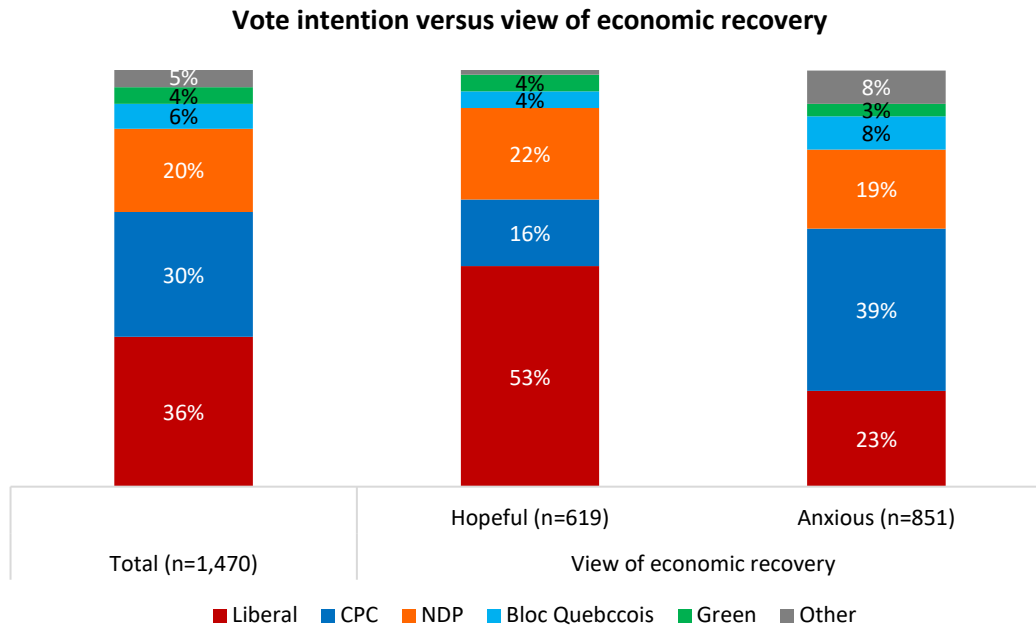
Federal vote intention, including leaners, decided voters only:							
(Weighted sample sizes)	Total (n=1,470)	Age and Gender					
		Male			Female		
		18-34 (n=161)	35-54 (n=267)	55+ (n=290)	18-34 (n=171)	35-54 (n=272)	55+ (n=310)
Liberal Party	36%	26%	29%	36%	29%	42%	44%
Conservative Party	30%	30%	36%	40%	15%	23%	28%
NDP	20%	24%	17%	12%	40%	24%	15%
Bloc Québécois	6%	6%	5%	8%	4%	3%	9%
Green Party	4%	5%	4%	1%	10%	2%	2%
Other Party	5%	10%	9%	3%	2%	5%	2%

Economic outlook appears to play a factor in vote choice. For the hopeful, the choice is clearly the Liberal Party. Half (53%) among this group say that they will vote for the incumbents, compared to just 23 per

CONTACT:

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

cent among those more anxious. The anxious are far more likely to prefer the CPC at this point in the campaign, while the NDP is close to equally represented among both groups:



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

For detailed results by economic outlook, [click here](#).

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl

Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org