

Much ado about nothing? Canadian voters return a parliament that looks much the same as the last

Preliminary results find the parties within one or two seats of where they were after 2019 election

September 21, 2021 – With the 2021 federal election in the rear-view mirror, it would appear that the composition of Canada's 44th Parliament will look much the same as the 43rd.

In a campaign that has seen its fair share of ups and downs, studies released by the non-profit Angus Reid Institute have provided insights into the trends that have shaped voters choices this election.

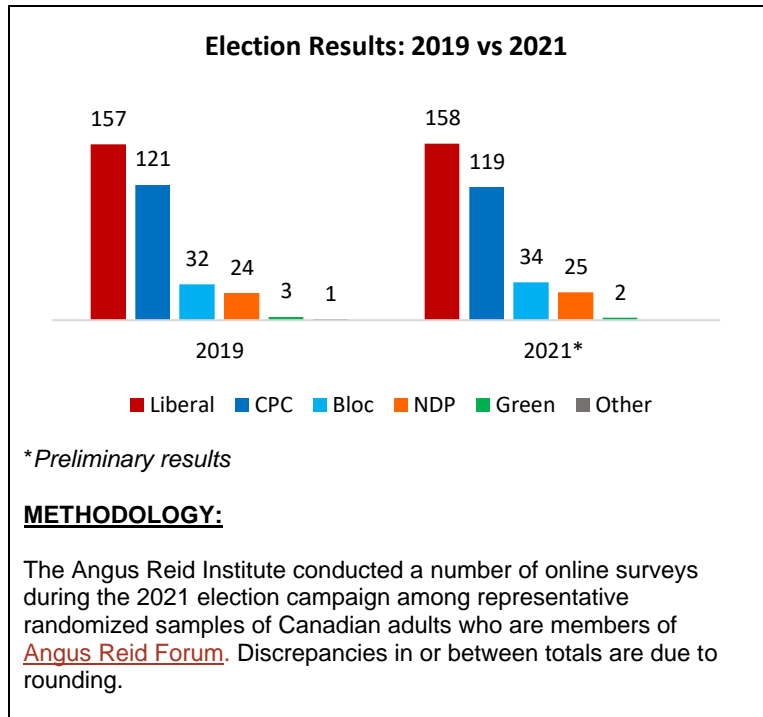
Here is a brief look at some of the key factors that informed Canada's 44th election:

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: Disenchantment with leadership options

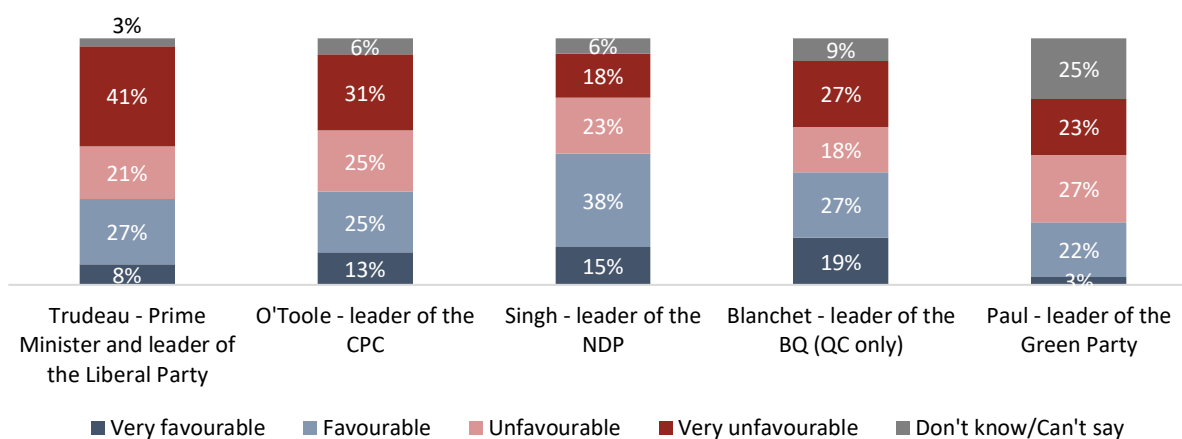
While Justin Trudeau's path to power in 2015 may have been paved on high levels of personal support, it was certainly not the case in 2021. With only a week left in the election, three-in-five respondents said they had either an unfavourable, or very unfavourable, view of the Liberal Party leader.

The other main contender for Prime Minister, Conservative Party leader Erin O'Toole, did not fare much better. Over half (56%) similarly said they had either an unfavourable, or very unfavourable, view of O'Toole.

By contrast, Jagmeet Singh and Yves-François Blanchet, leaders of the NDP and the Bloc Québécois, both enjoyed higher approval ratings at 53 and 46 per cent respectively.

Green Party leader, Annamie Paul, also fared poorly in favourability polls and, like People's Party of Canada leader Maxime Bernier, [failed to win her riding](#).

**Do you have an overall favourable or unfavourable view of the following people?
(Sept. 14, all respondents, n=1,840)**



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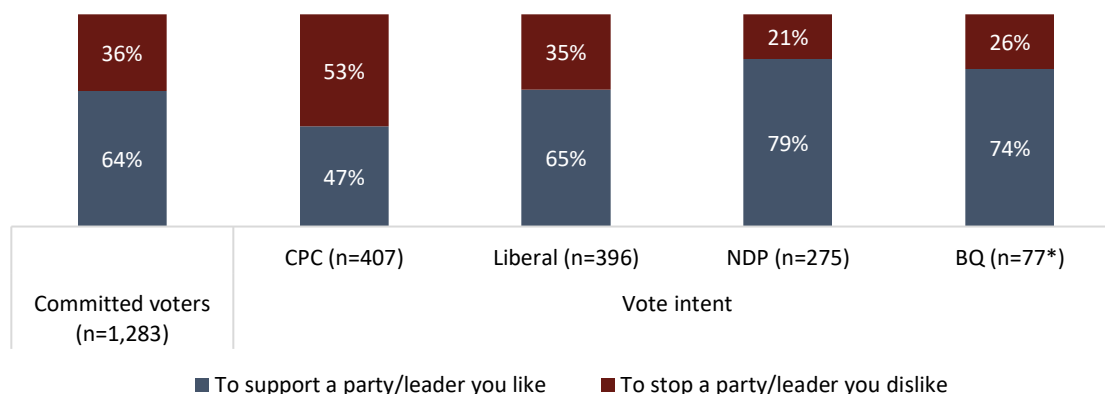
Part Two: A vote for O’Toole, or a vote *against* Trudeau?

In addition to being an election in which the two party leaders most likely to form government were also the least favourably seen, a significant portion of voters were motivated by their opposition to another party or leader.

Related: [Election 44: With one week left in campaign, CPC and Liberals locked in two-way race, mirroring 2019](#)

A survey from Sept. 12 found that one-third (36%) of all voters were voting against—as opposed to for—a party or leader. This was true of half (53%) of CPC supporters and one-third (35%) of Liberal partisans:

And thinking of the party you are currently supporting; would you say you are voting (Sept. 12):



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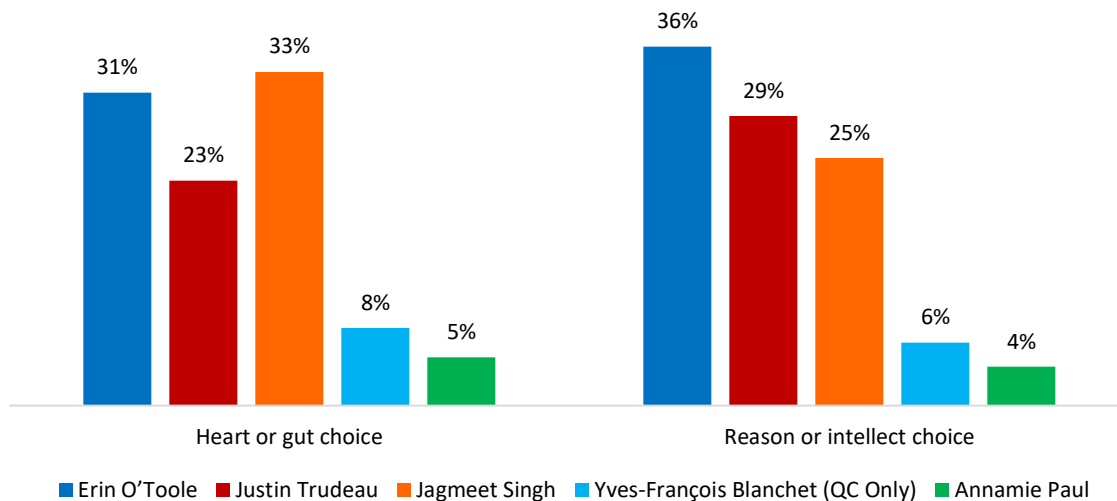
Part Three: The head versus the heart

The goal of the last two elections for the NDP was to turn the popularity of the party’s leader into votes in ballot boxes on election day.

Related: [The Head vs. the Heart: In campaign’s 2nd week, O’Toole is voters’ intellectual choice, shares ‘gut’ preference with Singh](#)

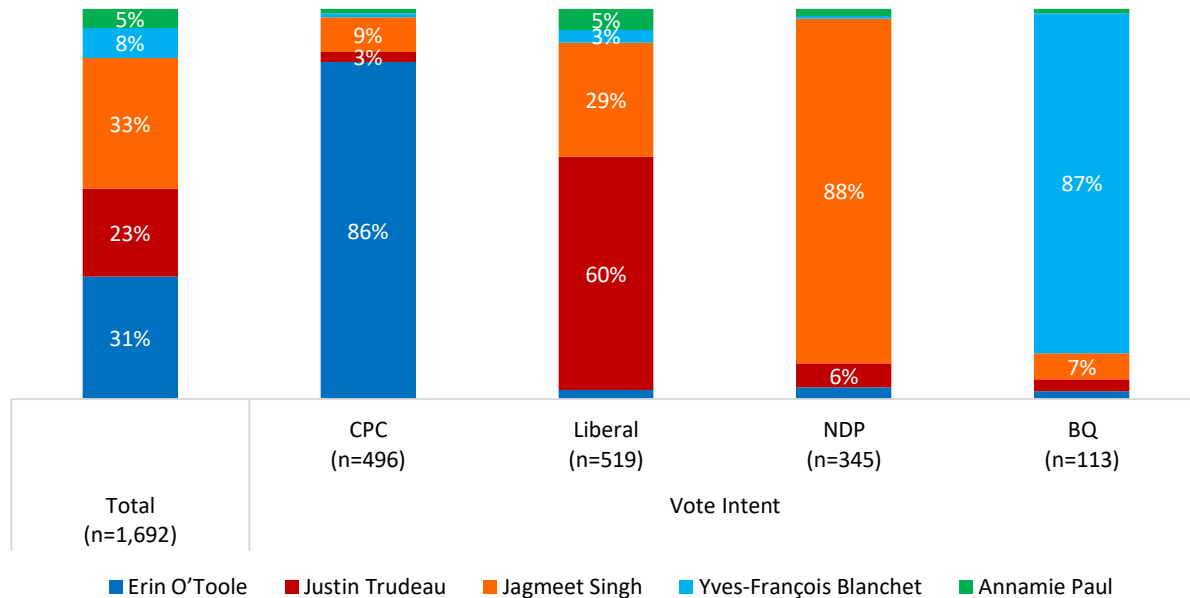
Indeed, one-third of Canadians said in August that Singh was their choice if they were voting only with their heart or gut:

**Suppose you are relying on each... which leader are you most attracted to?
(Aug. 26, n=1,692)**



Nearly all (88%) of the NDP’s supporters said the same, while even three-in-ten Liberals admitted they would choose Singh if they were only voting with their heart or gut:

**Suppose in this federal election, you are relying only on your gut or your heart.
In that case, which of the main party leaders are you most attracted to?
(Aug. 26)**

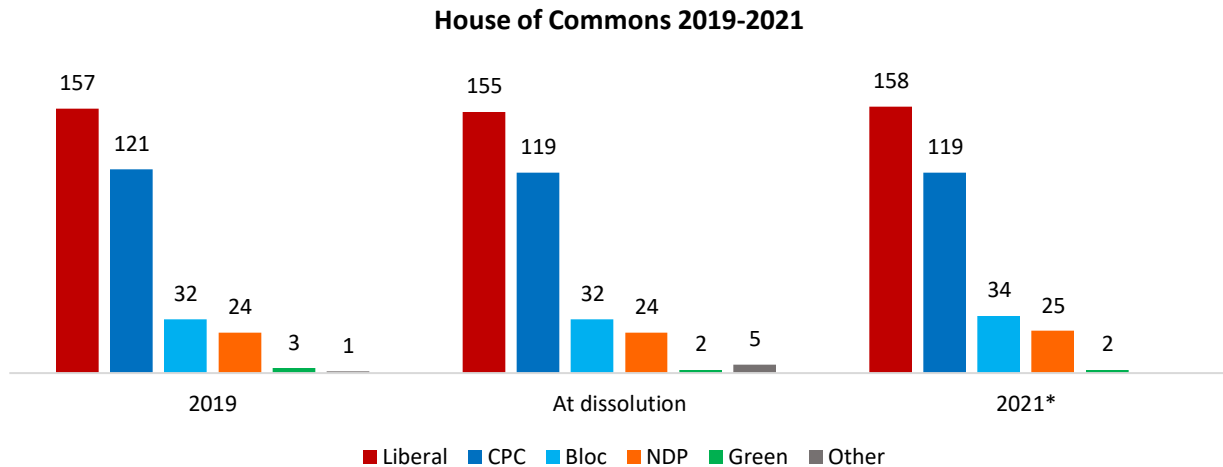


After all the votes are counted for the 44th federal election, perhaps more NDP voters voted with their heart, but not as many as the NDP would've hoped.

This election saw slight improvement for the NDP; the party claimed one additional seat from where they were after the 2019 election and captured 17.7 per cent of the popular vote (both figures are preliminary with mail-in ballots still to be counted), an increase from the 16 per cent they captured in 2019, with more expected to come via mail from B.C., where the party traditionally does well.

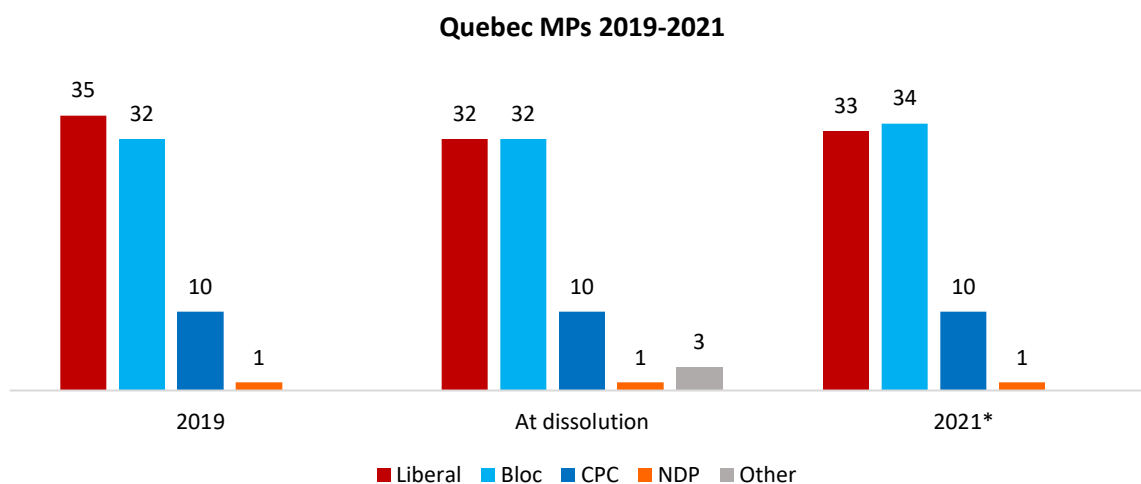
Part Four: Much ado about nothing?

The story of slight changes is really the story of the whole 2021 election. In many ways the makeup of the House of Commons is back to where it started, with every party within one or two seats of where they were when the house rose before the election:



**Preliminary results prior to the counting of mail-in ballots*

While there was much speculation that a political and media narrative around the English debate [galvanised Quebec](#) for Blanchet's party, [the Bloc surge](#) didn't materialize, and there was little movement in the overall standings in Quebec. The Liberals find themselves down two seats prior to the counting of mail-in ballots, and the Bloc up two:



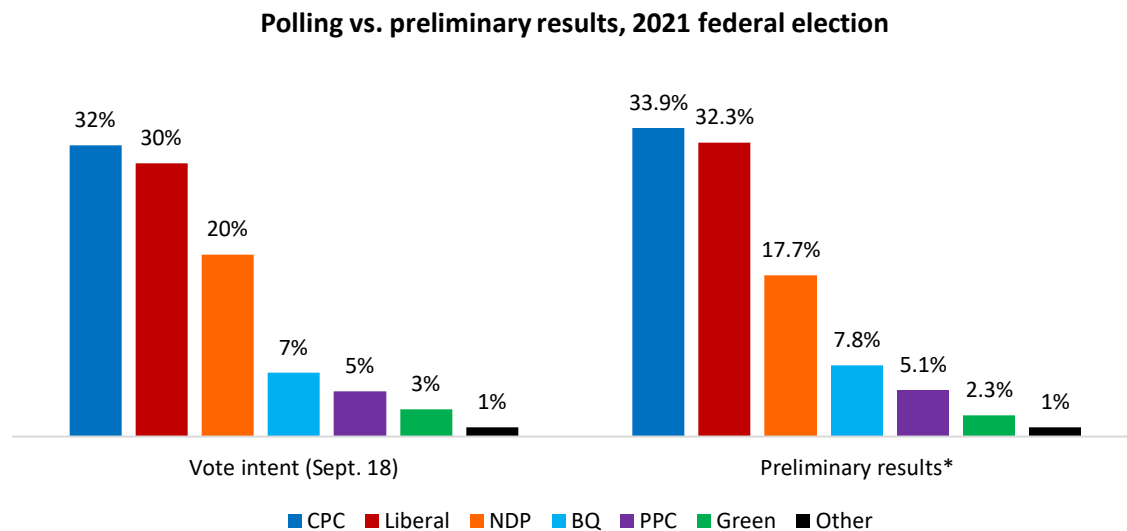
**Preliminary results prior to the counting of mail-in ballots*

Part Five: Polling and the preliminary popular vote

Based on preliminary numbers, the popular vote largely aligned with ARI polling conducted the weekend before the vote, though nearly one million [mail-in ballots](#) remain to be counted.

Related: [Déjà vu all over again? CPC, Liberals locked in tight battle with smaller parties poised to make the difference](#)

The preliminary percentage of the popular vote is within the margin of error for the Liberal, CPC, Bloc, PPC and Green parties:



**Preliminary results prior to the counting of mail-in ballots*

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