

Election 44: With one week left in campaign, CPC and Liberals locked in two-way race, mirroring 2019

Blanchet, Paul emerge from debate with personal momentum, little change in their parties' fortunes

September 14, 2021 – The 44th federal election campaign is in its final week, with no party separating itself among Canadian voters, half of whom are saying they're not yet fully committed to their party choice.

New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds the Conservative (32%) and Liberal (30%) parties in a statistical deadlock, with each garnering support from three-in-ten voters. The NDP appear poised to increase their vote share, currently supported by 21 per cent of Canadians after receiving 16 per cent of the vote in 2019.

Several dynamics have led to the stalemate, including a migration of voters of all age and gender combinations away from the incumbent Liberals. The only exception to this is among young women, where party support has increased four points since the campaign began.

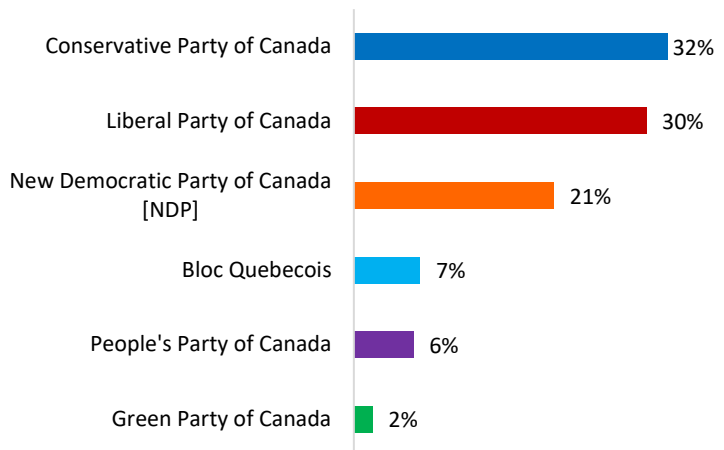
Regionally, the Liberals hold on to a key five-point advantage in Ontario but have ceded ground in British Columbia since the beginning of the campaign.

The CPC and NDP now both lead the Liberals in B.C. by double digits. In Quebec, the Bloc Quebecois have pulled into a tie with the Liberal Party.

No leader appears to have gained standing from the federal debates more than BQ leader Yves-Francois Blanchet. While both NDP leader Jagmeet Singh and CPC leader Erin O'Toole had been gaining momentum throughout the campaign, that trend reverses this week, with Blanchet and Green Party leader Annamie Paul both trending upward in public opinion.

As candidates sprint to the finish, they do so with varied support bases. For the Conservatives, half of current voters say they are supporting the party because they dislike another more (53%), not because they like what the CPC is offering (47%). In contrast, 35 per cent of Liberals and 21 per cent of New Democrats say this of their own current vote choice.

Vote intention – leaning and decided voters (n=1,689)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Sept. 9 – 12, 2021 among a representative randomized sample of 1,840 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.

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More Key Findings:

- If voters do switch their choice in the final week, it is the NDP that would gain most. One-quarter (25%) of voters say this would be their second choice, ahead of the Liberals (14%) and CPC (12%). Another quarter (24%) say they have no second choice at all.
- The People's Party continues to gain momentum in this campaign. Six per cent of voters now say they will support Maxime Bernier's party on Election Day.
- Jagmeet Singh leads in post-debate favourability (53%) while both Erin O'Toole (38%) and Justin Trudeau (35%) continue to be unfavourably viewed by a majority of Canadians.

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: Leadership

Leader momentum – Blanchet, Paul make post-debate gains

While the three federal debates were billed as an opportunity for Justin Trudeau and Erin O'Toole to distinguish themselves from each other in the hopes of opening up some daylight in a competitive election campaign, it appears that neither have emerged from the past week with notable positive momentum. One-quarter of Canadians (24%) say their opinion of O'Toole has improved over the past week or so, down four points from the previous week. For Trudeau, while the trend is upward, it is

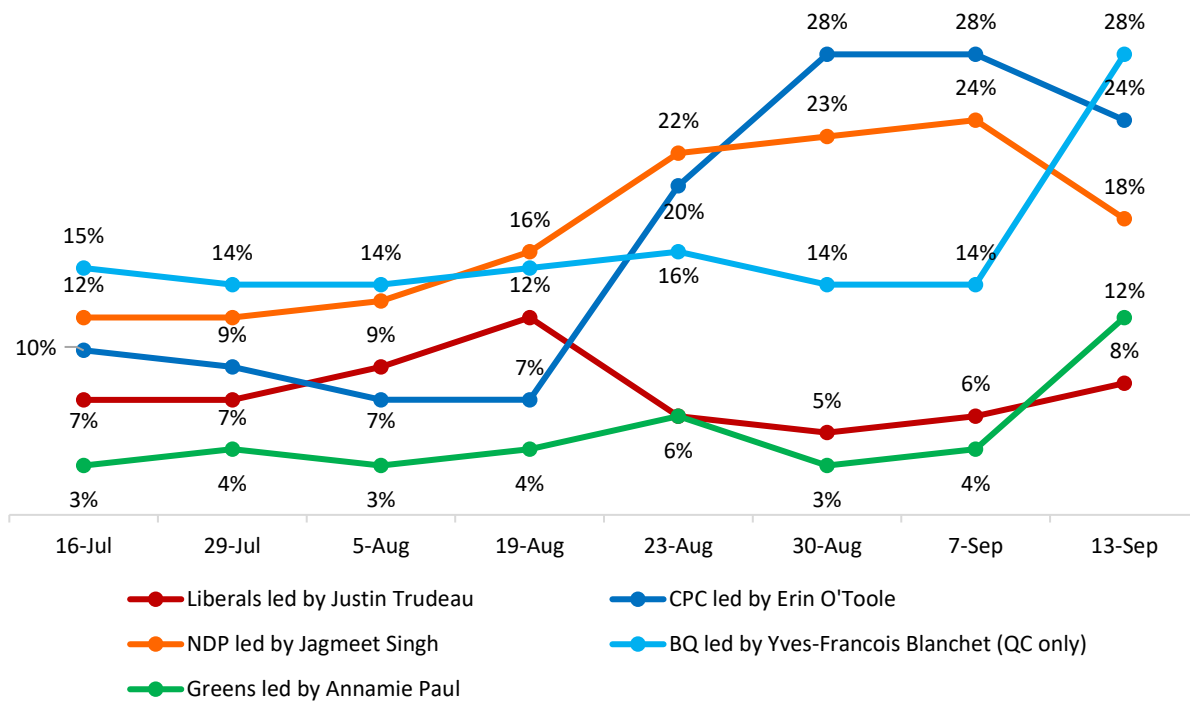
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nonetheless likely disappointing to the Liberal team; just eight per cent say their opinion of him has improved over the last week.

The two party leaders that appear to be benefitting the most from screentime during the debates are the Bloc's Yves-Francois Blanchet and Annamie Paul, leader of the Green party. Three-in-ten say their opinion of Blanchet is improving, double the rate of the week before. While just one-in-nine say the same of Paul, that represents a three-fold increase from last week:

Over the past few weeks, would you say your opinion of each of the following has improved, worsened or stayed the same? (Percent choosing 'Improved' shown)



Favourability of federal leaders

Whoever does lead the next government elected on Sept. 20 will do so with considerable negative sentiment from most of the country.

The two most likely prime ministers, O'Toole and Trudeau, continue to be viewed unfavourably by the majority of the population. Three-in-five (62%) view Trudeau unfavourably, while 56 per cent say this of O'Toole.

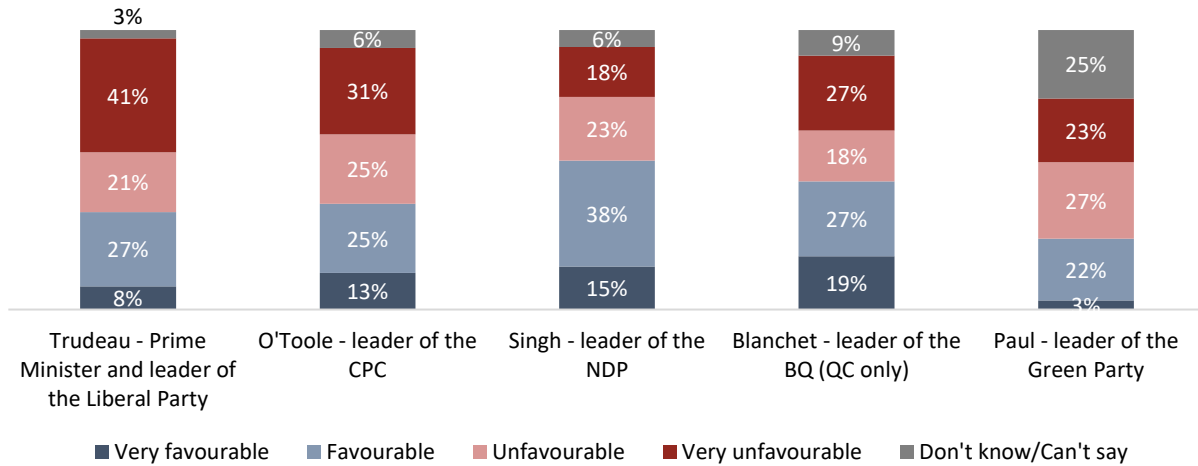
While Blanchet had the best week from a momentum perspective, he is still viewed unfavourably by the same proportion of respondents in Quebec as those who view him favourably.

The NDP's Jagmeet Singh continues to lead on this measure, as the only leader viewed favourably by a majority of the country:

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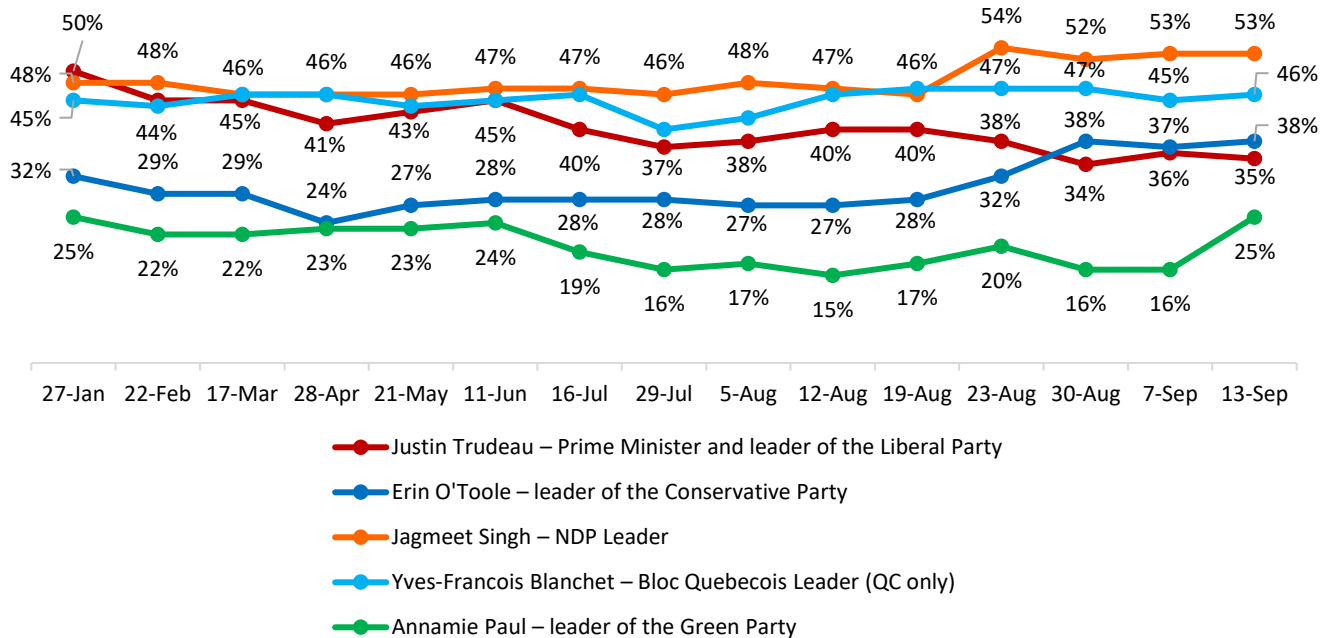
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**Do you have an overall favourable or unfavourable view of the following people?
(All respondents, n=1,840)**



Despite the extra time on Canadian televisions, laptops and mobile devices from last week's debates, favourability only changed significantly for one leader, Paul:

Leader favourability over time

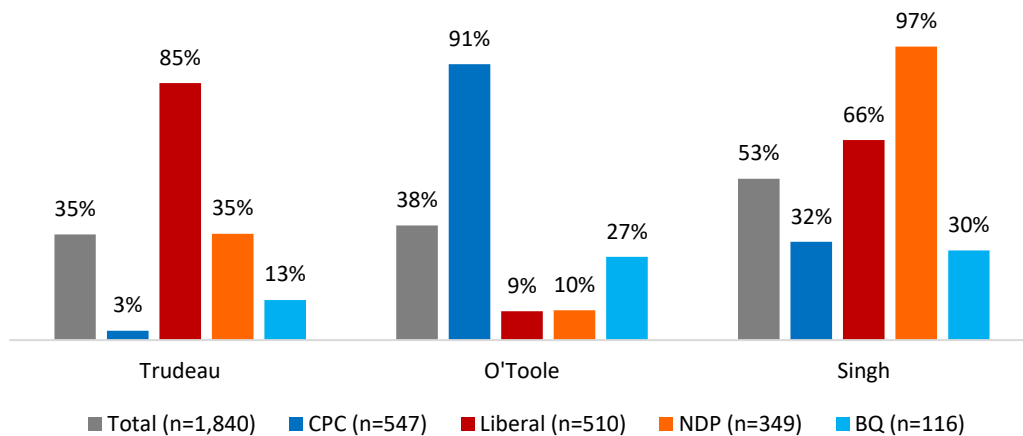


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Favourability among voter groups

A look at favourability by current vote intent finds all three of the major party's leaders faring well among their own voters, with Singh near unanimously praised. Notably, Singh is viewed positively by two-thirds of current Liberal voters:

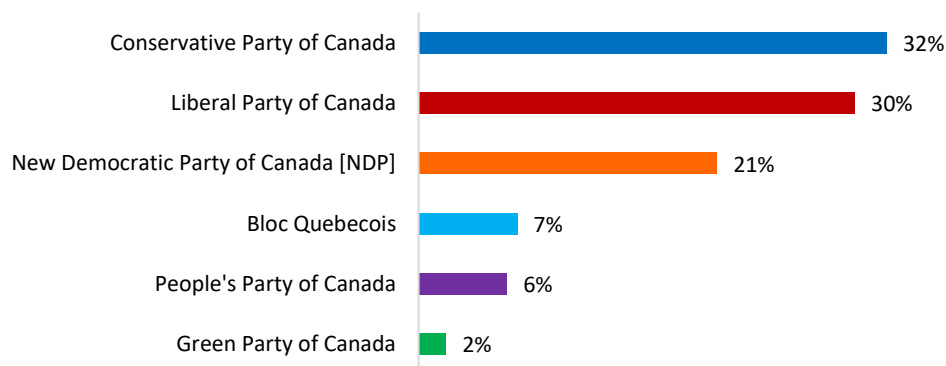
Favourability by current vote intent



Part Two: Vote intention

The 44th election remains a tight race with the CPC and the Liberals now in a statistical tie. Thirty-two per cent of decided voters say they will vote for O'Toole and the CPC, while three-in-ten say they will vote for Trudeau and the Liberals. Singh and the NDP continue to gather around one-in-five likely voters:

**Vote intention – leaning and decided voters
(n=1,689)**

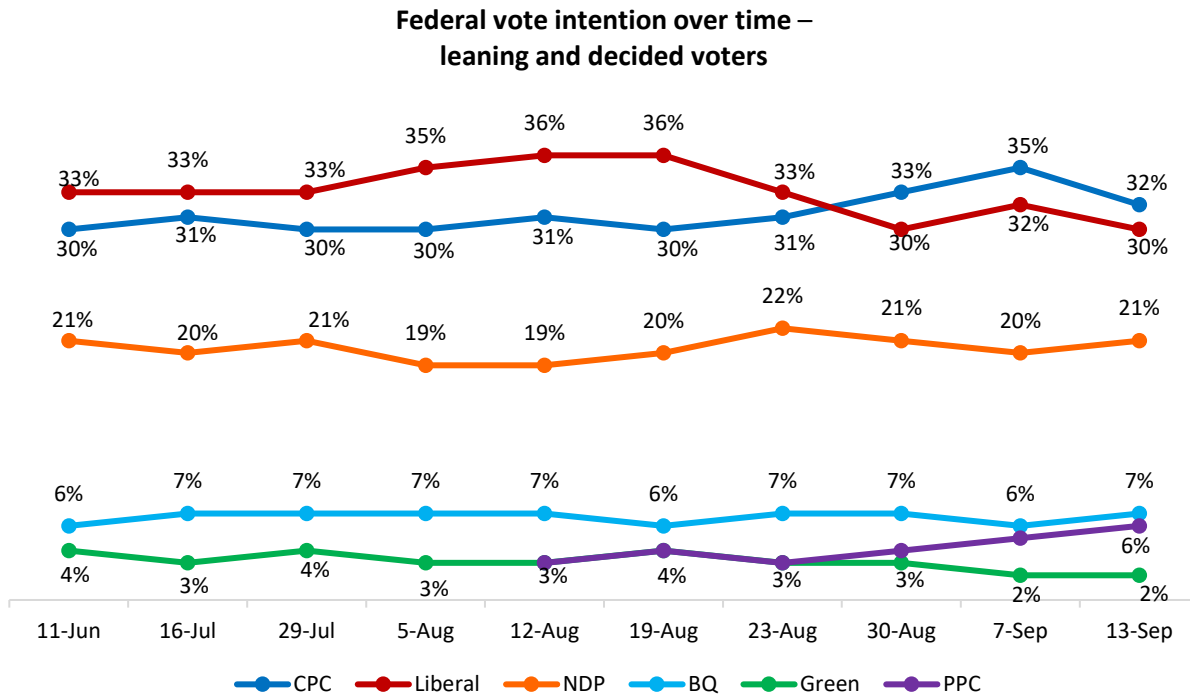


Both leading parties experienced a decline in support week over week. The dip for O'Toole marks the first time during the campaign period that support for his party has declined rather than grown. Notably,

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support for the People’s Party of Canada has doubled from three to six per cent over the past three weeks:

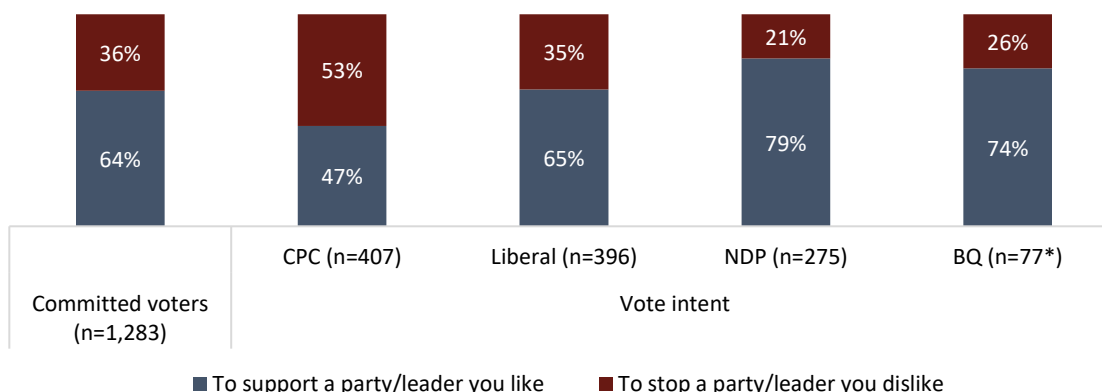


Voter motivations – Half of CPC supporters voting ‘against’ a party rather than ‘for’ one

During the 2019 federal election, [many NDP voters swung to the Liberals](#) to prevent Andrew Scheer and the Conservatives from forming government. Though votes are often thought to be a measure of support for a party and its beliefs, that’s not always the case. Voters will also cast their votes to spite a party or leader they dislike, supporting whichever party has the best chance of stopping them.

Two-thirds of decided voters say they are supporting a party or leader they like, while one-third say they are voting to stop a party or leader they dislike. The counter-vote sentiment is strongest among those who say they are voting for the CPC, the party with the best chance of stopping an unfavourably viewed Trudeau from becoming prime minister again:

And thinking of the party you are currently supporting; would you say you are voting:



**Small sample size, interpret with caution. Green party not shown due to too small of a sample size.*

Liberals fall in B.C., lead in Ontario; Quebec competitive

In B.C., what was a tight three-way race at the start of the election is now a two-party contest with the Liberals falling behind the pack. Out east, a drop for the Liberals in Quebec puts Trudeau’s party in a statistical tie with the Bloc. Still, the Liberals enjoy a plurality of support in Ontario and Atlantic Canada, while the CPC continues to dominate the Prairies.

Federal vote intention – leaning and decided voters (Change since start of campaign noted)								
(Unweighted sample sizes)	Total (n=1,689)	Region						
		BC (n=285)	AB (n=143)	SK (n=122)	MB (n=114)	ON (n=515)	QC (n=367)	ATL (n=142)
Conservative Party	32% (+1)	33% (+1)	57% (+7)	53% (-4)	37% (-4)	32% (+1)	20% (+3)	27% (0)
Liberal Party	30% (-6)	21% (-12)	14% (-11)	13% (-1)	28% (-4)	37% (-4)	30% (-4)	43% (-3)
NDP	21% (+2)	35% (+5)	14% (0)	19% (+1)	23% (+2)	22% (+2)	15% (+3)	19% (+2)
Bloc Québécois	7% (0)	-	-	-	-	-	29% (+1)	-
People’s Party of Canada	6% (+3)	4% (+2)	10% (+7)	5% (0)	7% (+5)	7% (+4)	4% (+1)	8% (+6)
Green Party	2% (-1)	5% (+3)	- (0)	1% (+1)	3% (+1)	1% (-1)	1% (-5)	3% (-1)
Other Party	2% (0)	2% (0)	5% (-3)	9% (+3)	3% (+1)	1% (-1)	1% (+1)	1% (-2)

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Age and gender breakdown

The demographic picture shows subtle changes since the beginning of the election. The CPC continue to enjoy a plurality of support from men of all ages, and the Liberals a plurality of support from women aged 35 and older. Trudeau appears to be making inroads among the youngest group of women at the expense of the NDP, the only age-gender group to offer a plurality of support to Singh's party. On the other hand, the NDP appear to be gaining where Trudeau is declining, that is to say among men 35 and older and women over the age of 55:

Federal vote intention – leaning and decided voters (Change since start of election noted)							
(Weighted sample sizes)	Total (n=1,689)	Age and Gender					
		Male			Female		
		18-34 (n=182)	35-54 (n=306)	55+ (n=341)	18-34 (n=186)	35-54 (n=325)	55+ (n=349)
Conservative Party	32% (+1)	37% (+3)	39% (-2)	47% (+6)	16% (-1)	27% (+6)	24% (-2)
Liberal Party	30% (-6)	19% (-4)	23% (-7)	22% (-12)	34% (+5)	34% (-7)	45% (-4)
NDP	21% (+2)	24% (0)	17% (+5)	14% (+4)	39% (-4)	24% (+1)	16% (+4)
Bloc Québécois	7% (0)	4% (-1)	7% (+1)	9% (0)	4% (+2)	5% (-1)	9% (0)
People's Party of Canada	6% (+3)	7% (+1)	11% (+6)	4% (+1)	4% (+3)	8% (+7)	2% (+1)
Green Party	2% (-1)	4% (+1)	1% (-3)	2% (+1)	2% (-4)	1% (-2)	2% (0)
Other Party	2% (0)	5% (+1)	2% (0)	2% (0)	1% (-1)	1% (-3)	1% (-1)

Part Three: How committed are voters?

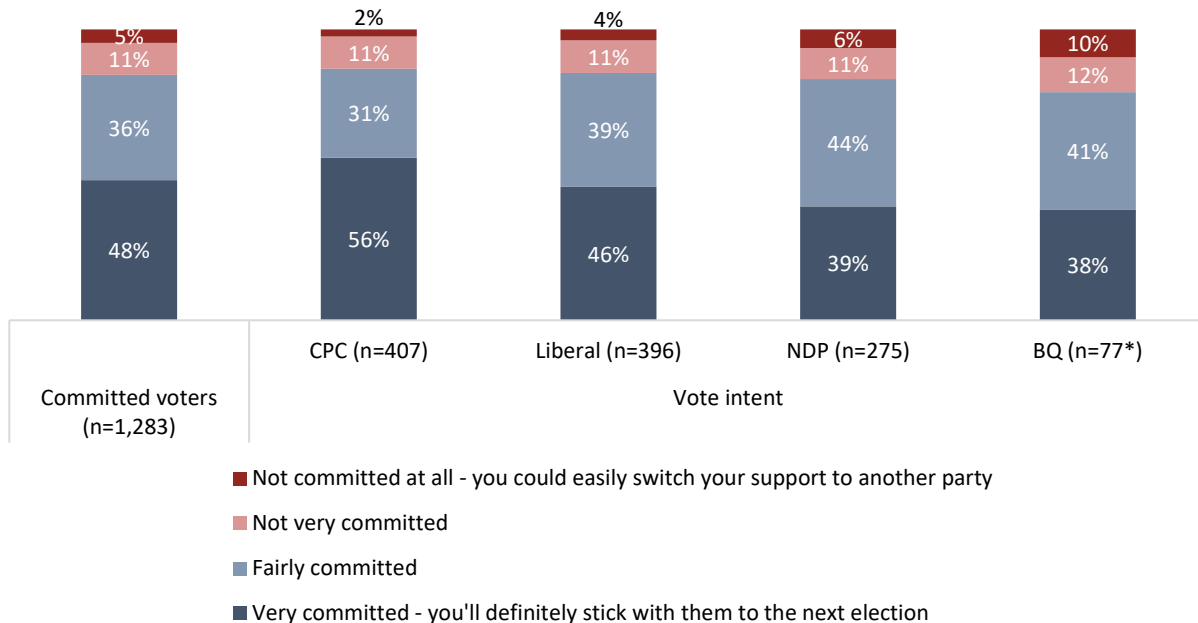
There is just under one week left in the campaign for Canadians to change their minds if they haven't already locked-in their vote by mail-in ballot or at this weekend's advance polls. For half of Canadian voters (48%) the decision has been made whereas, for the rest, uncertainty remains. Just over one-in-three (36%) say that they are fairly certain which party's candidate they will support, while 16 per cent remain more uncommitted.

It appears that every vote will carry heavy importance in this close race, and it is worth noting that at least 13 per cent of current supporters for each of the CPC, Liberals, NDP and Bloc, say that they have not committed to supporting that party, even if they are leaning that way.

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How committed are you to that party choice?

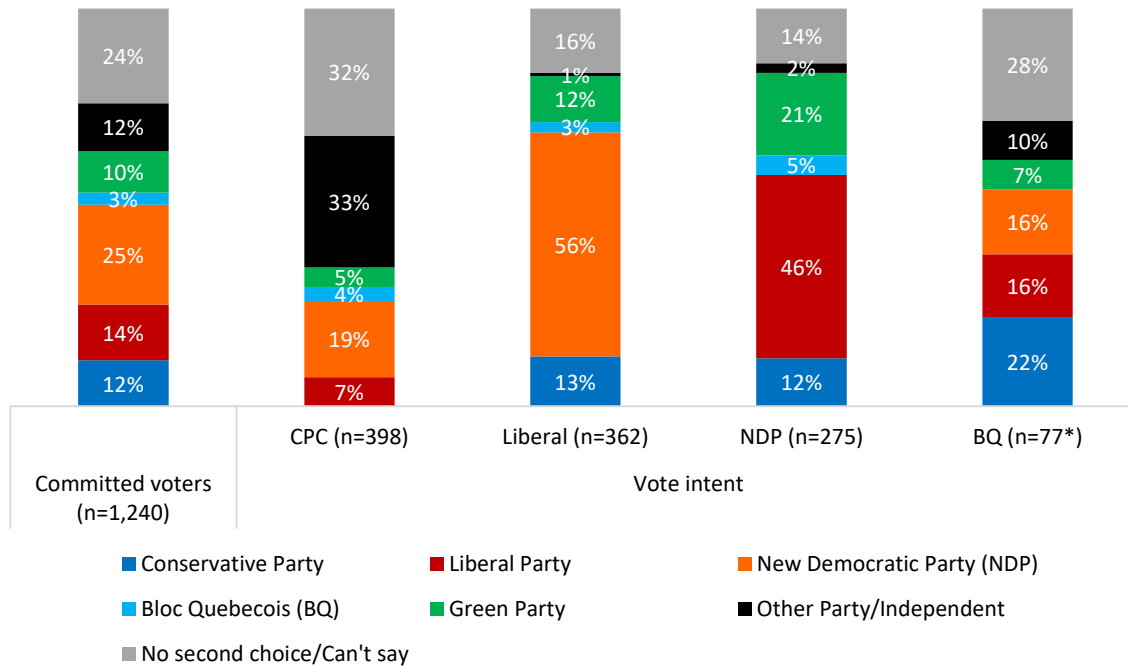


**Small sample size, interpret with caution. Green party not shown due to too small of a sample size.*

If current vote intent holds, the NDP will have made a substantial improvement over their showing in 2019. Singh's personal likeability appears to be making the NDP a popular second choice, as well. One-quarter of committed voters pick the NDP as their second choice.

Meanwhile, the NDP-Liberal swing potential is evident. A majority of Liberal supporters choose the NDP as their second choice, while near half (46%) of NDP supporters choose the Liberals. CPC supporters' second choice does not lie among the Liberals or NDP, instead three-in-ten say they have none or their second choice is a non-major party:

If you had to choose, which party would be your second choice?

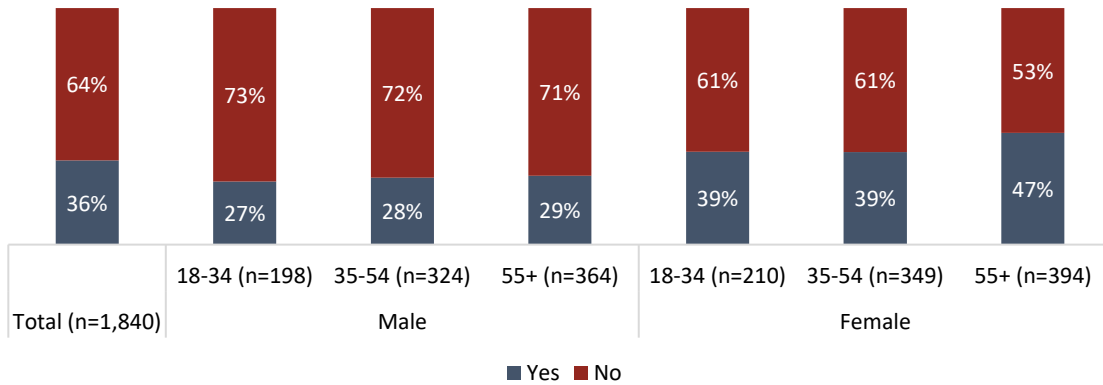


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Part Four: Views on another Trudeau term

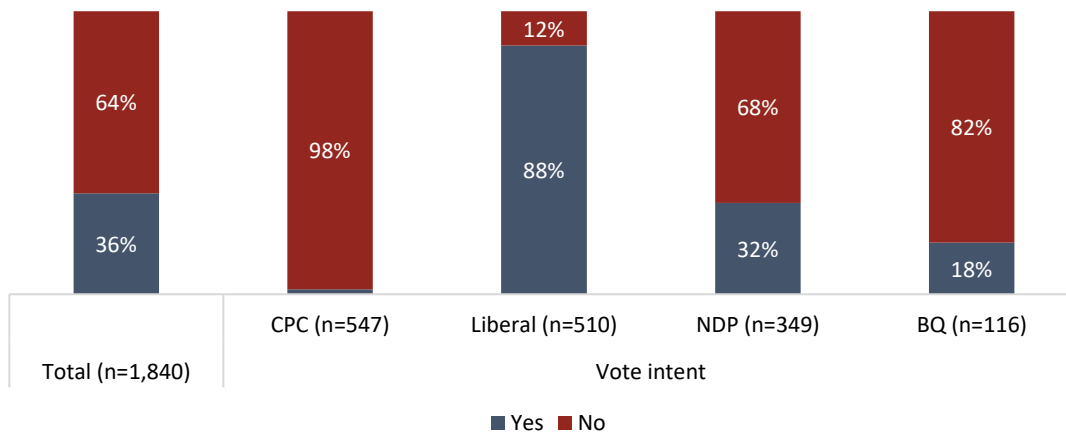
Ultimately, on the question of whether they feel Trudeau deserves another term as prime minister, Canadians lean toward the negative. Two-thirds do not think a third term is warranted. Though opinions differ slightly between men and women, all groups tend to agree:

Everything considered, do you think Justin Trudeau deserves another term as Prime Minister of Canada?



Those most supportive of another Trudeau term are those intending to vote for his party. That said, 12 per cent of current Liberal voters do not agree that Trudeau deserves another term.

Everything considered, do you think Justin Trudeau deserves another term as Prime Minister of Canada?



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