

## Premiers' Performance: Leader approval plummets in most provinces; Moe, Higgs suffer dramatic slides

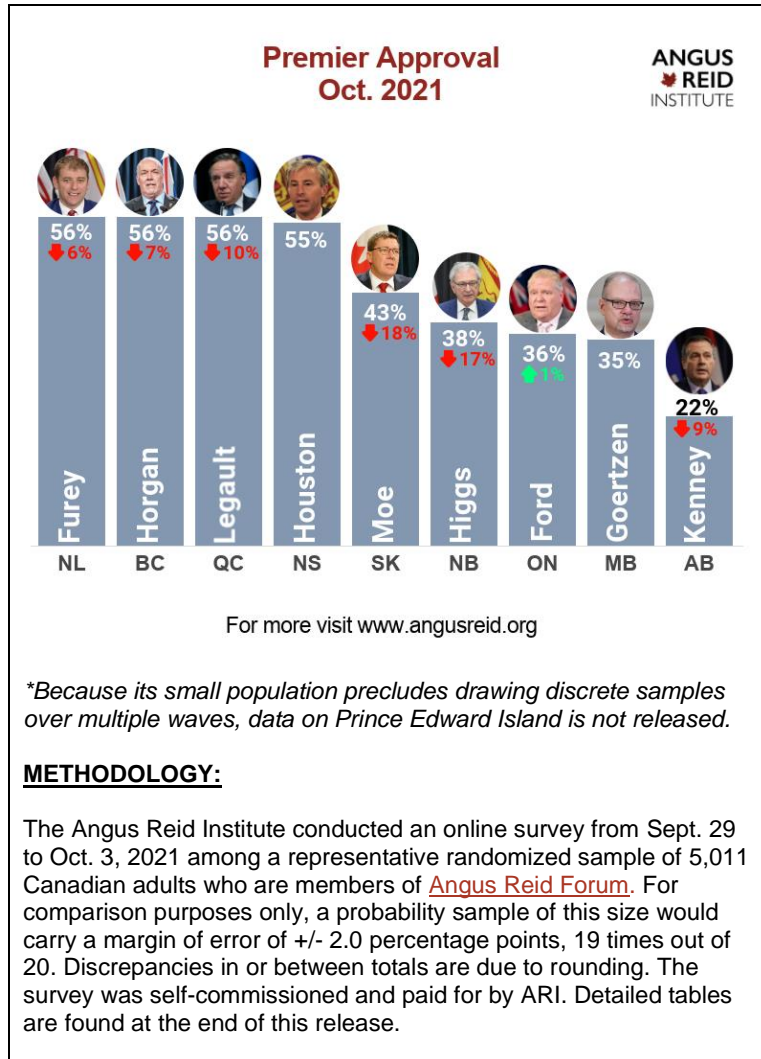
*Just one-in-five Albertans approve of Kenney, the lowest of any premier*

**October 13, 2021** – Be it fourth wave frustrations, pushback over mask and vaccine mandates, or post-COVID anxiety, Canadians have grown significantly less impressed with their provincial leaders since the summer.

Since June, all but one premier who was in power at the time has seen their respective levels of approval decline, according to new data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute. The lone exception? Ontario's Doug Ford, with a statistically insignificant one-point increase on job performance from Ontarians.

The most sobering assessments from their constituencies are for Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe and New Brunswick's Blaine Higgs, both of whom have seen their approval crash nearly 20 points in the last quarter, from 61 and 55 per cent then to 43 and 38 per cent now respectively.

The news is not much better for Alberta's Jason Kenney, currently the least approved-of premier among his own constituents at 22 per cent. Conversations about Kenney's long-term political future have been ongoing for some time, and with this wave of data, are [unlikely to abate](#).



Even among those enjoying majority-level good opinion, the trendline tells a story of declining satisfaction. At 56 per cent each, Quebec's François Legault sees his approval plummet ten points – putting him at the same level as John Horgan in British Columbia (off seven points) and Newfoundland and Labrador's Andrew Furey whose own approval is down six points from June.

### 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*

### CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

---

administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

## INDEX\*

**Part One: The rearguard: Kenney, Ford, Goertzen**

**Part Two: The newly fallen: Higgs, Moe**

**Part Three: The “leaders” of the pack: Horgan, Furey, Houston, Legault**

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

## Part One: The Rearguard

### Alberta:

It's been [a brutal fourth wave](#) of the COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta, and after characterizing the [pandemic as “over”](#) in July, Premier Jason Kenney is bearing the brunt of what was most definitely not the “best summer ever.” Hospitals in the province – home to [nearly half](#) of Canada's active cases – now depend on the help of [Canadian military nurses](#), as Alberta deals with impact of ICUs full of patients with the infection. Thanksgiving weekend brought no new restrictions to the province, instead [Kenney pleaded](#) with Albertans to avoid a repeat of last year when cases started to build after the holiday.

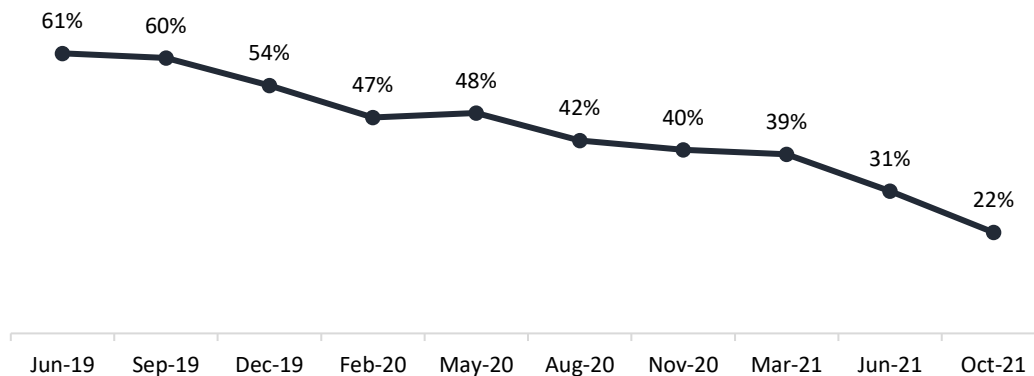
Just one-in-five Albertans approve of Kenney, a new low point in his two-year stint as premier. Despite this, Kenney has managed to hang onto his leadership of the United Conservative Party. He fought off a near caucus revolt by moving up a leadership review to [next spring](#), despite some members calling for it sooner. The anger is not fully quelled, however, as some constituency associations are still looking for [an earlier review](#) of Kenney's leadership.

---

## CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

### Approval of Alberta Premier Jason Kenney



#### Ontario:

The pandemic was initially kind to Ontario Premier Doug Ford. Seven-in-ten Ontarians professed they approved of him in the weeks after the pandemic was declared. It represented an all-time popularity peak in the PC Party of Ontario leader's reign. Now just 36 per cent say the same.

Ford and the Conservatives have been embroiled in controversy over keeping two unvaccinated MPPs – both who say they aren't vaccinated due to a [medical exemption](#) – in caucus. Ontario also remains one of the three provinces, alongside Alberta and New Brunswick, to not sign on to the federal \$10-a-day childcare deal. But Ontario government officials say the \$10 billion over five years the Liberal government is offering is [not enough](#).

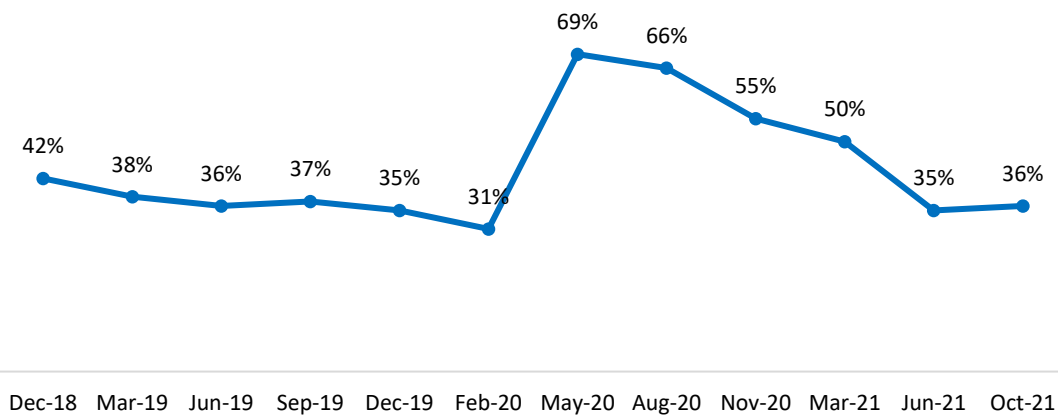
Against this backdrop, Ford is already gearing up for the next election. His party recently released [a number of new ads](#) which attempt to frame controversial construction projects such as Hwy. 413 and the Bradford bypass as key issues in the lead up to the next election to be held next year.

---

#### CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

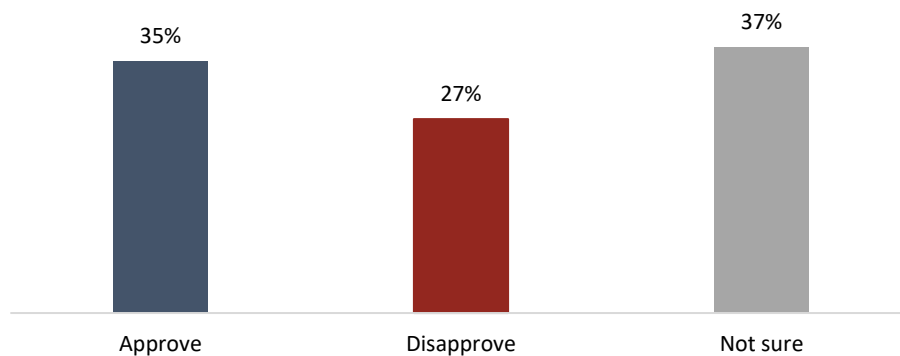
### Approval of Ontario Premier Doug Ford



### Manitoba:

Premier Brian Pallister stepped down after suggesting the colonization of Canada was done with good intentions – the third time Pallister made inflammatory comments about Indigenous people in the province. Kelvin Goertzen serves as interim premier as the party awaits the results of a historic leadership race, which will put a woman in the premier's seat – either former Manitoba cabinet minister Heather Stefanson or former Harper cabinet minister Shelly Glover – for the first time in Manitoba's history.

### Approval of interim Manitoba Premier Kelvin Goertzen (n=505)



### Part Two: The newly fallen

### New Brunswick:

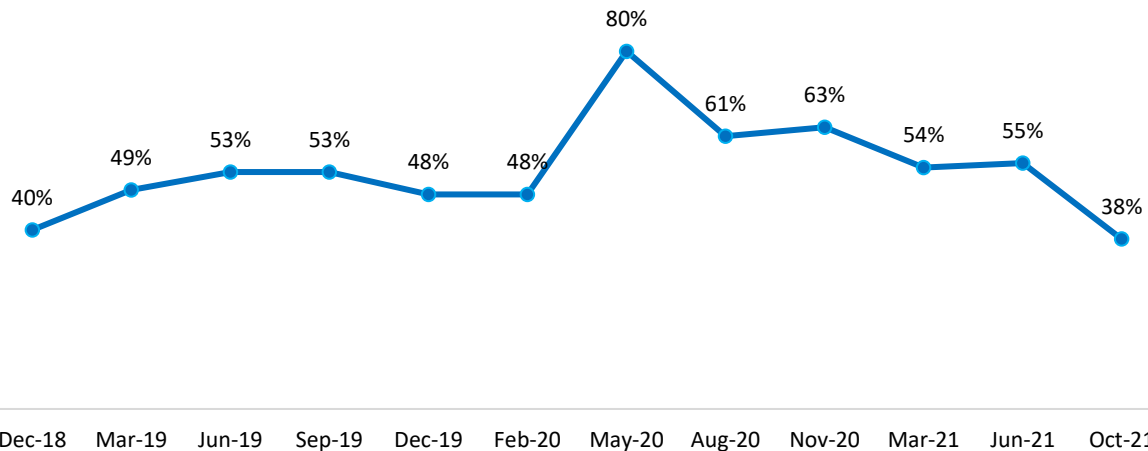
The number of New Brunswickers who approve of Blaine Higgs has dropped precipitously since the last quarter and now sits at only 38 per cent. This drop in approval is mirrored by the soaring number of COVID-19 cases across the province. With over 1,000 active cases reported in the province, hospitals have announced that they're postponing some non-urgent procedures and moving their internal readiness

### CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

level to “red alert.” Notably, New Brunswick was the first province to pop out of the Atlantic bubble, [opening itself up](#) to the rest of Canada before its neighbours in June.

### Approval of New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs



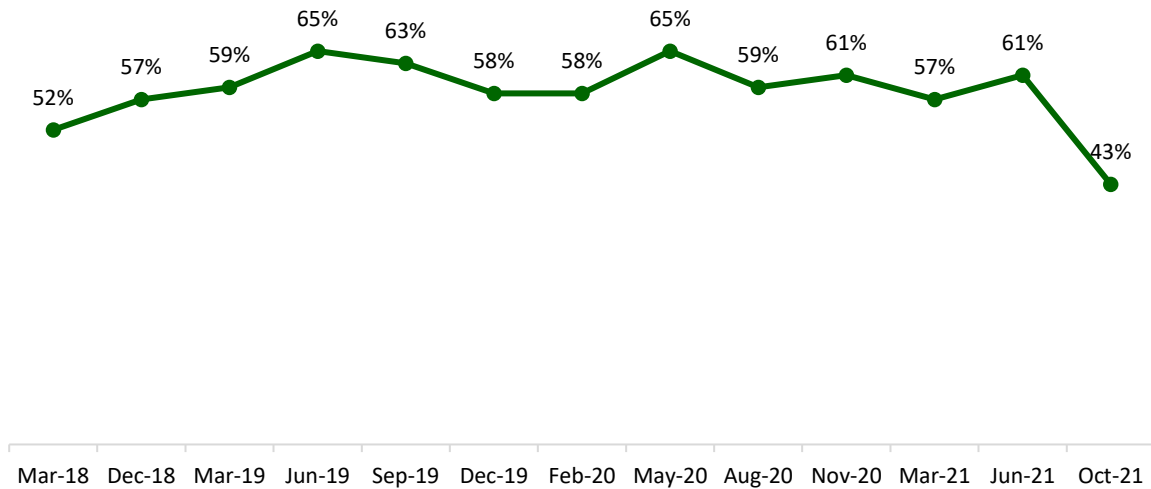
### Saskatchewan:

Much like neighbouring Alberta, the fourth wave has been rough for Saskatchewan. Vaccination rates in the province are lagging and Premier Scott Moe has been criticized by the opposition NDP for not doing enough to denounce the use of [ivermectin](#) – a medication used to deworm livestock – as a COVID-19 treatment.

The situation has become dire in recent months with [record numbers of people](#) in hospital and intensive care units due to COVID-19. Saskatchewan’s top health authority, Dr. Saqib Shahab, [commented](#) in late September that the province was experiencing “a mass casualty event every day.”

The province’s recent virus struggles appear to be reflected in the premier’s approval; for the first time in his tenure, Moe does not enjoy a majority level of approval, with only two-in-five (43%) saying they approve of him.

Approval of Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe



Part Three: The pack “leaders”

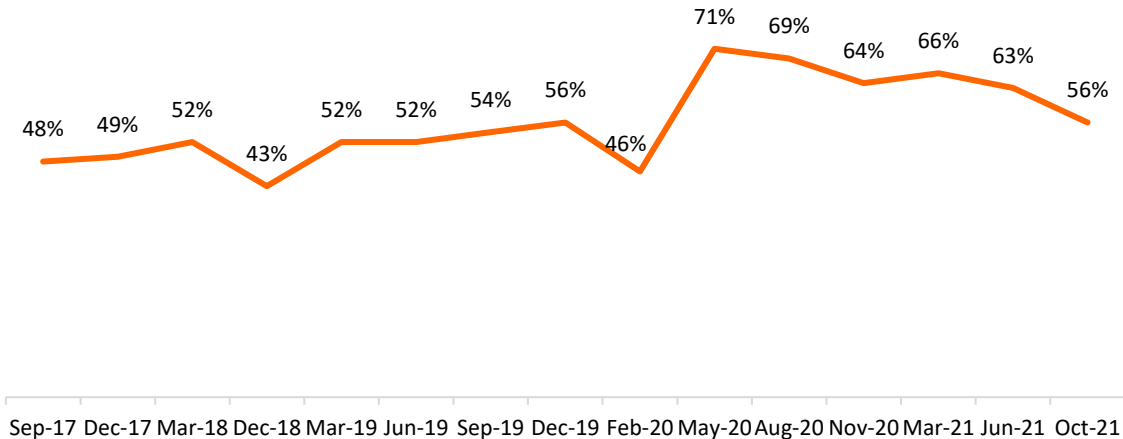
**British Columbia:**

Premier John Horgan’s popularity spiked after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic but has fallen seven points from June and 15 points from a peak of 71 per cent in May 2020.

In between, there was a summer heat wave that killed [at least 569 people](#) and contributed to forest fires that razed significant portions of the province – including [destroying the town of Lytton](#). Horgan’s government has been accused of [not offering enough support](#) for vulnerable populations during the heat wave, and [not being responsive enough](#) during the fire season.

Meanwhile, the healthcare system faces challenges from [the plateau of the fourth wave](#) of the pandemic, as well as [staff shortages](#) critics argue the government should have seen coming. While the trend has been negative since May of last year, Horgan still holds the approval of over half of British Columbians.

### Approval of British Columbia Premier John Horgan



#### Newfoundland and Labrador:

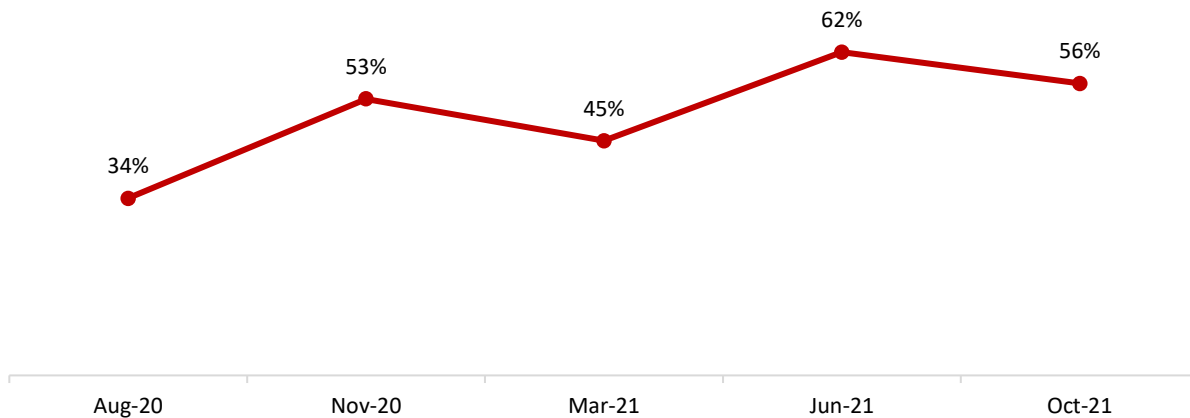
If Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are happy with the way the government has handled the pandemic, they continue to grapple with a number of economic concerns including the highest unemployment rate in the country at 13.1 per cent and the lowest projection for economic growth at 2.4% of real GDP.

To deal with this gloomy economic outlook and the looming possibility that the province's debt would be downgraded to junk status, the government introduced a number of tax increases and spending cuts over the summer.

In addition, the cost of electricity in the province is slated to rise by about 10 per cent, with officials projecting future increases of 2.25 per cent a year going forward. This in spite of a new deal with the federal government to bail out the overbudget and behind-schedule Muskrat Falls hydroelectricity project to the tune of \$5.2 billion.

Against this backdrop, Premier Andrew Furey's personal approval rating has slipped from 62 to 56 per cent:

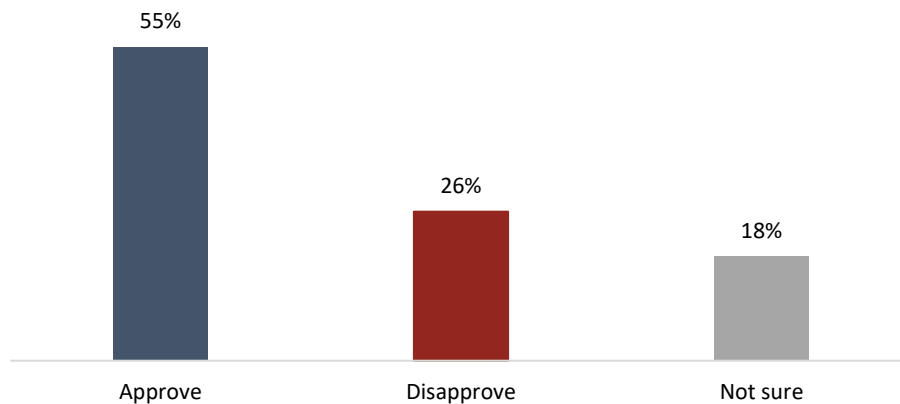
**Approval of Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Andrew Furey**



**Nova Scotia:**

New Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston is in his honeymoon period and currently enjoys approval from a majority of Nova Scotians (55%). He currently has few detractors (26% disapproval) while one-in-five (18%) have yet to form an opinion.

**Approval of Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston  
(n=315)**



**Quebec:**

After enjoying relatively stable favourability rates over the last year, Premier François Legault’s approval falls to 56 per cent. While this still makes him one of the most approved of premiers in the country, he now shares the top spot with B.C.’s Horgan and Newfoundland and Labrador’s Furey.

This new low in approval comes as Legault continues to court controversy in la belle province. His government recently held consultations on the [divisive proposed Bill 96](#), a revision of the province’s language laws, and drew criticism for its decision to prorogue parliament in a move decried as [“window](#)

**CONTACT:**

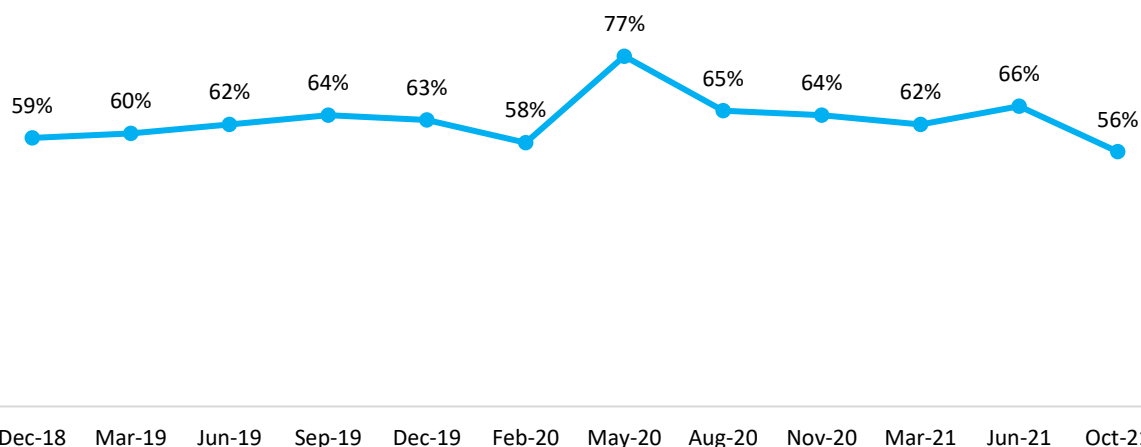
Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl



“dressing” for the 2022 election. Outside of provincial politics, Legault’s choice to endorse Conservative leader Erin O’Toole for prime minister during the federal election was also ill-received.

Despite this, Legault still commands a majority approval rating and commentators have highlighted that the Coalition Avenir Québec’s dominance in almost every demographic segment of the electorate has no precedence in the province’s history.

### Approval of Quebec Premier François Legault



Premier Approval Oct. 2021									
(Unweighted numbers)	Horgan (n=604)	Kenney (n=605)	Moe (n=505)	Goertzen (n=505)	Ford (n=1,056)	Legault (n=838)	Higgs (n=265)	Houston (n=315)	Furey (n=229)
Approve	56%	22%	43%	35%	36%	56%	38%	55%	56%
Disapprove	38%	76%	54%	27%	61%	40%	58%	26%	37%
Not sure/Can't say	6%	2%	3%	37%	3%	4%	4%	18%	6%

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

Margins of error								
BC (604)	AB (605)	SK (505)	MB (505)	ON (1,056)	QC (838)	NB (265)	NS (315)	NL (229)
+/- 4%	+/- 4%	+/- 4%	+/- 4%	+/- 3%	+/- 3%	+/- 6%	+/- 6%	+/- 6%

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