

## Federal Politics: Liberals trail CPC by six points in vote intention; but Poilievre lags Trudeau in likeability

*Trudeau's approval declines to 37 per cent, but only one-third have favourable view of Poilievre*

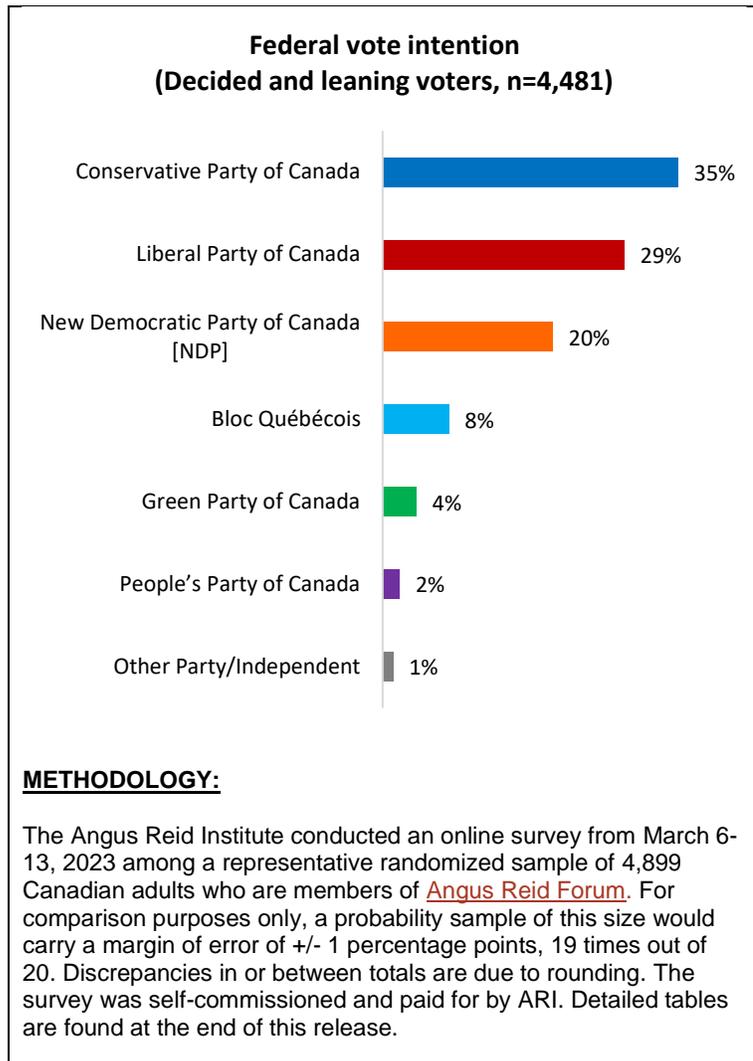
**March 16, 2023** – Weeks of questions over potential foreign interference in Canadian elections – and the federal government's handling of the issue – have taken their toll on the approval of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, but perception problems for the Conservatives in key battlegrounds – Quebec and major urban centres – leave the questions as yet unanswered over whether the CPC can capitalize on its lead in vote intention.

New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute, canvassing almost 5,000 Canadians, finds Trudeau's approval (37%) has slipped six points in the last three months. And even though the Liberals trail in vote intent almost everywhere in the country (35% CPC to 29% Liberal overall), CPC party leader Pierre Poilievre lags in likeability, while his party lags in must-win areas.

Trudeau is much more positively appraised in Quebec (36% to 24%), and slightly more so in Ontario (41% to 34%) and British Columbia (38% to 33%), than Poilievre. The CPC continue to have ground to make up in Quebec, as they (21%) find themselves behind the Liberals (28%) and Bloc Québécois (33%).

There continues to be a demographic divide between the two political rivals. The CPC would earn a plurality of votes from men of all ages if an election were to be held tomorrow as Poilievre is viewed much more favourably among men (43%) than women (25%), although he has made incremental progress on this front. The Liberals lead in vote intent among only one demographic – women over the age of 54 – despite Trudeau's higher approval among women.

Another issue for Trudeau and the Liberals in the party's third term in power is the fatigue factor. The party's 2021 supporters are less likely than other partisans to say they will vote Liberal again if an election were held tomorrow. Three-quarters (73%) of those who voted Liberal in 2021 would repeat their vote, fewer than those who voted CPC (87%), NDP (80%) or Bloc Québécois (86%). For the Liberals, this represents an 11-point decline in vote retention since January 2022.



### CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
Jon Roe, Research Associate: 825.437.1147 [jon.roe@angusreid.org](mailto:jon.roe@angusreid.org) @thejonroe

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## More Key Findings:

- Three-in-five (59%) believe inflation to be a top issue facing Canada. Half (48%) select health care. Both significantly outpace other concerns such as housing affordability (27%), the environment (23%) and the economy (19%).
- A plurality in Metro Vancouver, Montreal and the 416 and 905 area codes of Toronto say they would vote Liberal if an election were held tomorrow. However, in the latter most, the gap between the Liberals and the CPC is not as large as the other major cities.
- Though women still are more likely to view Poilievre negatively than positively, he has gained four points of favourability (22% to 26%) among women over the age of 54 since December. Trudeau, meanwhile, has seen his approval among that demographic decline by seven points (53% to 46%).

## 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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Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl  
Jon Roe, Research Associate: 825.437.1147 [jon.roe@angusreid.org](mailto:jon.roe@angusreid.org) @thejonroe

**Part One: Top issues**

**Inflation, health care continue to dominate**

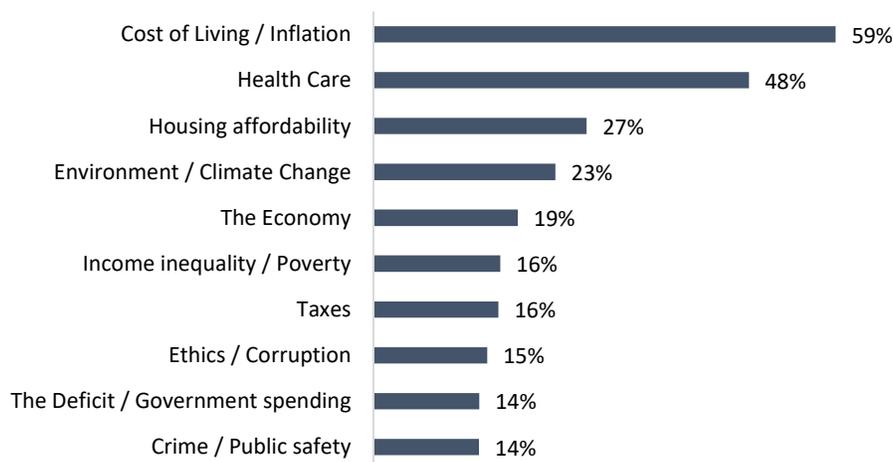
It may already be three months into 2023, but the problems of 2022 persist in the eyes of many Canadians. As COVID-19 faded as a concern throughout last calendar year, there were two issues front-of-mind for Canadians: inflation, which reached 40-year highs in 2022; and health care, as the system began to crack from faults exposed during the pandemic.

**Related:**

- **Two-thirds now say health care where they live is poor**
- **Public Purists, Privatization Proponents and the Curious: Canada’s three health-care mindsets**

Three-in-five (59%) Canadians believe the rising cost of living to be a top issue facing the country. Half (48%) say the same of health care. Other concerns – housing affordability (27%), climate change (23%), the economy more broadly (19%) – in the top five are selected at much lower rates:

**Thinking of the various issues and challenges facing Canada, which ones do you personally care about the most?  
(All respondents, n=4,899; up to three selected, issues with 10% or greater shown)**



**CPC voters more concerned with government spending, taxes, ethics than others**

With a federal budget looming at the end of the month, it is supporters of the party sitting in opposition who select fiscal matters at higher rates than others. The deficit (29%) and taxes (28%) are top concerns for approaching three-in-ten of those who voted CPC in 2021. Few past Liberal (3%, 10% respectively) or past NDP (4%, 7%) feel those issues are top worries. Instead, those who voted for those parties are much more concerned with housing affordability (31% Liberal, 35% NDP), the environment (36% Liberal, 35% NDP) and income inequality (30% NDP, 19% Liberal).

Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland has revealed little of what’s in the plans as she draws up the budget, though she has made a point of emphasizing the need for fiscal restraint.

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Thinking of the various issues and challenges facing Canada, which ones do you personally care about the most? (Up to three chosen; top five issues shown)				
Total (n=4,899)	2021 Federal Vote			
	CPC (n=1,400)	Liberal (n=1,358)	NDP (n=739)	BQ (n=314)
Cost of Living/ Inflation 59%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 62%	Health Care 64%	Health Care 56%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 55%
Health Care 48%	Health Care 37%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 58%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 55%	Health Care 47%
Housing affordability 27%	The Deficit/ Government Spending 29%	Environment/ Climate Change 36%	Housing Affordability 35%	Environment/ Climate Change 39%
Environment/ Climate Change 23%	Taxes 28%	Housing Affordability 31%	Environment/ Climate Change 35%	Housing Affordability 21%
The Economy 19%	Ethics/ Corruption 28%	Income Inequality/ Poverty 19%	Income Inequality/ Poverty 30%	Immigration/ Refugees 21%

## Part Two: Approval and favourability

### Trudeau approval

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau continues to face criticism over his government's response to allegations of election interference by the Chinese government in Beijing in the last two federal elections. There have been [many demands for a public inquiry](#) into the issue, but Trudeau has stopped short of calling one. Instead, he plans to [name a special rapporteur](#) to investigate, and asked the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency to [look into the allegations](#).

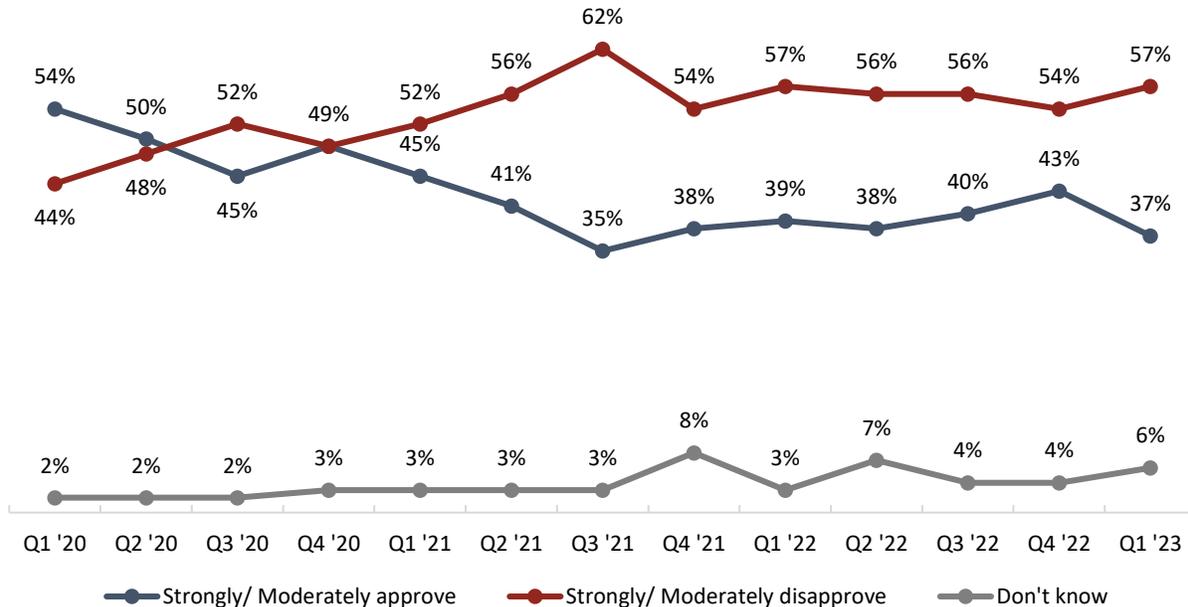
**Related: [China, Canada and Challenging Diplomacy: Two-in-three Canadians believe Beijing did attempt election interference](#)**

As the controversy swirls, approval of Trudeau has declined since December. Fewer than two-in-five (37%) say they approve of the prime minister's performance, a decline of six points in three months. Three-in-five (57%) disapprove of Trudeau, while six per cent offer no opinion:

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### Approval of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



### One-third have favourable view of Poilievre

Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre has had problems of his own in recent months. Three CPC MPs met with Christine Anderson, a German member of European parliament who has been accused of [minimizing crimes committed by the Nazis](#). Poilievre released a statement calling Anderson’s views [“vile”, “racist” and “hateful”](#), but said he [would not remove the three MPs](#) from caucus, despite only [one of them expressing regrets](#) over the meeting. Instead, Poilievre said [“what I’m more concerned about is the vile and racist views of the prime minister.”](#) raising the issue of Trudeau’s wearing of blackface prior to entering politics.

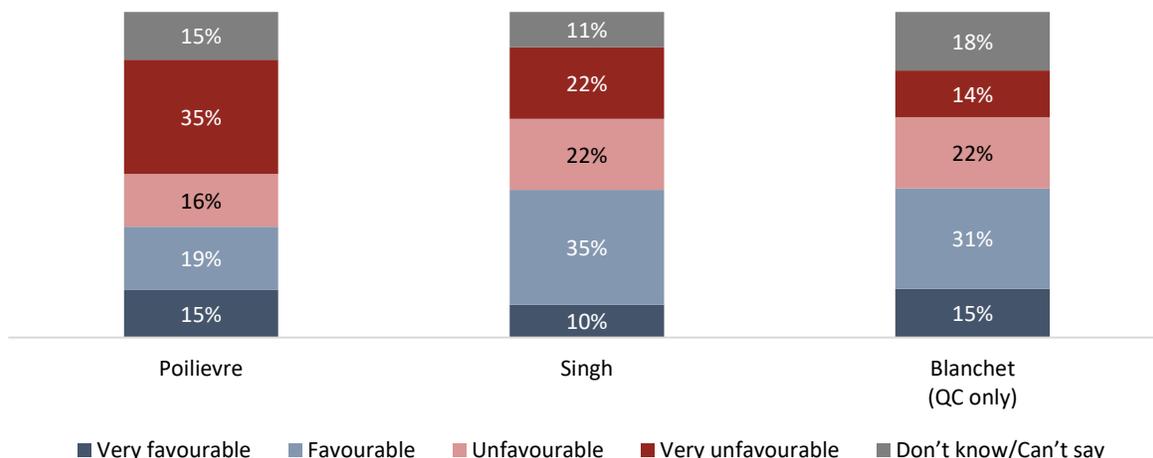
Last week, Conservative MP Michael Cooper [faced criticism](#) from NDP and Liberal MPs after he made a dismissive remark to Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly in a committee hearing on foreign election interference. The comment was called [“shameful” and “inappropriate,”](#) as well as [“sexist”](#), by rival MPs. Cooper dismissed the allegations of sexism, and said [he would have said](#) the same thing if Joly was a man. Poilievre has made no comment on the matter.

One-third (34%) of Canadians say they view Poilievre favourably, as many (35%) say they have a very negative impression of the CPC leader. Meanwhile, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh (45%) and Bloc Québécois leader Yves-François Blanchet (46%) are viewed favourably by more than two-in-five:

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**Favourability of the party leaders  
(All respondents, n=4,899)**

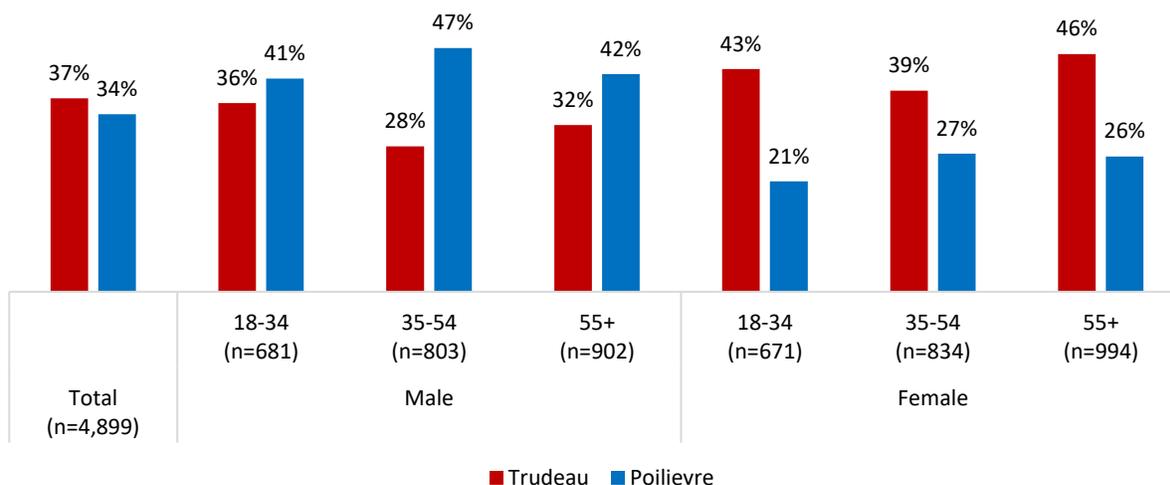


**Trudeau, Poilievre, and the demographic divide**

The prime minister and opposition leader garner positive impressions from different demographics. For Trudeau, women and Canadians aged 18- to 34-years-old are much more likely to have positive views. For Poilievre, men and Canadians aged 35- to 54-years-old say they view the CPC leader favourably at higher rates than other groups.

Though positive views of Poilievre has changed little among younger women, he has gained four points in favourability among women over the age of 55 since December. This has coincided with a seven-point drop by Trudeau in approval among the same demographic.

**Trudeau approval vs. Poilievre favourability**



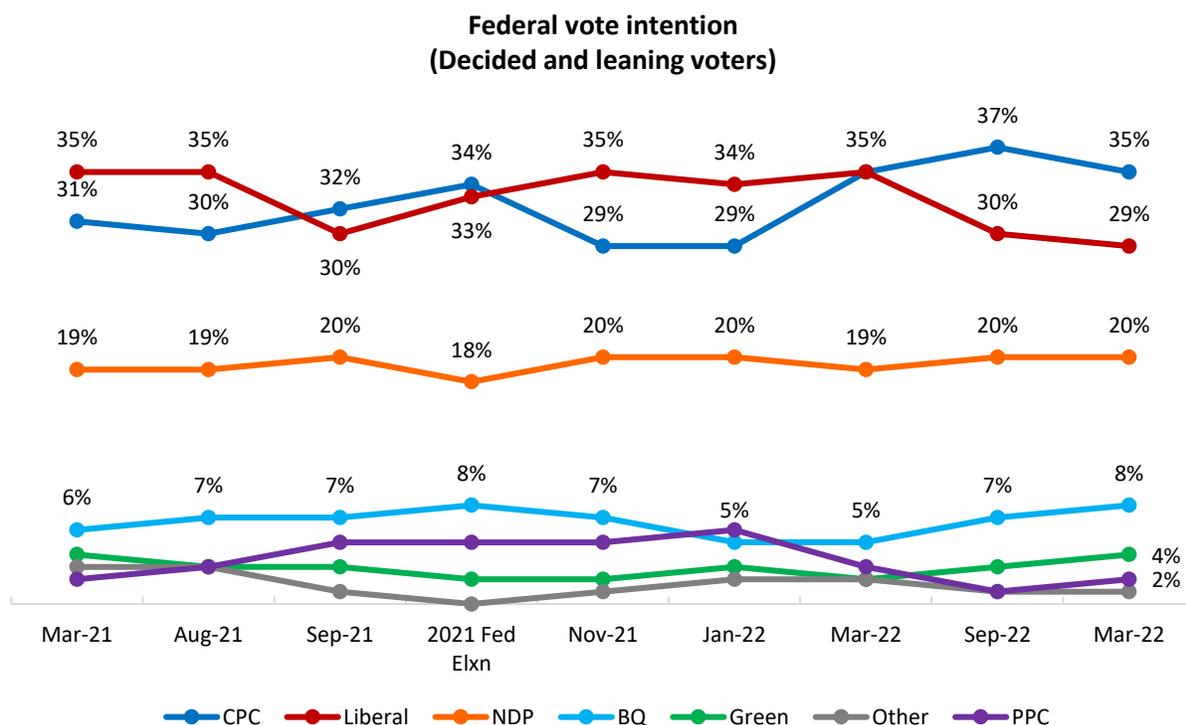
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### Part Three: Vote intent

Despite the deficit in likeability between Trudeau and Poilievre, it is Trudeau's party that finds itself trailing when it comes to vote intention.

When asked who they would support were an election held tomorrow, more than one-in-three (35%) Canadians said they would vote Conservative. Three-in-ten (29%) Canadians say they would vote Liberal, while one-in-five (20%) would vote NDP:



### Provinces and key cities

The 2021 federal election saw the Liberals take 78 seats in Ontario to the Conservatives 37. However, the popular vote was much tighter: 39 per cent for the Liberals to 35 per cent for the CPC. As always, Canada's most populous province will play a key role whenever the next election comes. Currently, the two main parties are statistically tied in vote intent in that province (37% CPC, 34% Liberal), with a further one-in-five Ontarians (21%) who say they intend to vote NDP.

In Canada's second largest province, however, the Conservative Party (21%) finds itself behind the Liberals (28%), who trail the Bloc Québécois (33%). The CPC won only 10 seats in the 2021 election in the province, which has proven to be difficult electoral ground for the Conservatives since the modern party formed this century.

Things are brighter for the Conservatives on Canada's west coast, where the party (34%) find themselves with a six-point lead over the NDP (28%) and a seven-point lead over the Liberals (27%):

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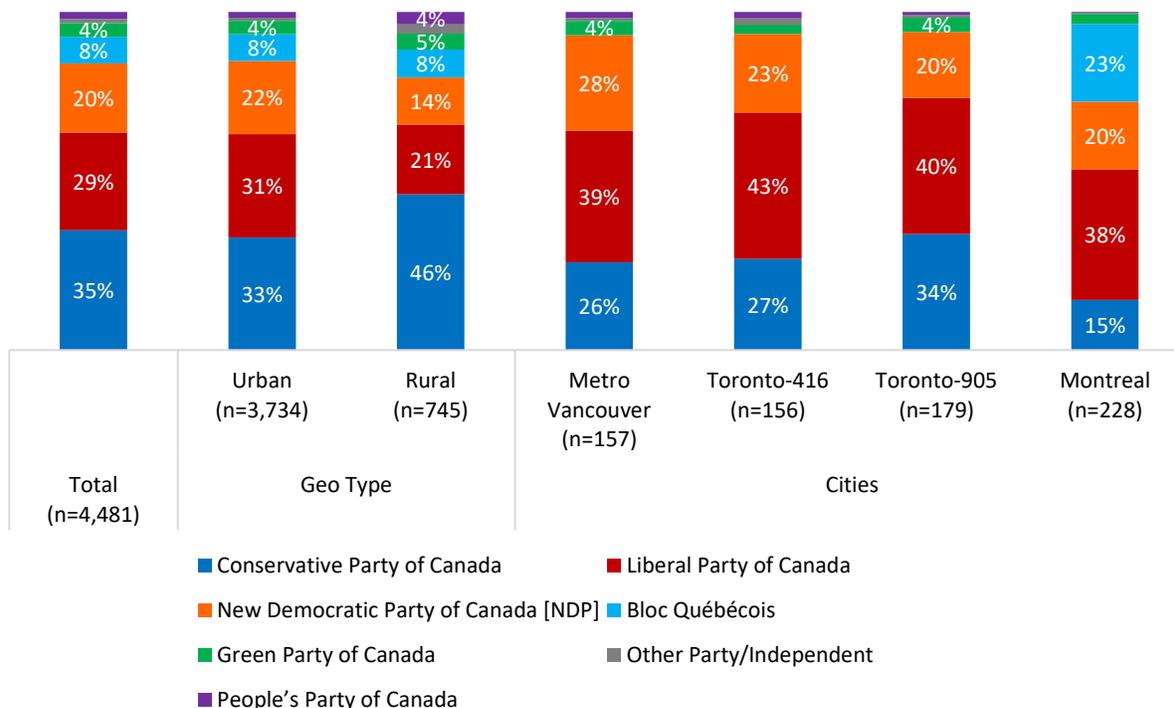
Federal vote intention (Decided and leaning, unweighted sample sizes)											
	Total (4481)	Province									
		BC (469)	AB (778)	SK (392)	MB (495)	ON (794)	QC (645)	NB (265)	NS (352)	NL (167)	PEI (186)
<b>CPC</b>	35%	34%	55%	60%	42%	37%	21%	40%	33%	37%	29%
<b>Liberal</b>	29%	27%	16%	11%	24%	34%	28%	36%	35%	40%	46%
<b>NDP</b>	20%	28%	23%	24%	25%	21%	13%	17%	26%	15%	11%
<b>BQ</b>	8%	-	-	-	-	-	33%	-	-	-	-
<b>Green</b>	4%	8%	1%	0%	4%	4%	3%	4%	2%	6%	12%
<b>PPC</b>	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	3%	3%	1%	2%
<b>Other</b>	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%

The Liberals do, however, have strong current support in the major metropolitan regions of Metro Vancouver, Greater Toronto and Greater Montreal. Pluralities in all three say they would vote Liberal if an election were held tomorrow. Still, it's worth noting the gap between the Liberals and the CPC who reside in the more suburban "905" belt around downtown Toronto is not nearly as large as it is elsewhere:

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 Jon Roe, Research Associate: 825.437.1147 [jon.roe@angusreid.org](mailto:jon.roe@angusreid.org) @thejonroe

**Federal vote intention  
(Decided and leaning voters)**



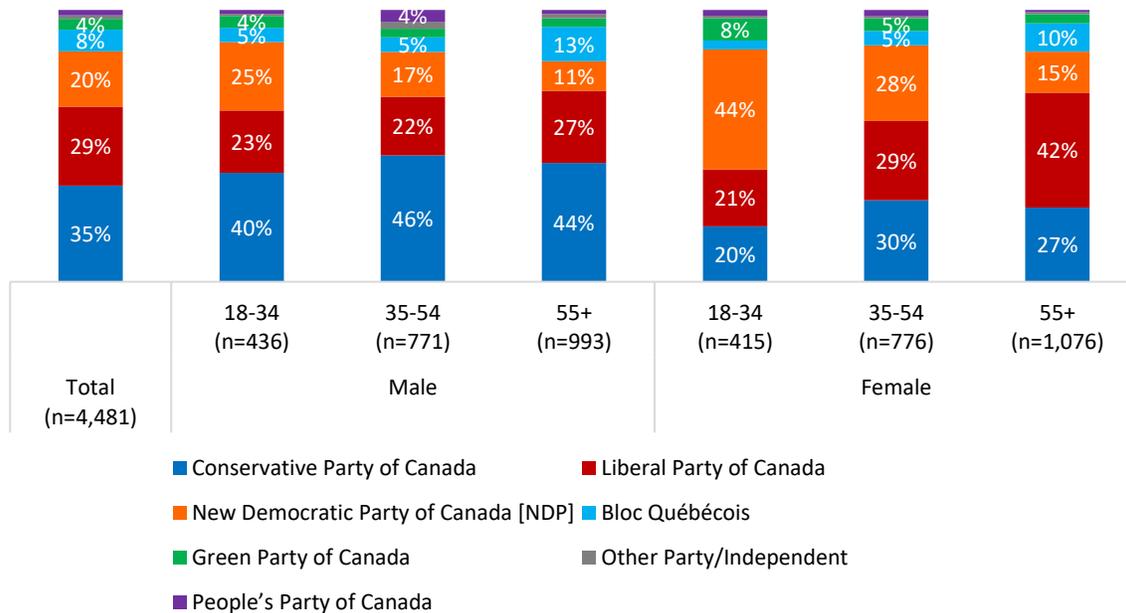
**Age and gender**

A plurality of men of all ages say they would vote Conservative if an election were held tomorrow. The Liberals come in front in vote intention among only one demographic – women over the age of 54. Women aged 35- to 54-years-old are divided equally between the NDP, Liberals and CPC, while more than two-in-five (44%) women under the age of 35 say they would vote for Singh and the NDP:

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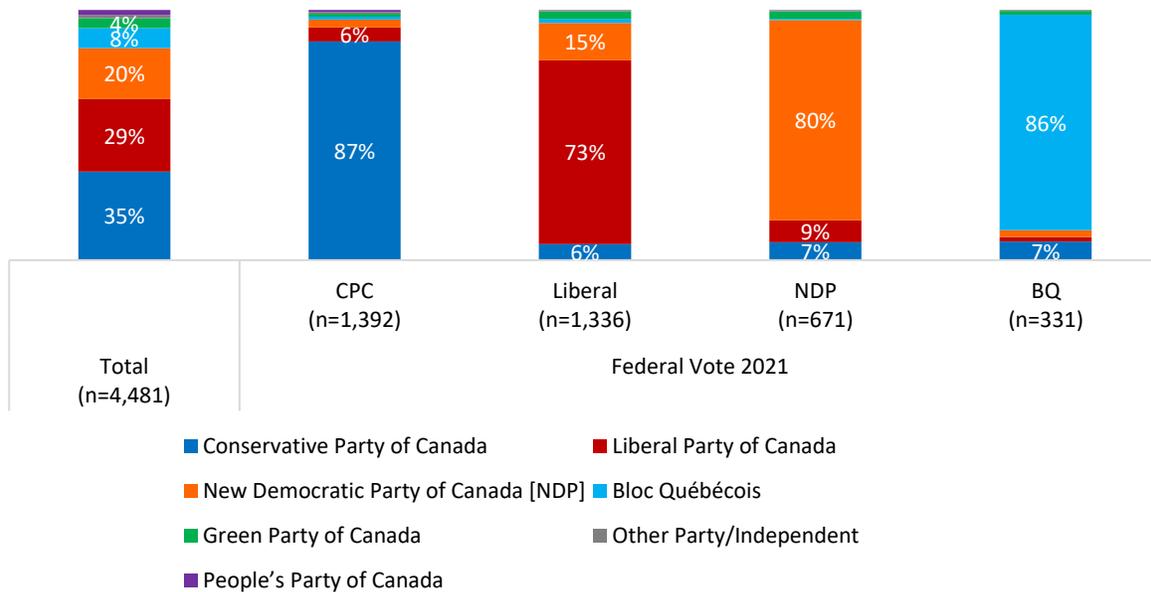
**Federal vote intention  
(Decided and leaning voters)**



**Vote retention**

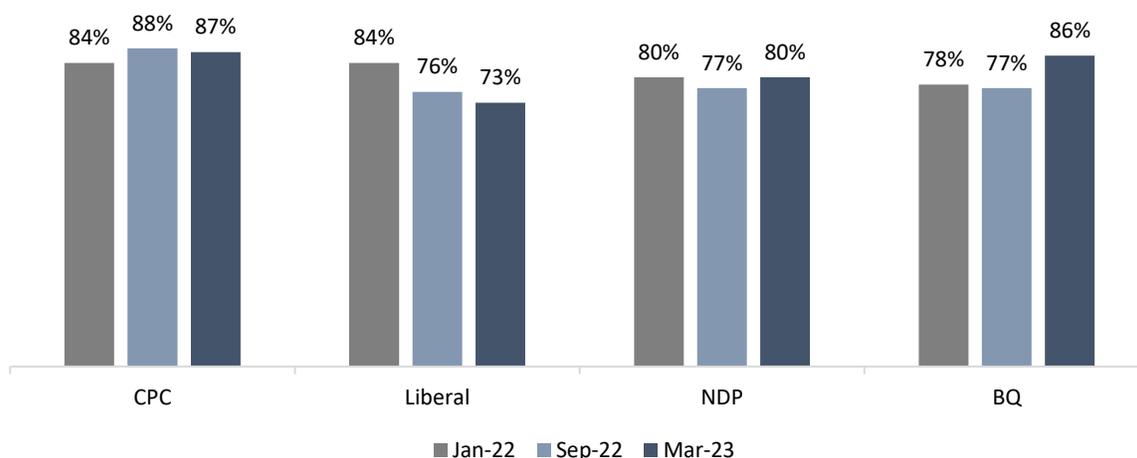
Approaching nine-in-ten (87%) of those who voted CPC in 2021 say they would again if an election were held tomorrow. Among other 2021 voters, only the Bloc Québécois enjoy as high a level of vote retention (86%). Three-quarters (73%) of past Liberal voters say they would repeat their vote in an upcoming election, the lowest rate of the four major parties:

**Federal vote intention  
(Decided and leaning voters)**



For the Liberals, this metric has declined by 11 points since January 2022, before former CPC leader Erin O’Toole was ousted by his party triggering the leadership election that Poilievre won. Retention for the other parties since then has remained consistent, in the case of the NDP and CPC, or grown, in the case of the Bloc:

**Vote retention over time**



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