

Majority — including two-in-five past Liberal voters — say Trudeau should step down

Freeland top choice to replace Trudeau if he were to leave; CPC leads vote intent by 11 points

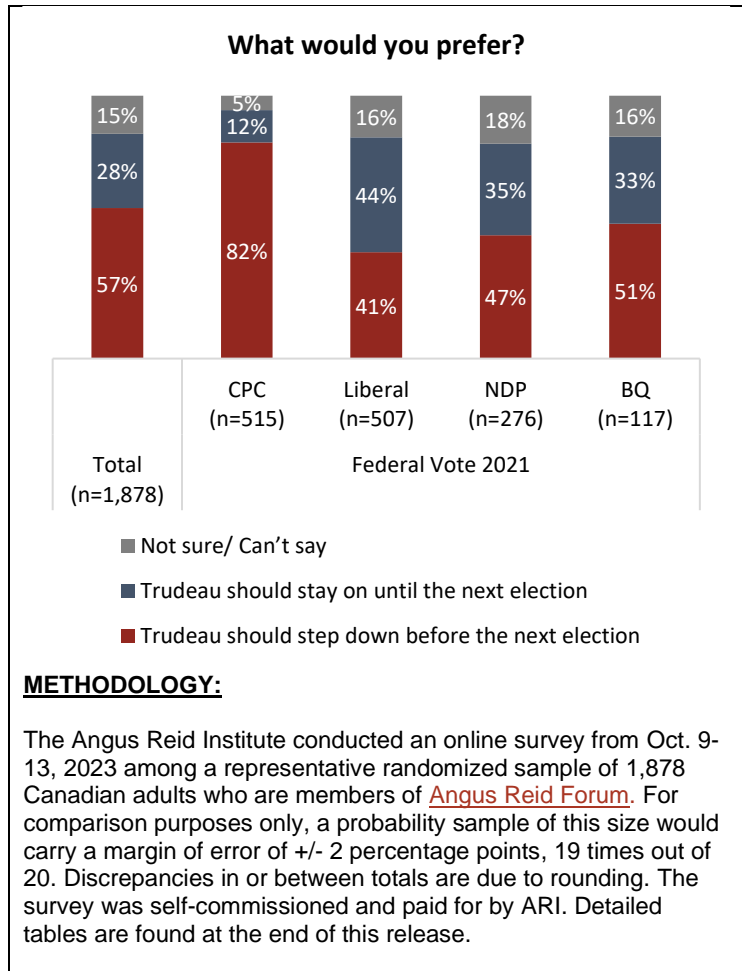
October 18, 2023 – Prime Minister Justin Trudeau [has made clear](#) his intention to lead the party into the next election, scheduled for 2025. Most voters, including a large portion of his own party supporters, feel he should step down before the next election.

A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds more than half of Canadians (57%) holding the view that Trudeau should step down, while three-in-ten (28%) say he should lead the Liberals into the next election. Importantly, 2021 Liberal voters are divided, with close to equal numbers saying he should stay on (44%) or leave the party to a fresh face (41%).

The impetus to make a change [may be building](#), as the Liberals trail the opposition Conservative Party by 11 points in vote intention. Currently, 39 per cent would vote for the CPC candidate in their riding, while 28 per cent say the same of the Liberals. One-in-five (21%) would vote for Jagmeet Singh's New Democratic Party.

And while Canadian views of their prime minister after eight years have soured from earlier peaks, views of opposition leader Pierre Poilievre remain anything but sweet. Fewer than two-in-five (37%) view Poilievre favourably, largely unchanged over the last year. Nearly the same number hold a strongly unfavourable view of him (35%), while about half view him unfavourably overall (49%).

But if not Trudeau, then who? Canadians were asked about five prominent political figures in the Liberal universe as potential replacements for the long-tenured PM. Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland holds the distinction of being the most well-known, and the most likely to generate support from those who would consider the Liberal Party in a future election. That said, no strong consensus exists over who would be the best choice. Close to equal numbers would prefer former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, or current Liberal cabinet members Anita Anand, Mélanie Joly, or François-Philippe Champagne.



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More Key Findings:

- Three-in-ten Canadians say Pierre Poilievre would make the best prime minister for Canada (30%). Half as many choose Justin Trudeau (16%) or Jagmeet Singh (15%), while close to the same number say none of them are suited for the job (27%).
- Justin Trudeau's approval matches his lowest mark of his eight-year stint as prime minister at 31 per cent. Two-thirds (64%) say they disapprove of his performance.
- The CPC hold a 10-point lead in Ontario over the Liberals (42% to 32%) and are also the top choice in British Columbia, holding an 11-point lead over the NDP in that province (40% to 29%).

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: Most say Trudeau should go

- **Two-in-five past Liberal voters, majority overall would have Trudeau step down**

Part Two: Leadership

- **Trudeau records tie for lowest approval of tenure**
- **Poilievre's search for cross-partisan appeal**
- **Comparison of the leaders**
- **Best prime minister**

Part Three: Vote intention

- **By region**
- **By age and gender**
- **Vote retention – where have the Liberals gone?**

Part Four: Who could replace Trudeau?

- **Freeland most well known, but no clear choice for replacement**
- **How big is the possible vote universe for each party?**

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Part One: Most say Trudeau should go

This has been a turbulent political period for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Liberal government, domestically and internationally. At the end of September, Trudeau told parliament that Indian government agents were linked to the killing on Canadian soil of Hardeep Singh Najjar, a self-proclaimed Sikh nationalist and a Canadian citizen. The accusation followed a rocky trip for Trudeau to India for a G20 summit, where Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi forwent a bilateral meeting with his Canadian counterpart, and a postponement of a Canadian trade mission to India that was originally scheduled for October.

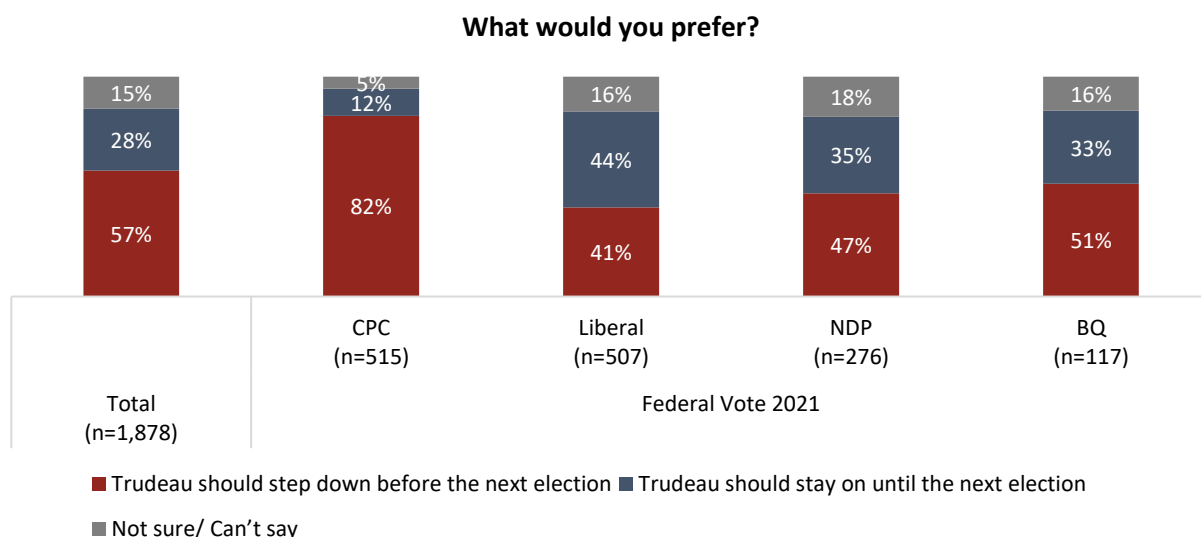
Trudeau was also forced to apologize after a Ukrainian man who served in a Nazi unit during the Second World War was given a standing ovation in parliament in September, though the prime minister's office noted that it did not know the man would be invited to parliament. Trudeau said it was Anthony Rota who was “solely responsible” for the invite; Rota resigned from his position as speaker of the house.

A burgeoning international conflict between Israel and Hamas now has Trudeau calling for calm, all the while, Canadians navigate domestic challenges, including a widespread cost of living crisis.

Two-in-five past Liberal voters, majority overall would have Trudeau step down

These challenging times come alongside questions about Trudeau's future eight years into his tenure as prime minister. Two years into Trudeau's third term, and, barring a withdrawal of NDP support, with potentially two years remaining of Liberal minority governance, a majority feel it is time for a change at the helm of the party. Approaching three-in-five (57%) Canadians say Trudeau should step down before the next election. Half that number (28%) disagree, believing he should be the one who leads the party into the next contest.

The sentiment that Trudeau should step aside before the next election is not confined to one side of the political spectrum. Those who voted Liberal in 2021 are nearly as likely to feel Trudeau is the one to lead the party into the next election (44%) as say it is time for a change (41%):

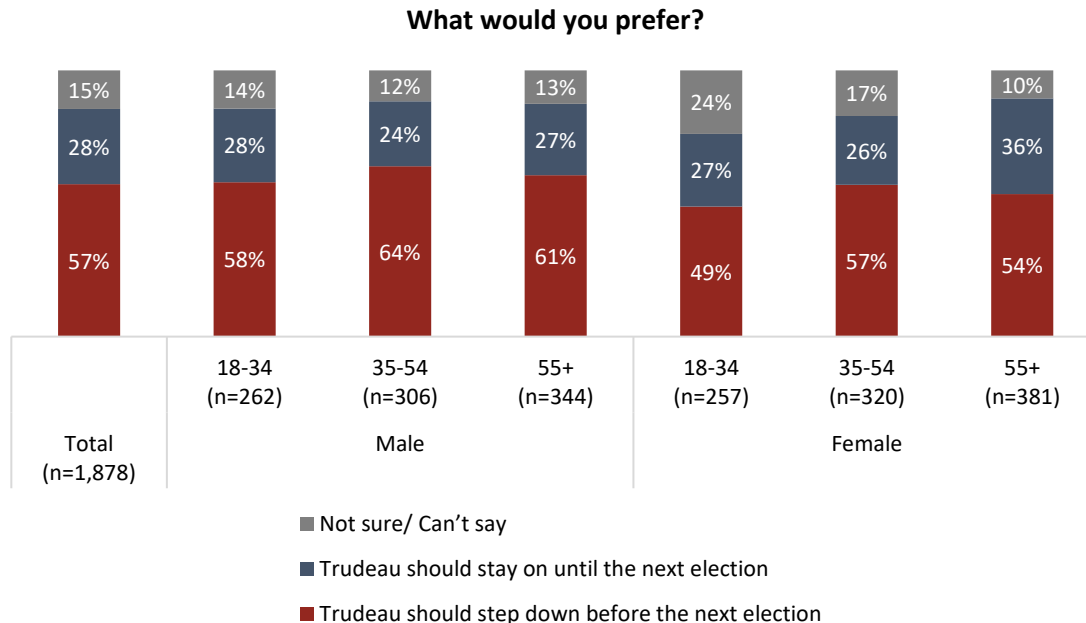


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Men are more likely than women to feel Trudeau should step down before the next election. However, majorities of all demographics except 18- to 34-year-old women feel this way:



Part Two: Leadership

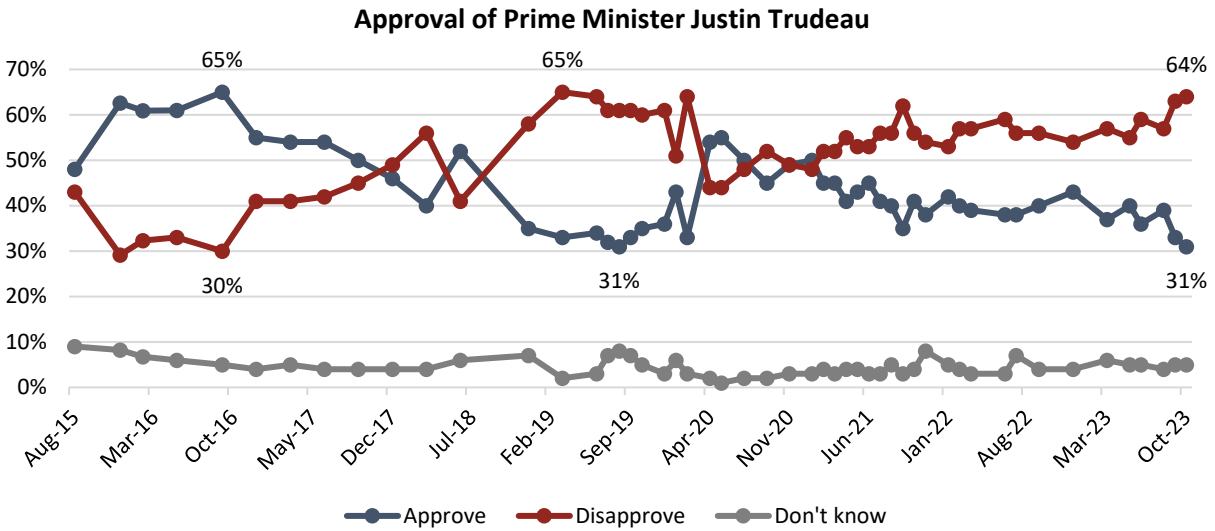
Trudeau records tie for lowest approval of tenure

Since a pandemic-era high of 55 per cent in 2020, approval of Trudeau has trended downwards. Now three-in-ten (31%) say they approve of Trudeau, matching the low approval rating seen in [August 2019](#), as Canadians prepared to head to the polls for the 2019 election with the clouds of the SNC-Lavalin scandal hanging above the Liberal leader.

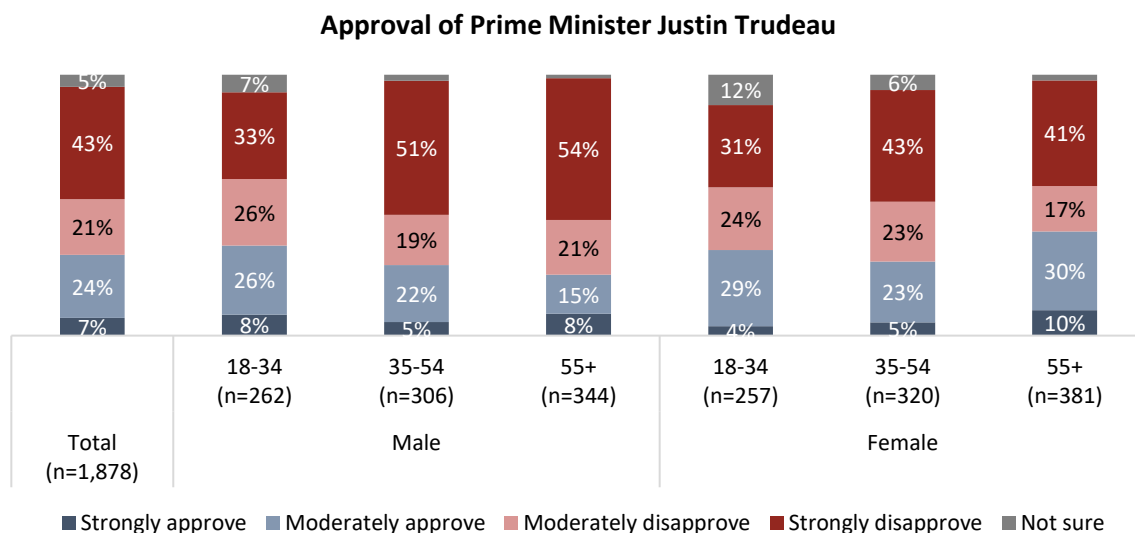
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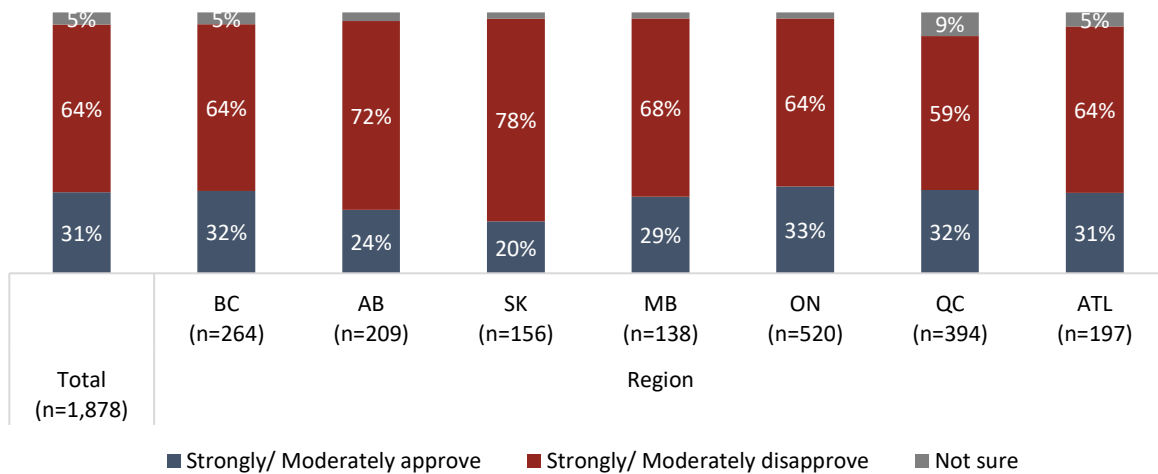


Women older than 54 are the most likely to view the prime minister positively. However even in the group, as many say they strongly disapprove of his performance (41%) as approve of it (40%). Men older than 34 are the most negative in their assessment of Trudeau:



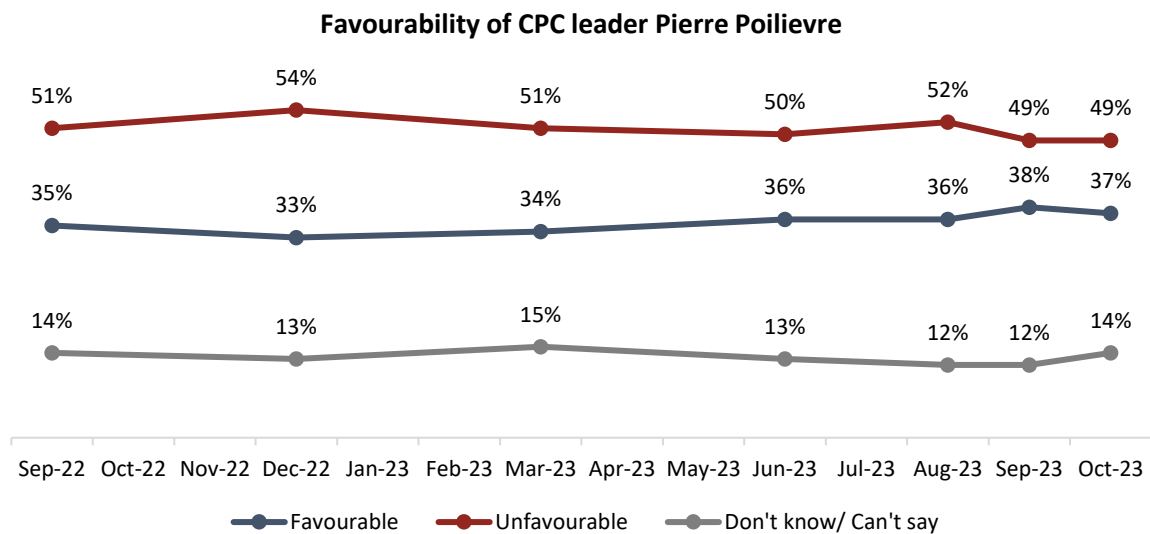
Approval of Trudeau peaks at one-third in Ontario (33%), Quebec (32%) and B.C. (32%). In Saskatchewan and Alberta, those who disapprove of the prime minister outnumber those who approve of him by four- and three-to-one, respectively:

Approval of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



Poillievre's search for cross-partisan appeal

Across the aisle, the man looking to oust Trudeau does not appear to have made gains as approval of the PM tumbles. Approaching two-in-five (37%) say they view Conservative leader Pierre Poillievre favourably, but half (49%) do not. Both figures have shown little variation since Poillievre took over as leader of the Conservative party last fall:



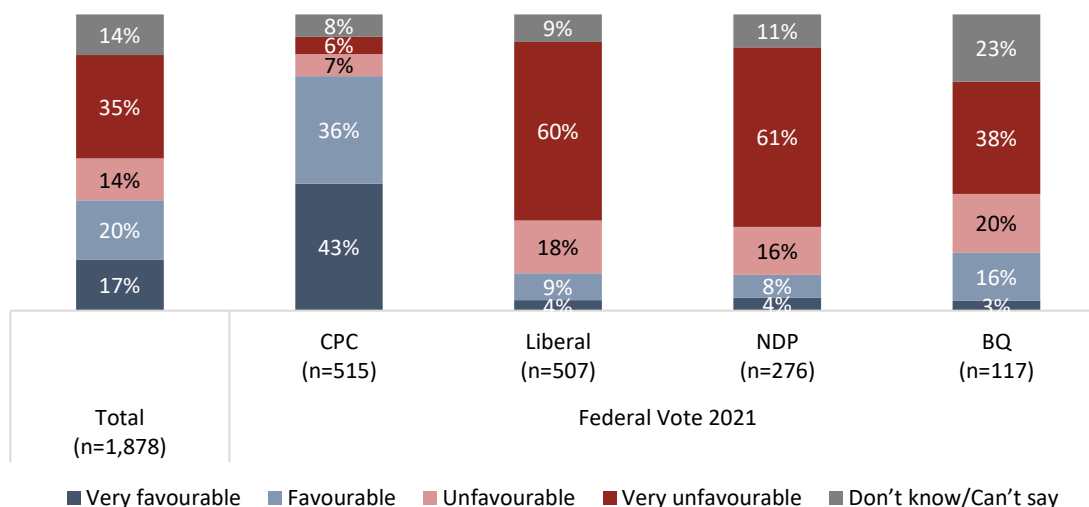
Poillievre generates much of his favourability from those who supported the Conservatives in 2021. Those who voted Liberal and NDP are much more likely to express negative sentiments. As the CPC [eyes a breakthrough in Quebec](#), three times as many (58%) past Bloc voters say they have a negative view of Poillievre as a positive one (19%):

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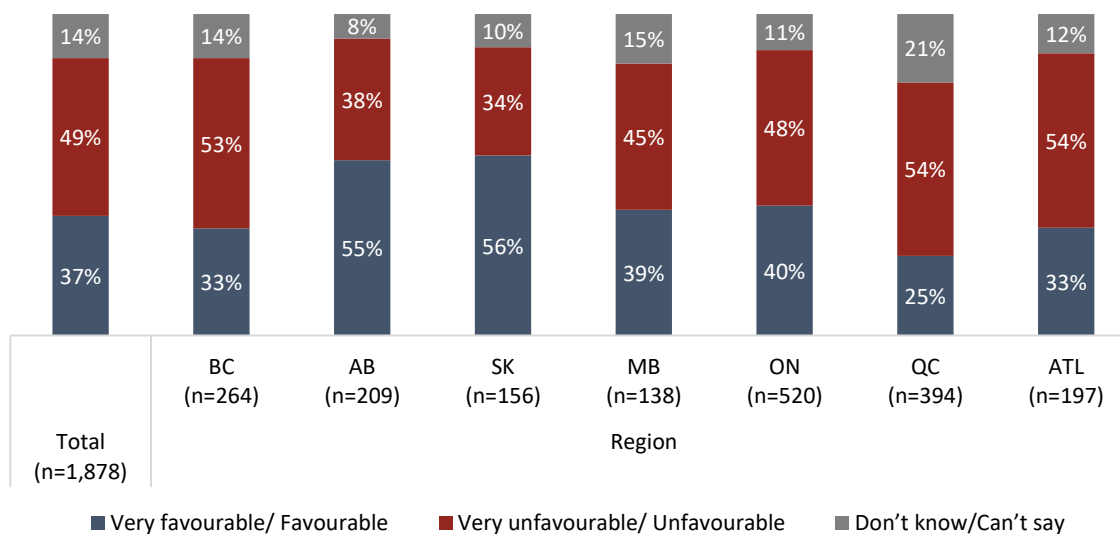
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Favourability of CPC leader Pierre Poilievre



Still, there are many in Quebec who are unsure. One-in-five (21%) offer no opinion of Poilievre, suggesting there could be room for improvement for the Conservative leader. However, majorities in Quebec (54%), Atlantic Canada (54%) and B.C. (53%) say they view Poilievre negatively. Alberta (55%) and Saskatchewan (56%) are the only two provinces where a majority say they have a positive impression of Poilievre:

Favourability of CPC leader Pierre Poilievre



Comparison of the leaders

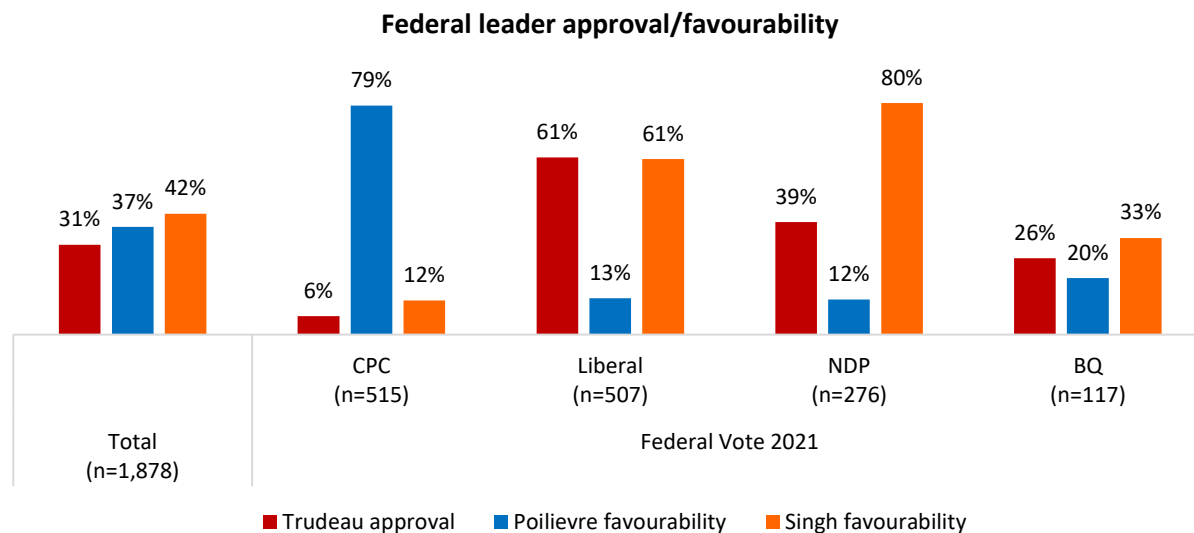
Four-in-five (79%) past CPC voters say they have a favourable view of Poilievre. As many (80%) past NDP voters say the same of their leader Jagmeet Singh. Trudeau, meanwhile, is offered praise by a

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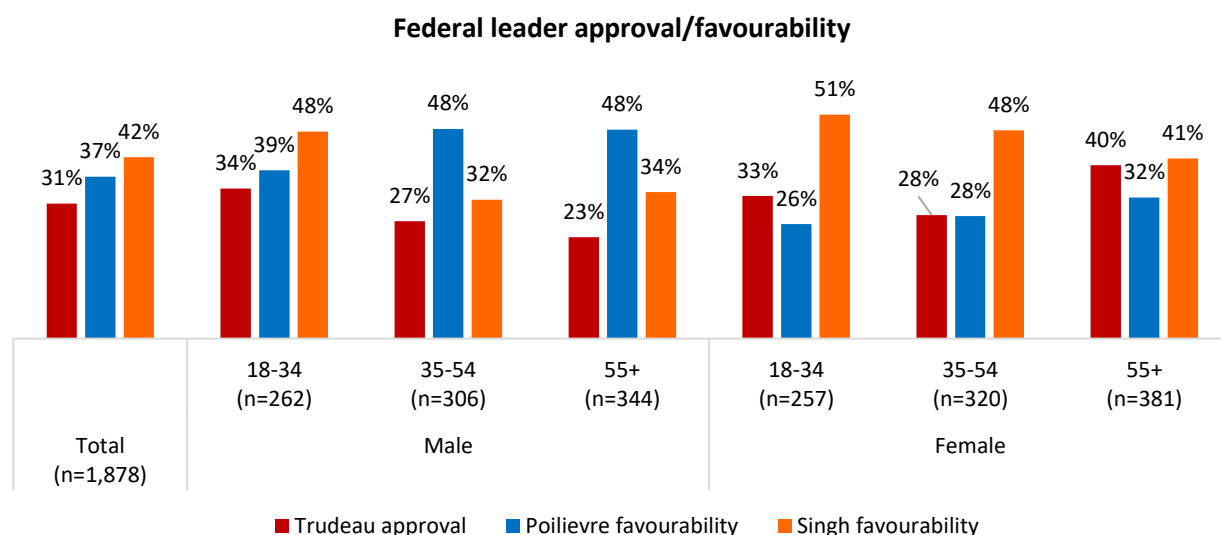
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smaller majority – three-in-five (61%) – of his party’s past voters. In fact, those who voted Liberal in 2021 are as likely to say they view Singh positively (61%) as Trudeau (61%):



Half of men older than 34 say they view Poilievre favourably; while half of women aged 18 to 54 and men 18-34 say they have positive impressions of Singh. Favourable views of Trudeau lag his rivals in every demographic except women older than 54, among whom he is statistically tied with Singh:



Best prime minister

Most Canadians feel Trudeau is not the best option to lead the country. Three-in-ten (30%) pick Poilievre, who narrowly edges “none of them” (27%) as the top choice. Half as many say Trudeau (16%) or Singh (15%). Both the latter men are not the majority choice for best prime minister among their past party supporters – two-in-five (38%) who voted Liberal in 2021 say Trudeau is the best option at PM; 46 per

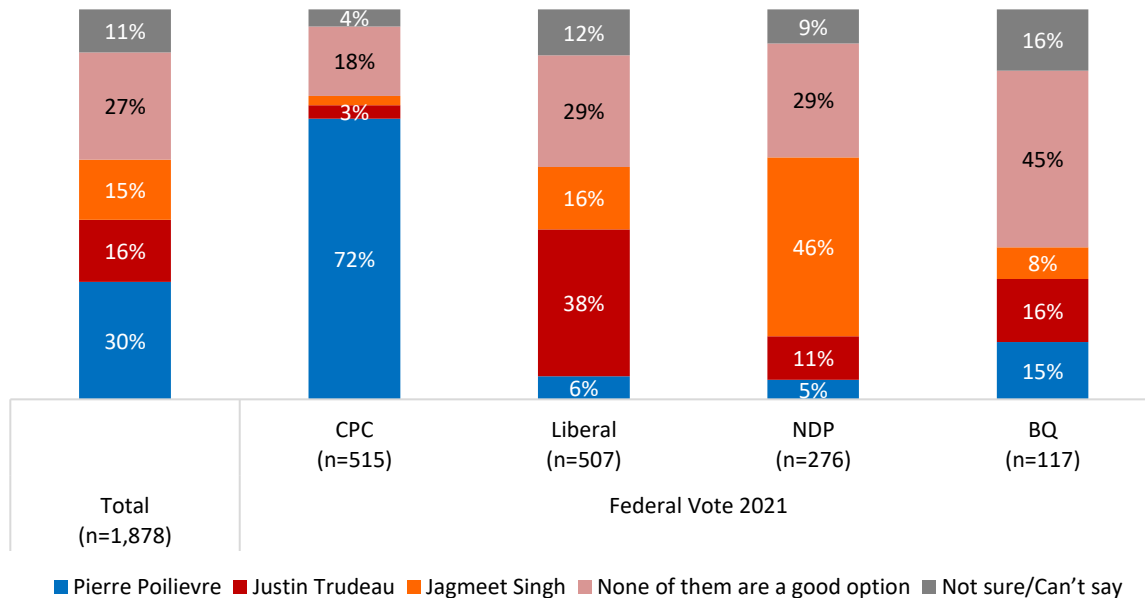
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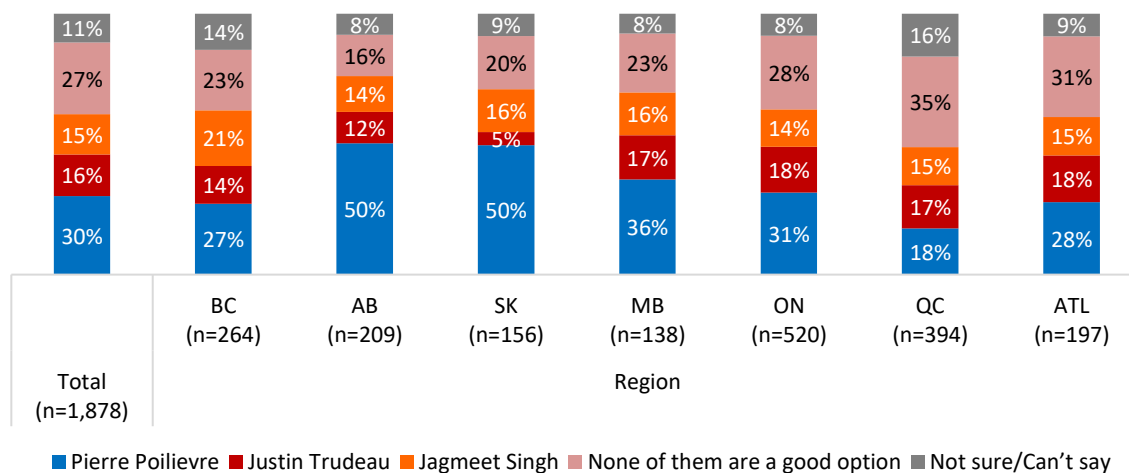
cent of those who voted NDP say Singh. Past CPC voters are much more likely (72%) to offer an endorsement of their leader:

Which of these leaders would make the best prime minister of Canada?



Regionally, Poilievre is viewed as Canada's best option to lead by half in the Conservative strongholds of Saskatchewan and Alberta. But he also finds himself leading on this metric across the country, falling to at worst a statistical tie with Trudeau in Quebec:

Which of these leaders would make the best prime minister of Canada?



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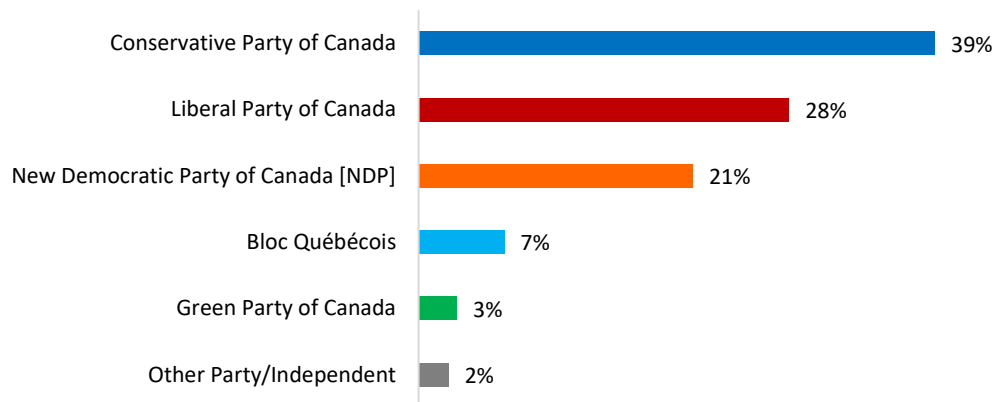
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Part Three: Vote intention

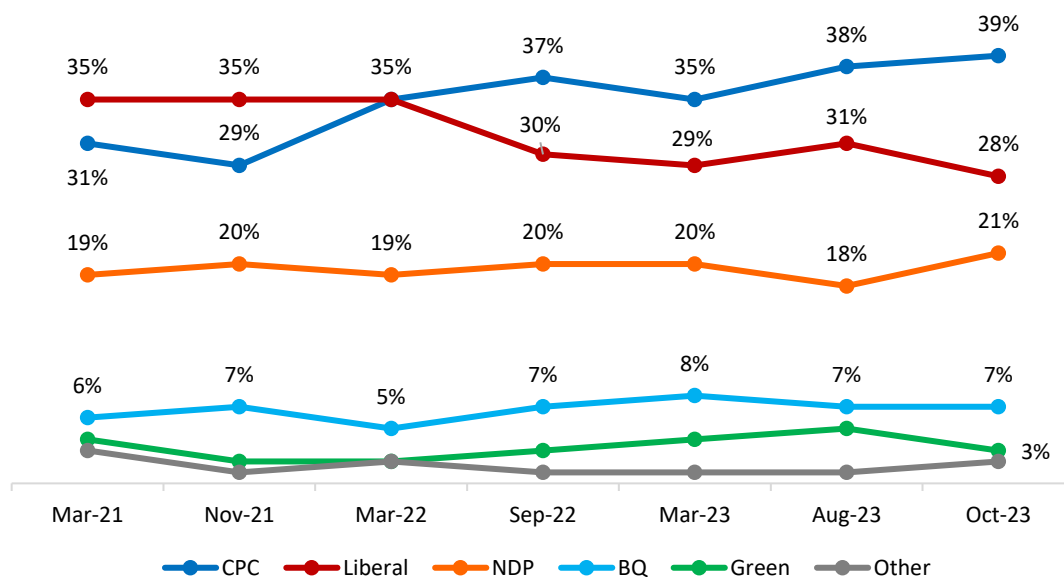
Increasingly negative views of Trudeau appear to be a drain on support for the governing Liberals, who now trail the Conservatives by 11 points in vote intention. Two-in-five (39%) Canadians say they would vote CPC if an election were held, while three-in-ten (28%) would vote Liberal. One-in-five (21%) say they would place their vote with the NDP:

**Federal vote intention
(Decided and leaning voters, n=1,683)**



The gap between the two parties has grown from the seven points seen last fall when Poilievre won leadership of the Conservatives to the 11 points that now separate the CPC from the Liberals:

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



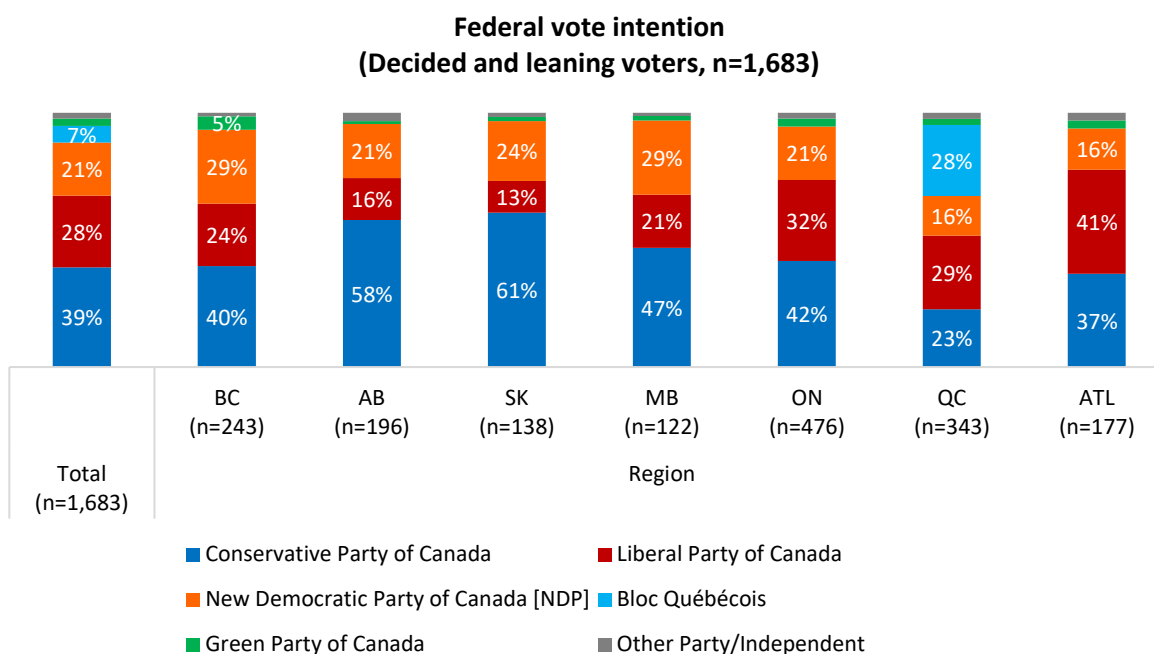
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By region

The CPC hold a plurality of support in B.C., Manitoba and Ontario, and a majority in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Liberals lead in only one region in the country – Atlantic Canada. In Quebec, support is even for the Bloc Québécois (28%) and the Liberals (29%), with the Conservatives in a close third (23%):



By age and gender

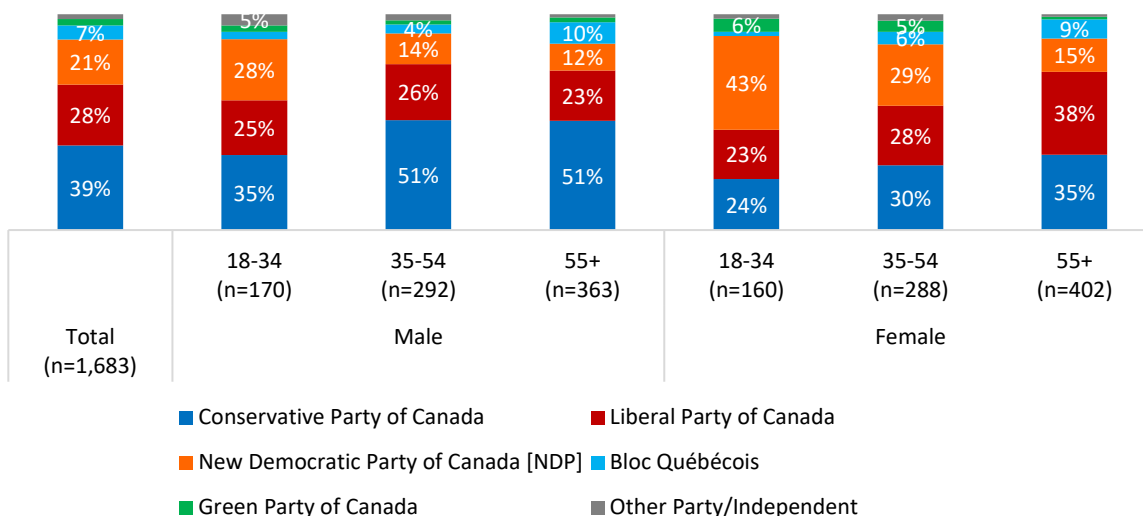
The Conservatives are a more popular choice among men, while the NDP garner more support from younger Canadians. The Liberals are in a three-way fight for support among 35- to 54-year-old women, and a two-way battle among women older than 54:

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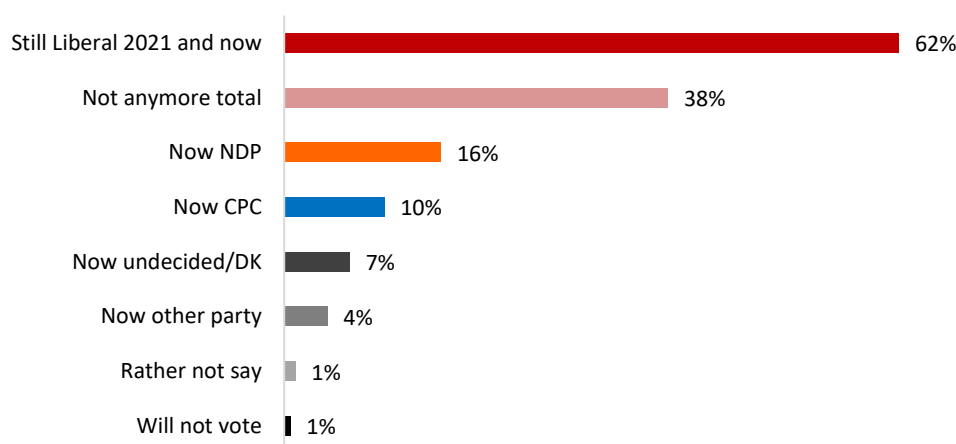
**Federal vote intention
(Decided and leaning voters)**



Voter retention – where have the Liberals gone?

Among those who voted Liberal in 2021, two-in-five (38%) say they aren't planning to support the party again if an election were held today. One-in-six (16%) past Liberal voters say they intend to vote NDP, while one-in-ten (10%) have moved over to the Conservatives. There are a further one-in-ten (9%) who are either undecided, will not vote, or prefer not to disclose their choice:

**Liberal voter retention
(Voted Liberal in 2021, n=512)**



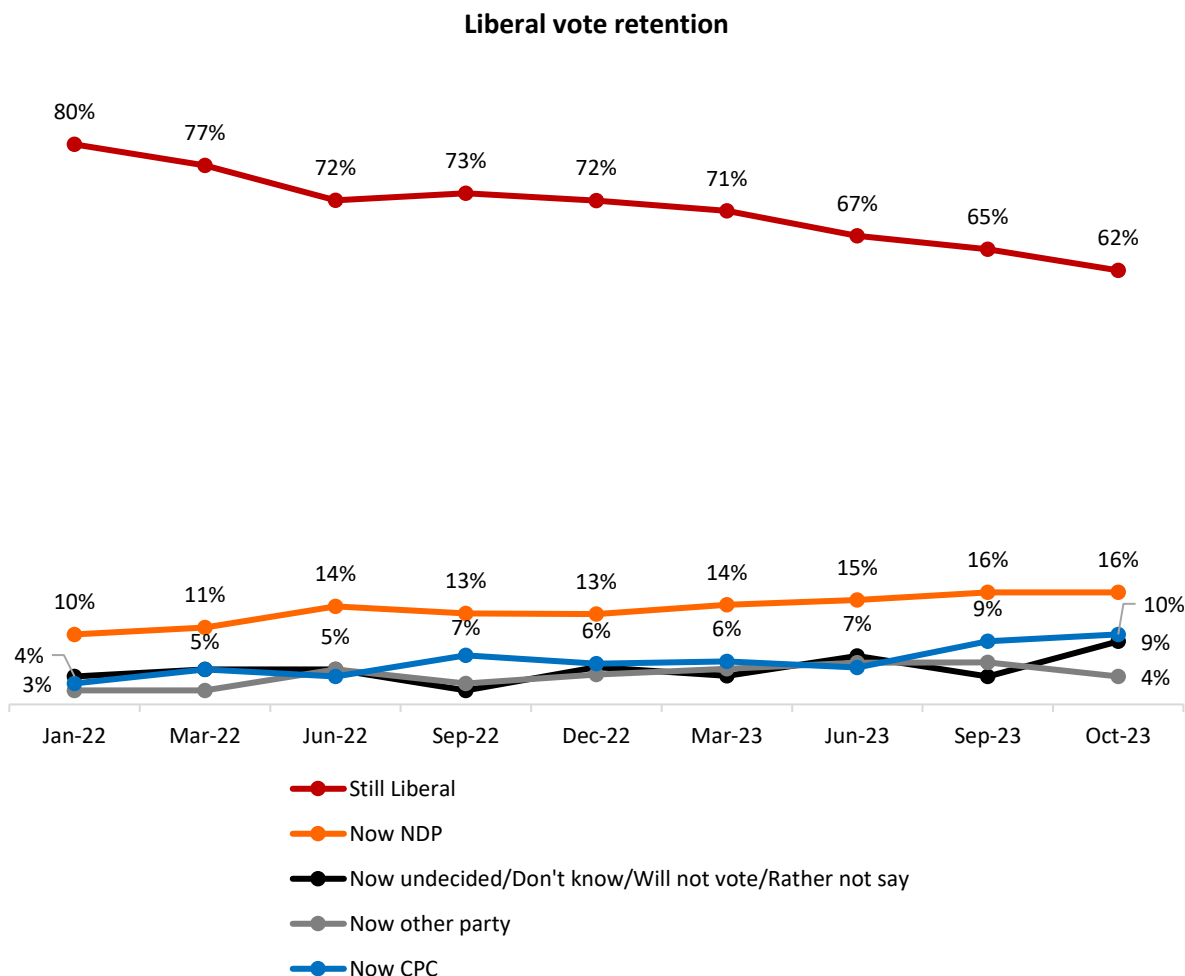
While the NDP appear to have benefitted the most from Liberal flight, there are a growing number of Liberals who are shifting to the Conservatives since the 2021 election. In January 2022, three per cent of

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2021 Liberal voters said they would be voting Conservative in a future election. That proportion has more than tripled (10%) in the subsequent months:



Part Four: Who could replace Trudeau?

Trudeau has remained steadfast that he will be the person to lead the Liberal Party into the next federal election, whether that's in 2025 or sooner. That said, given the increasingly challenging political situation, [speculation has begun](#) about whether or not another leader would give the party a fresh look in the eyes of the public.

Freeland most well known, but no clear choice for replacement

Canadians were presented with five high-profile political figures, four who are currently serving in cabinet, as well as former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, who has [been linked to the party](#) recently.

Canadians are familiar with Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, but relatively uncertain about others, including Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly, and President of the Treasury Board Anita Anand:

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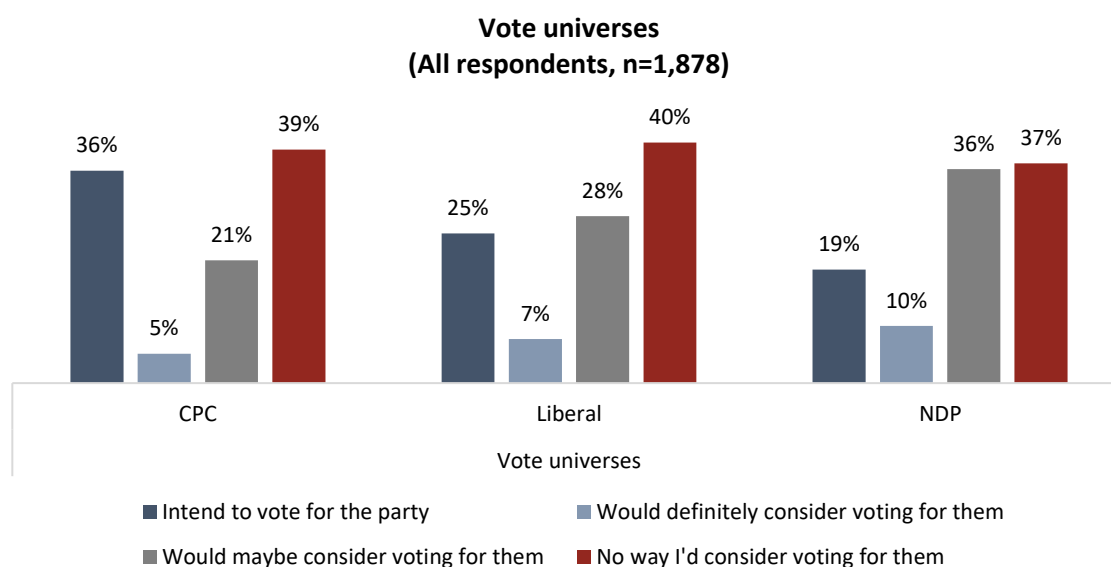
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Here are some people that have been suggested as potential replacements for Trudeau. How much do you know about the following people?
(Percentage who know 'a lot' or 'a little' shown)

	Total (n=1,878)	2021 Federal Vote			
		CPC (n=515)	Liberal (n=507)	NDP (n=276)	BQ (n=117)
Chrystia Freeland	72%	84%	79%	64%	74%
Mélanie Joly	51%	58%	58%	39%	78%
Mark Carney	34%	42%	40%	27%	8%
François-Phillipe Champagne	33%	37%	38%	22%	61%
Anita Anand	32%	41%	36%	27%	17%

How big is the possible vote universe for each party

The stakes for any new Liberal leader are significant. Among the population, 60 per cent say they would consider that party (including those who already say they would vote for them). That said, Canadians appear equally open to all three of the major federal parties, given the right leadership and vision:

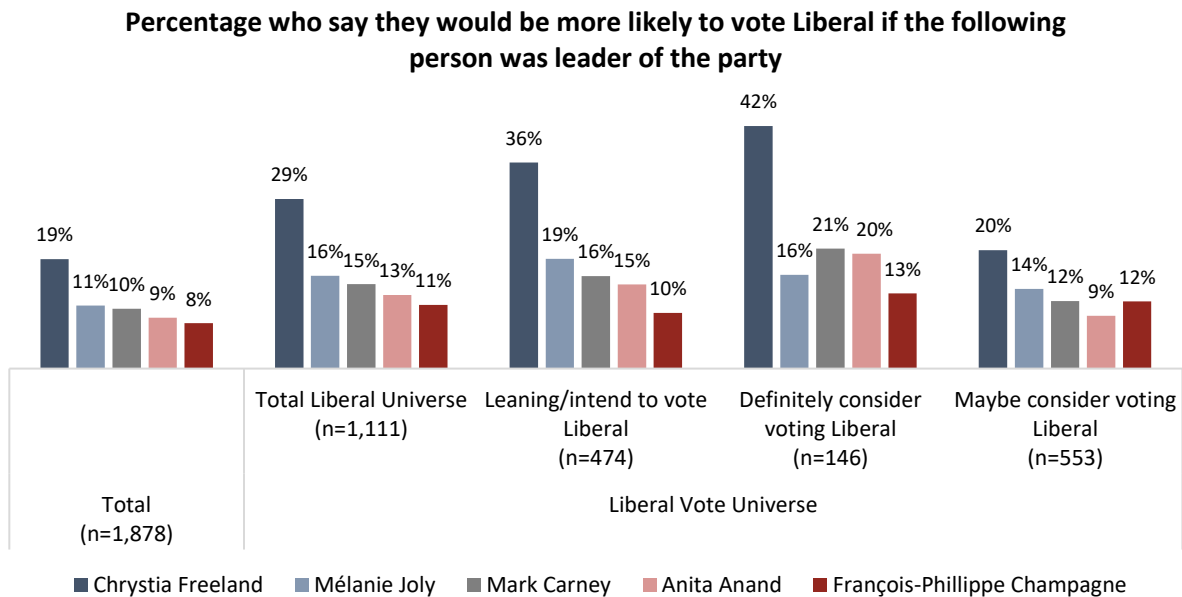


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Focusing in on the Liberal vote universe, Chrystia Freeland is the clear preference. Nearly twice as many within the Liberal sphere choose her compared to any other leader and this gap grows among those who are most likely to enter the fold, but do not currently support the party:



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

For detailed results by the Liberal vote universe, [click here](#).

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