

Alberta vote: 'Stay' outweighs 'Leave' 2:1; two-in-five separatists say it's about "sending a message to Ottawa"

'Leave' voters more likely to say referendum "very important" to AB future (85%) than 'Remainers' (60%)

Aug. 14, 2026 – Albertans on both sides of the separation debate are marshalling donations and volunteers as the campaign ahead of the fall referendum heats up.

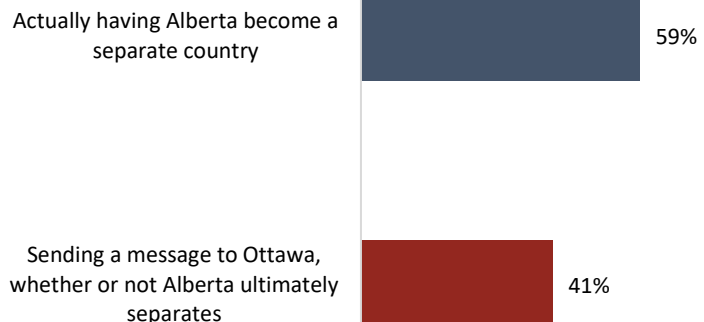
New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds those who would vote to start the process on a future binding referendum (33%) are outnumbered by a near two-to-one margin by those who prefer Alberta stay in Canada (61%). Notably, when Albertans are asked how they would vote on a simplified hypothetical separation question, fewer support actually voting to separate (30%) as would vote on Oct. 19 to have a future referendum (33%).

The gap between those figures is perhaps explained by the split motivation of the 'leave' camp. Two-in-five (41%) who say they would vote in support of separation in the hypothetical question say it's more about "sending a message to Ottawa" than Alberta becoming an independent country.

Since May, when three-in-ten (30%) said they would vote leave in a hypothetical referendum question, there has been no statistically significant movement in support of separation.

While support for the Oct. 19 separation question remains the minority stance in Alberta, men older than 34 (35-54, 45%; 55+ 48%) are more likely than other demographics to want to proceed down the path of separation. Men (16%) and women (15%) aged 18 to 34 are more likely to believe Alberta should remain a province of Canada.

**Thinking about your reasons for voting to leave Canada, which matters more to you?
(Among those who would vote to leave in hypothetical simplified referendum question)**



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Aug. 10-13, 2026, among a randomized sample of 1,017 Canadian adults who are residents of Alberta. Respondents are drawn from the [Angus Reid Forum](#), a large-scale online panel developed to include Canadian residents in each of the 343 federal ridings in Canada and representative of the Canadian population by age, gender, family income, ethnic status and education. The sample was weighted to be representative of adults provincewide according to region, gender, age, household income, and education, based on the Canadian census. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 3 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.

For more information on our polling methods, [click here](#).

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There does appear to be more import put on the fall referendum from the 'leave' than the 'stay' side. More than four-in-five (85%) of those who say they would vote 'leave' in a hypothetical simplified referendum describe the fall referendum as "very important" to the future of the province; three-in-five (60%) who would vote 'stay' say the same.

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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The referendum on a future referendum

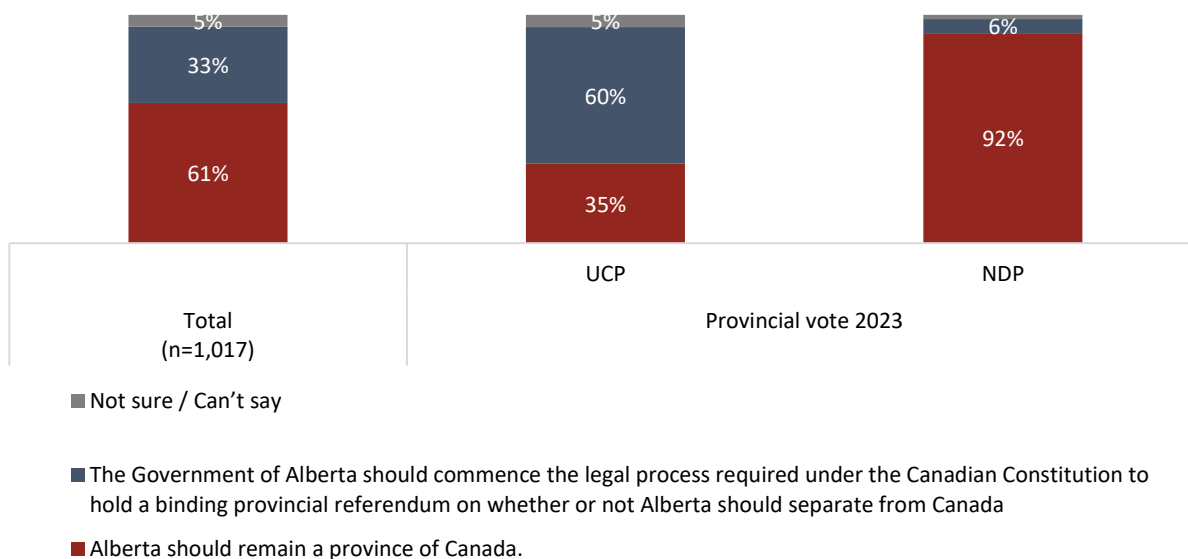
The 10-high stack of ballots Albertans will have to mark on Oct. 19 starts with the headliner. As it stands, by a near two-to-one margin, Albertans believe their province should stay in Canada (33%) rather than proceed with a future binding referendum on separation (61%).

The tight rope Alberta Premier Danielle Smith is walking on separation is evident from the views of those who supported her party in the 2023 election. The province may be against it at a majority level, but 2023 UCP supporters are more likely than others to want the province to travel the legal path towards a future separation referendum. Nearly all (92%) 2023 NDP voters want to stop the separation train in its tracks on Oct. 19.

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Should Alberta remain a province of Canada, or should the Government of Alberta commence the legal process required under the Canadian Constitution to hold a binding provincial referendum on whether or not Alberta should separate from Canada?

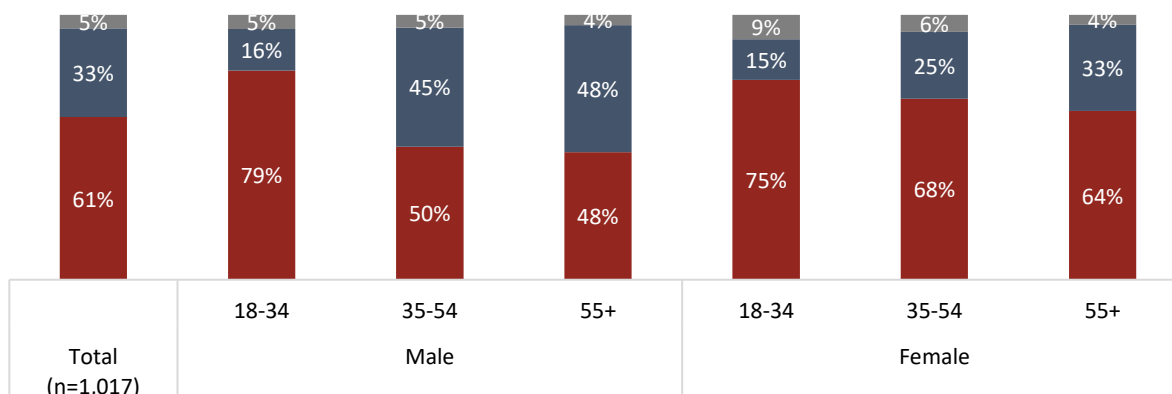


There are also clear demographic divides on the issue of separation. Men older than 34 are more likely than others to say they'd vote for having a future binding separation referendum. Three-quarters of Albertans under 35 want Alberta to remain a province within Canada:

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Should Alberta remain a province of Canada, or should the Government of Alberta commence the legal process required under the Canadian Constitution to hold a binding provincial referendum on whether or not Alberta should separate from Canada?



■ Not sure / Can't say

■ The Government of Alberta should commence the legal process required under the Canadian Constitution to hold a binding provincial referendum on whether or not Alberta should separate from Canada

■ Alberta should remain a province of Canada.

Alberta's referendum vs. a simplified leave/stay question

A referendum on having another referendum on separation and an actual separation referendum appear to generate slightly different responses from Albertans. The Angus Reid Institute also asked a simplified leave/stay question:

Suppose the October binding referendum question simply asked: "should Alberta leave Canada and become its own independent country or stay in Canada?". In this case, how would you vote?

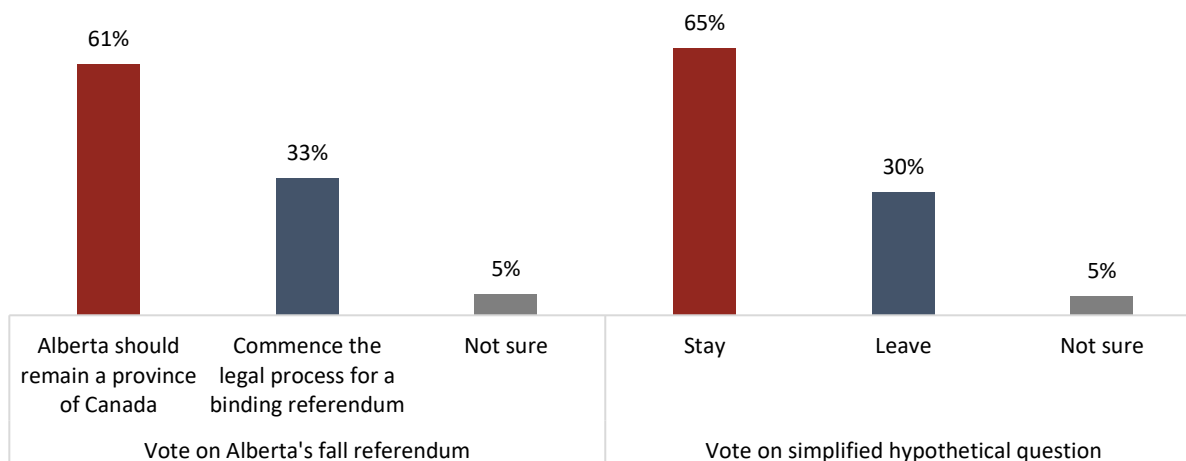
[Read the questionnaire here.](#)

There are more Albertans who would vote stay (65%) in a simplified separation referendum question than those who would vote against the fall referendum question (61%). Similarly, there are fewer who would vote for Alberta to leave Canada (30%) than those who would vote to advance to a future binding referendum (33%) on Oct. 19.

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**Alberta's referendum vs. a simplified stay/leave question
(Alberta, n=1,017)**



Support for both sides has been stable over time

Note that the two-thirds who would vote to 'stay' in a simplified referendum question has remained consistent in data recorded by ARI in 2026.

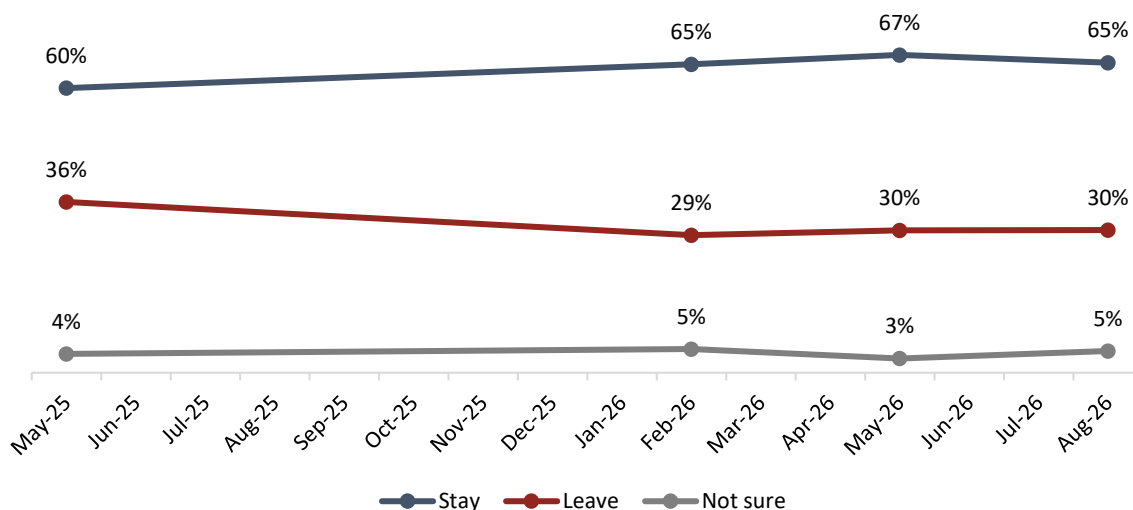
Related:

- [Unity or Separation: Quebec, Alberta & Canada's future: In Alberta, a divided right dampens the sovereignty spark](#)
- [Alberta Separation: Three-in-five say they'd vote in October to stay, but half say the question is "confusing"](#)

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Vote intentions on simplified hypothetical stay/leave question over time in Alberta

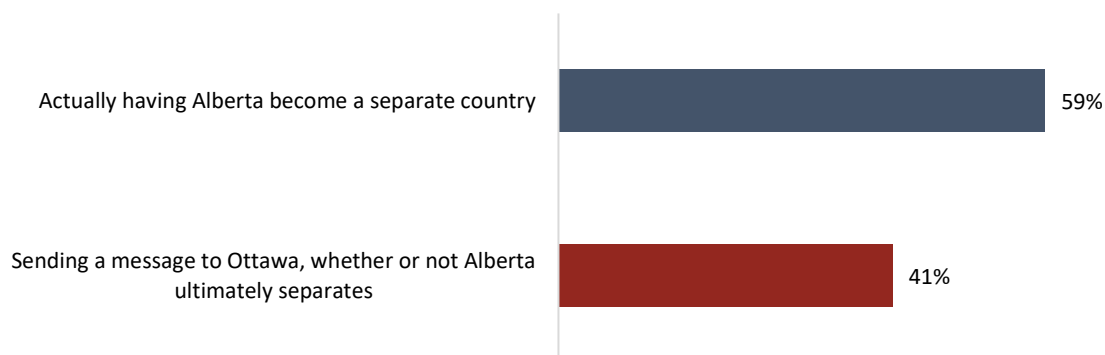


Two-in-five 'leave' voters say it's about 'sending a message to Ottawa'

The gap between those who want to proceed with a future referendum and those who would actually vote to leave is perhaps partially explained by the “leavers” motivation. Two-in-five (41%) say the separation vote is more about “sending a message to Ottawa”. Most – three-in-five (59%) – “leavers” say they are driven by actually wanting Alberta to separate:

Thinking about your reasons for voting to leave Canada, which matters more to you?

(Among those who would vote to leave in hypothetical simplified referendum question)



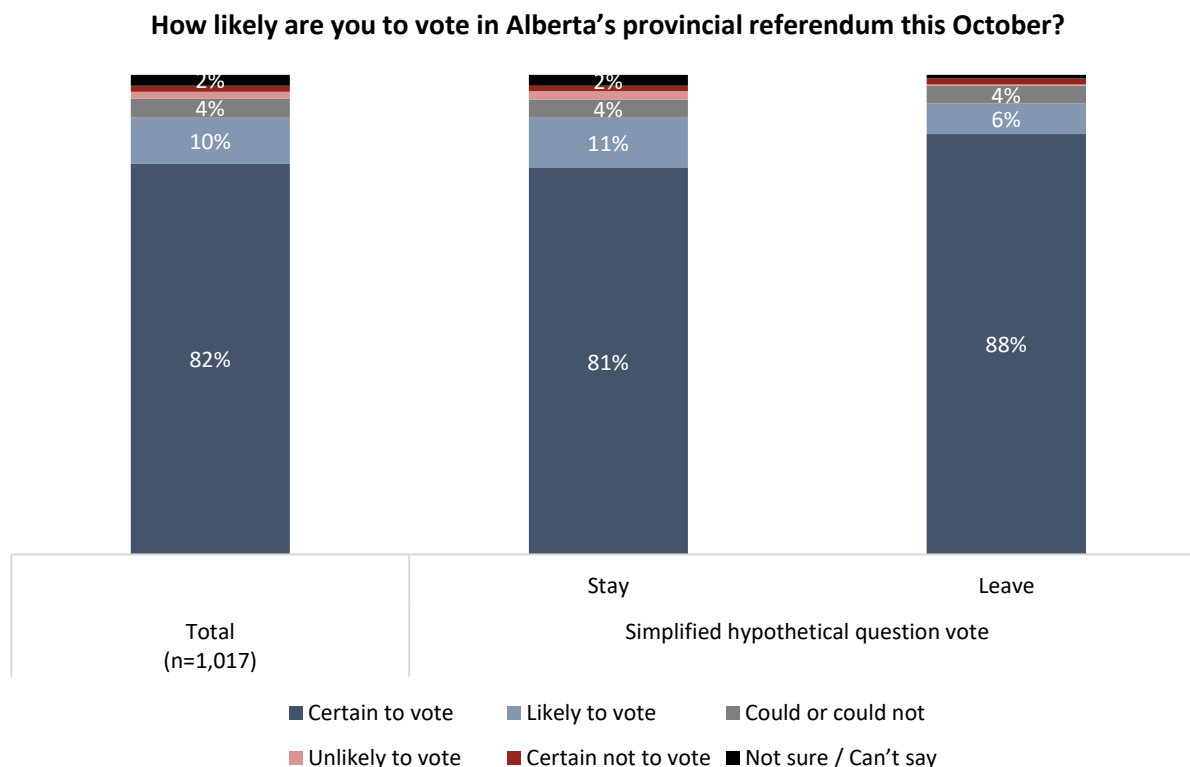
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Vote likelihood and perceived importance of referendum

Four-in-five (82%) Albertans say they are “certain” they will vote in the forthcoming referendum. Among the one-in-five not in that group, half (10%) describe themselves “likely” to vote.

There is a seven-point gap in vote certainty between the stay and leave sides. More than four-in-five (88%) who say they would vote leave in a simplified hypothetical referendum question say they are certain to vote this fall; 81 per cent of the ‘stay’ side says the same:

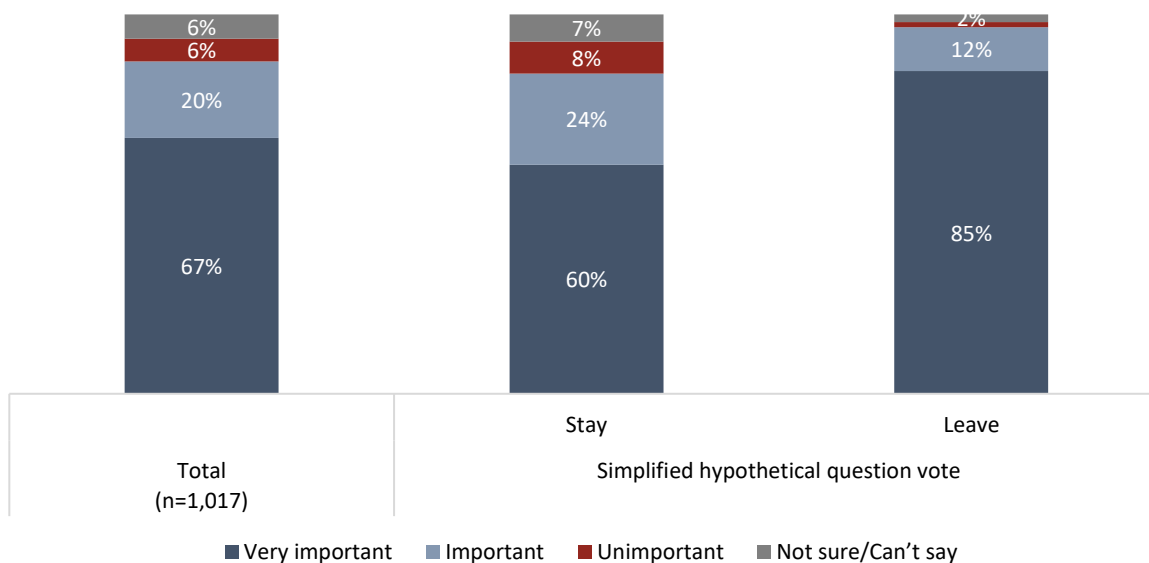


There is an even larger gap in between the two groups when it comes to assessing the perceived importance of the fall referendum for the future of the province. Three-in-five (60%) of those who say they would vote ‘stay’ in a hypothetical separation referendum describe the Oct. 19 referendum as “very important” while one-quarter (24%) say it is only “important”. On the ‘leave’ side, more than four-in-five (85%) believe this fall’s referendum to be “very important”:

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And how important do you think this referendum is for the future of Alberta?



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

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