

BC Election: As voters begin to lock in, Conservatives hold five-point lead over gaining NDP

With fewer choices as OneBC & Centre BC field narrow candidate rosters, both major parties make gains

Oct. 5, 2026 – The B.C. election picture has come into sharper focus after this weekend's nomination deadline finalized each party's slate of candidates, and who would be running where.

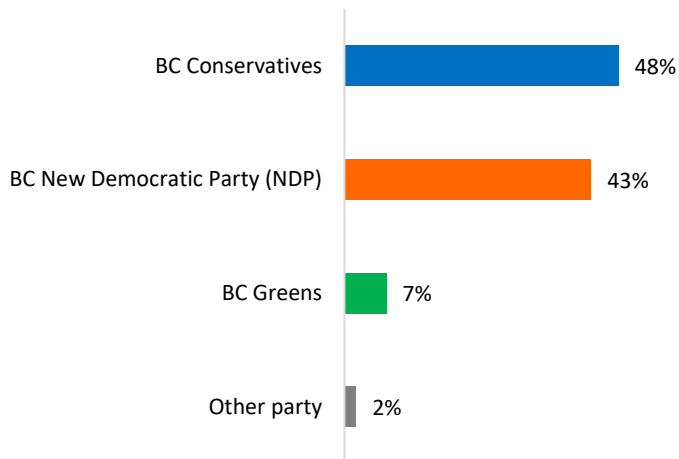
New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds a narrowing race, and a more solidified electorate expressing less indecision as to where they will place their vote, and how likely they are to keep it there.

The BC Conservatives and BC NDP both grew their share of support during the early portion of the campaign; the former benefits from a smaller pool of CentreBC and One BC candidates to compete with across the province while the latter takes gains from the BC Greens. Half (48%) of leaning and decided voters say they would vote for the BC Conservatives, while 43 per cent support the BC NDP.

British Columbians have begun to solidify their choice on the ballot. Approaching half (46%) describe themselves as “very certain” as to who they will support, an increase from the one-third (35%) who said so during the first week of the campaign. However, this growth in certainty is reflected much more among BC Conservative supporters than those who would support the BC NDP. On Sept. 24, half (47%) of BC Conservative supporters said they were “very certain” of their choice, two-thirds (65%) say the same now. For the BC NDP, there are 44 per cent who say they have made up their mind, a growth of only three points from the beginning of the campaign.

BC NDP leader David Eby cited the U.S. tariffs and the threat of President Donald Trump as one of the key reasons his party needed a majority mandate when he called the election at the end of September. That issue was not among British Columbians' top six at the start of the campaign and it has fallen even further down the list. One-in-ten (10%) say the U.S. tariffs/Donald Trump/the alcohol ban is “most

B.C. provincial vote intent (Decided and leaning voters, n=846)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Oct. 1-3, 2026, among a randomized sample of 1,013 Canadian adults who are residents of British Columbia. 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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important" to them when they are making their decision as to who to vote for, placing the issue far behind top concerns such as cost of living (57%), health care (42%), the economy/jobs (26%), housing affordability (24%), the deficit (24%) and public safety (24%), and even behind a group of secondary issues such as the opioid crisis (15%), climate change (14%), DRIPA (14%) and poverty (13%).

BC Conservative leader Lorne Doerkson has had little time to familiarize himself with voters, but a growing number now know enough to view him favourably or unfavourably. At the start of the campaign, two-in-five (40%) British Columbians did not have an opinion; 25 per cent say the same now. There are as many who view him positively (38%) as negatively (37%).

That is better than Eby performs on the same question. Three-in-five (58%) say they view the BC NDP leader unfavourably; one-third (36%) favourably.

On the key question of who British Columbians believe would be the best premier, Doerkson has a slight edge (36%) over Eby (33%). But there nearly as many who say neither the BC NDP nor the BC Conservative leader is the best choice to lead the province (31%).

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: Vote intent

- **Gap narrows between Conservatives and NDP**
- **Vote intent by region**
- **Vote intent by age and gender**
- **Vote retention – One-quarter of 2024 NDP voters have left the party**
- **Voters more likely to have made up their minds**

Part Two: Leaders and issues

- **As voters get to know Doerkson, the numbers are less comforting for Eby**
- **Narrow advantage to Doerkson on 'best premier'**
- **The U.S. tariffs issue sliding in importance; cost of living and health care galvanize**

Part One: Vote intent

Gap narrows between Conservatives and NDP

Voters' choices in the British Columbian election became much clearer on Saturday after the deadline for parties to nominate candidates passed. The BC Conservatives are the only party to field a candidate in all 93 of the province's electoral divisions. Despite calling the election, the BC NDP was one short of a full

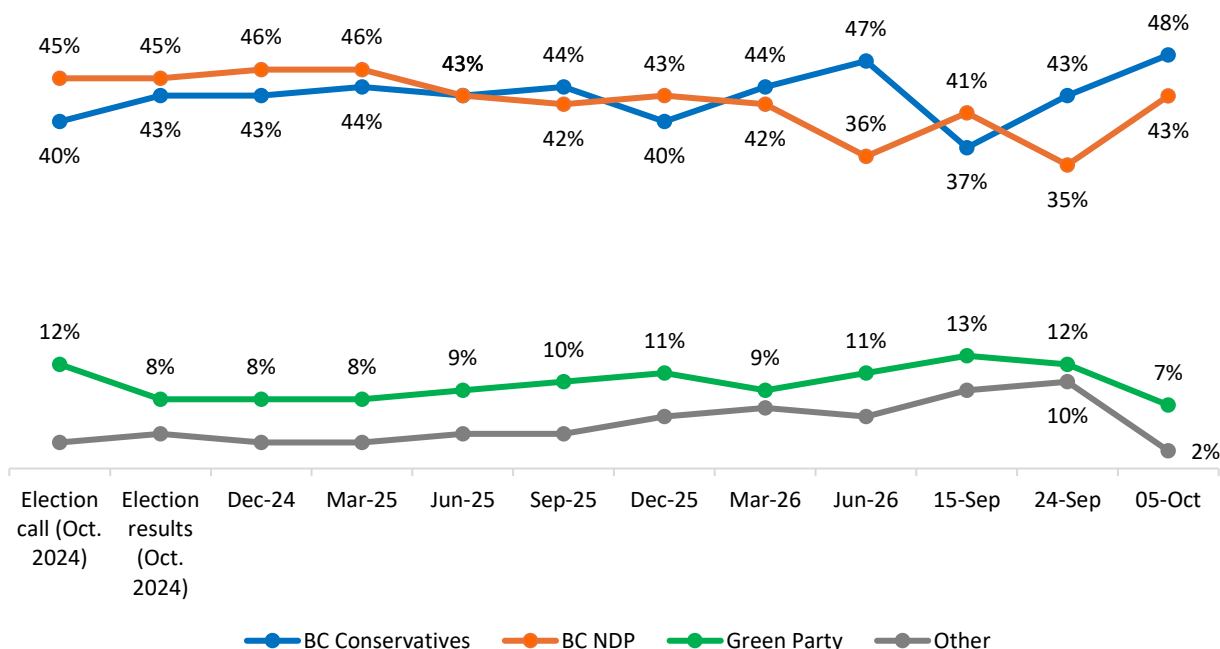
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slate of candidates. The BC Greens have candidates contesting 73 races, while Centre BC nominated 35 and OneBC have 33 candidates across the province.

The BC Conservatives have gained support in the first two weeks of the campaign, but so too have the BC NDP, who have narrowed the gap between the two parties. Approaching half (48%) of decided and leaning voters plan to support the BC Conservatives, while 43 per cent say they would vote for the BC NDP. Both the BC Greens (dropping five points) while the other parties, unable to field substantial rosters, fade into the background:

**B.C. provincial vote intention over time
(Decided and leaning voters)**



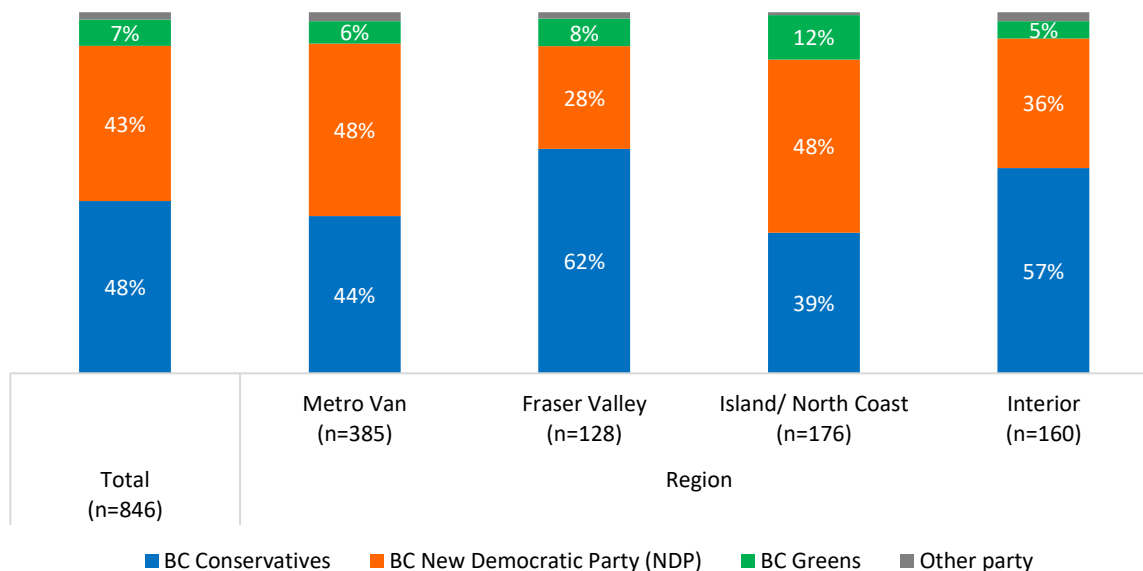
Vote intent by region

The BC Conservatives hold a significant advantage in the Fraser Valley and the Interior, while the BC NDP fare better in Metro Vancouver and on the Island and province's North Coast. A rebound in the Metro Vancouver area for the BC NDP has changed their electoral outlook after earlier ARI data showed them trailing the Conservatives.

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B.C. provincial vote intent by region (Decided and leaning voters)



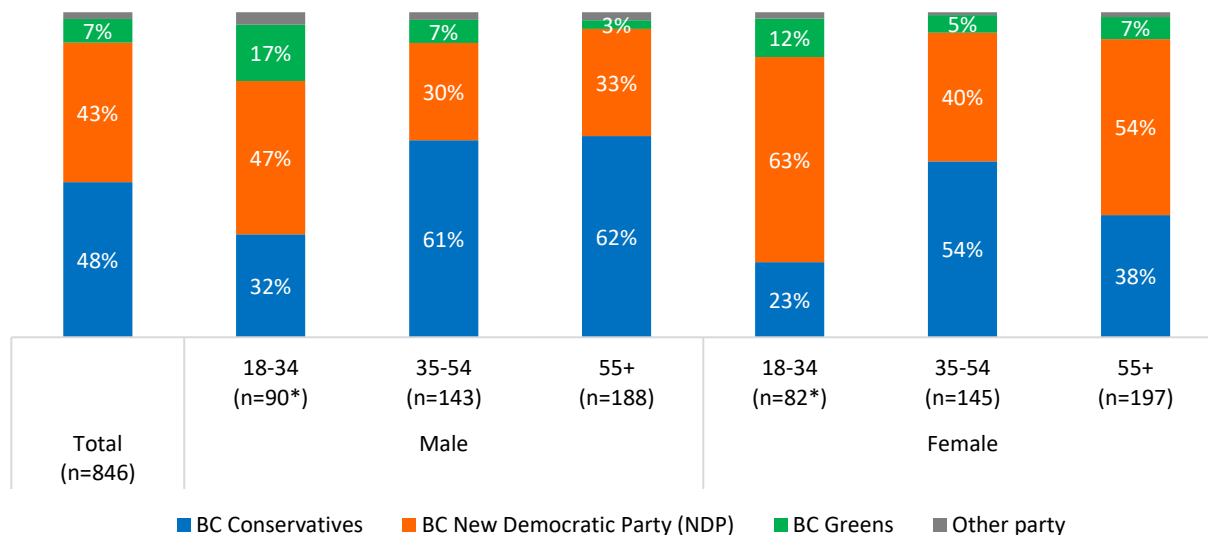
Vote intent by age and gender

There is a gender divide in party support, especially among those older than 54. Three-in-five men of that age say they are planning to vote Conservative, while a majority (54%) of women say they plan to support the BC NDP. The BC Conservatives are the preferred option among both men and women aged 35- to 54-years-old while the BC NDP earn more support among those under 35, who tend to be less reliable voters according to [historical Canadian election data](#).

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B.C. provincial vote intent by age and gender (Decided and leaning voters)



**Smaller sample size, interpret with caution*

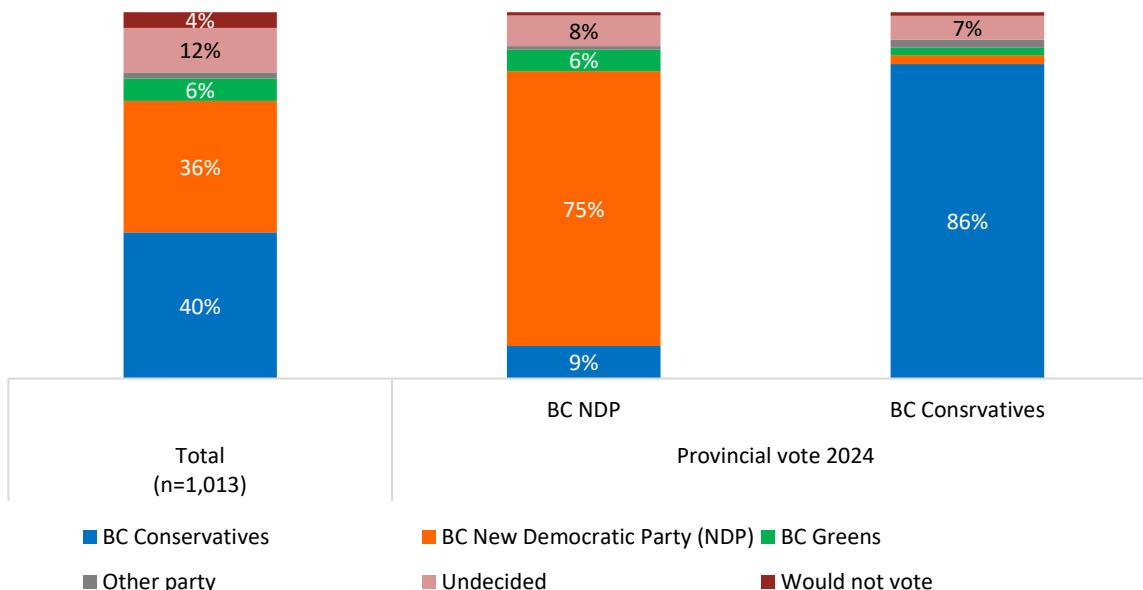
Vote retention – One-quarter of 2024 BC NDP voters have left the party

For the BC NDP, the challenge will be convincing their 2024 voters to return at higher rates. One-quarter of those who voted for the party in the election two years ago say they either are undecided or are voting for the Greens (6%) or Conservatives (8%). Comparatively, the BC Conservatives are retaining 86 per cent of supporters from the 2024 election:

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Provincial vote retention - including undecideds and those who would not vote



Voters more likely to have made up their minds

Now that British Columbians – [irritated at the outset](#) – have made some peace with the snap election, they are expressing more certainty as to who they plan to support. The week the election was called, one-third (35%) described themselves as “very certain”; more than two-in-five (46%) do the same now.

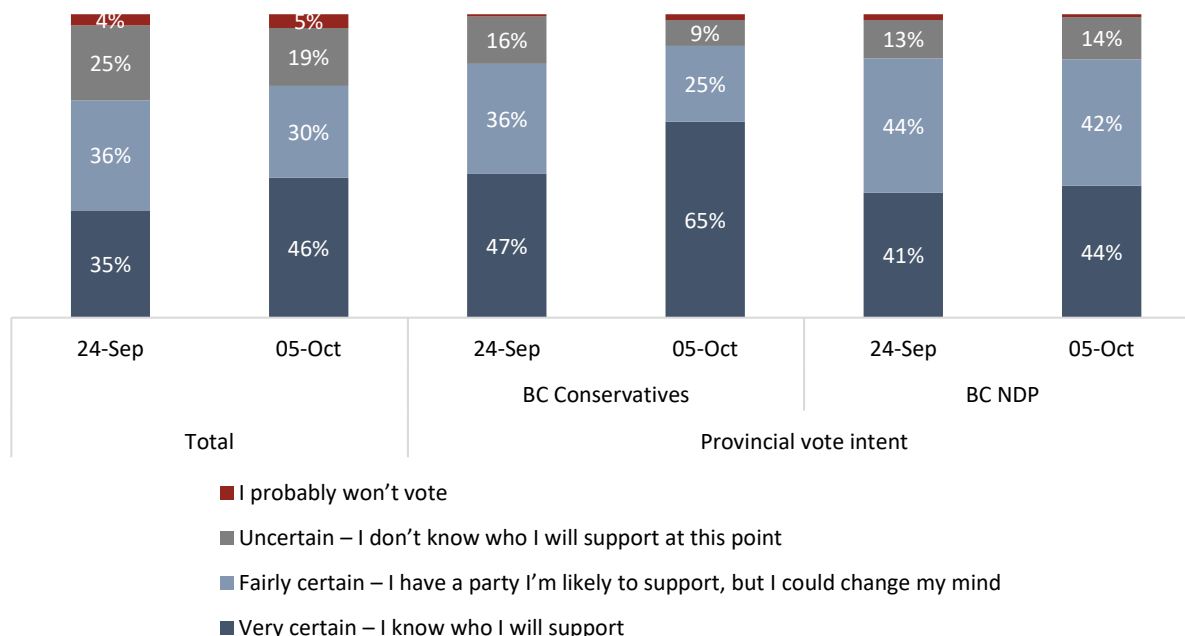
Related: [Ballot Backlash: BC Conservatives open 8-point lead after snap election call, but electorate far from locked in](#)

But that certainty is almost entirely buoyed by those who intend to vote for the BC Conservatives. Certainty among that group has grown from 47 per cent on Sept. 24 to 65 per cent now. Among BC NDP supporters, there has only been an increase of three points of those who say they are “very certain” in their choice:

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At this stage, how certain are you about which party's candidate you will support in the election?



Part Two: Leaders and issues

As voters get to know Doerkson, the numbers are less comforting for Eby

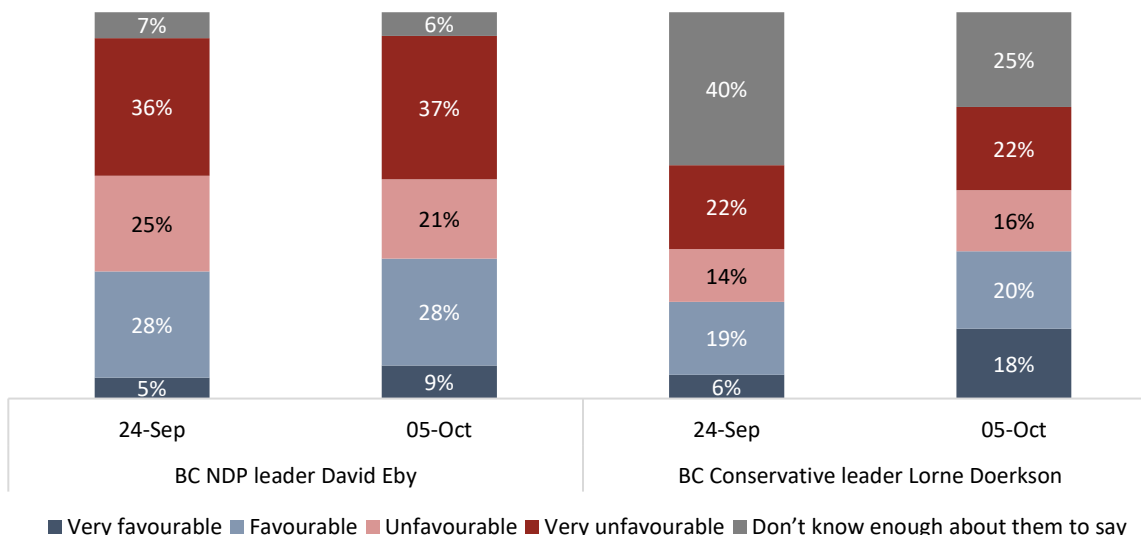
BC Conservative leader Lorne Doerkson stepped into the interim about 36 hours before Eby called the election. The campaign has since been something of a speed dating exercise between the heretofore little-known two-time MLA and BC voters. On Sept. 24, two-in-five (40%) said they didn't know enough about Doerkson to form an opinion, whether positive or negative. There are still one-quarter (25%) who are reserving judgement. For the other three-quarters, opinions are split evenly between favourable (38%) and unfavourable views (38%).

For Eby – the far better known politician - personal popularity is lower than it was during the 2024 election, when midway through the campaign more than two-in-five (45%) viewed him favourably and fewer than half (45%) said they had an unfavourable view. Currently, a majority (58%) say they view Eby unfavourably and fewer than two-in-five (37%) have a positive view of the NDP leader:

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Would you say you have a favourable or unfavourable view of the following leaders:



Narrow advantage to Doerksen on 'best premier'

On the question of best premier, British Columbians are split. Doerksen holds a narrow edge (36%) over Eby (33%), who is nearly on par with “neither” (32%).

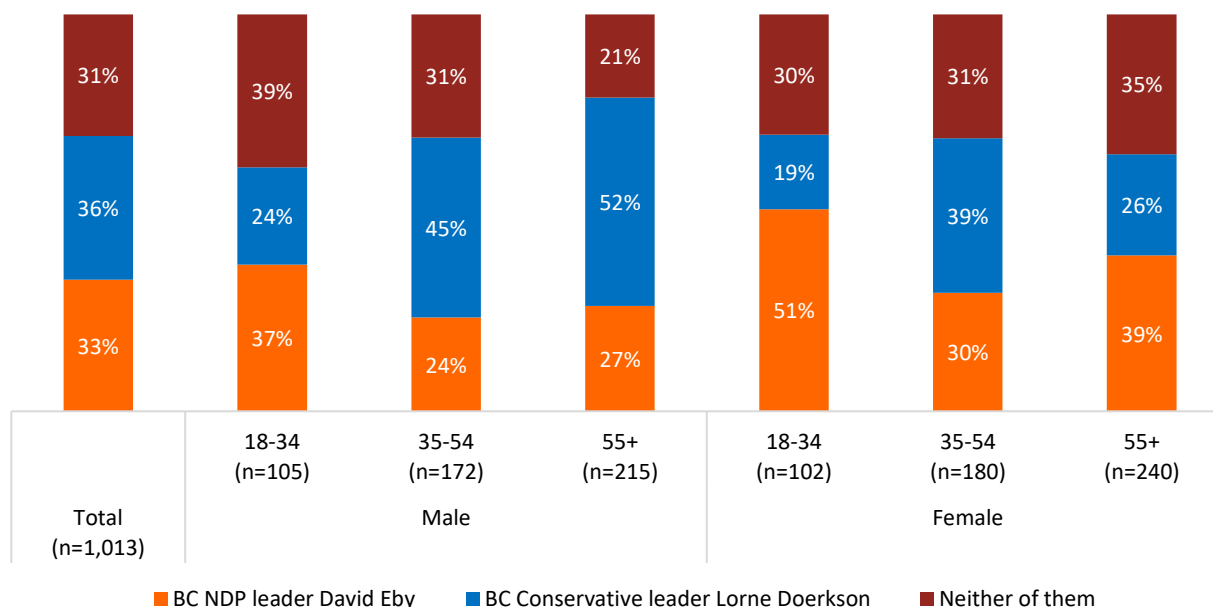
The gender divide on vote is also evident on this question. Half (52%) of men aged 54 or older select Doerksen as the best option for premier of the province; only one-quarter (26%) of women that age agree.

Doerksen is also favoured by a near two-to-one margin among men aged 35- to 54-years-old, and by a smaller margin among women that age. British Columbians under 35 are more likely to select Eby than Doerksen on this question:

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Which of these would you say would make the best premier of British Columbia?



The U.S. tariffs issue sliding in importance; cost of living and health care galvanize

The U.S. trade issue and the threat of U.S. President Donald Trump had been an early focus of Eby and the BC NDP's campaign. However, the party has appeared to pivot at [recent campaign stops](#). Although the tariffs remain in effect, the issue has apparently faded from prominence in the minds of voters. On Sept. 24, one-in-six (15%) British Columbians selected the U.S. tariffs/Donald Trump/the alcohol ban as a top issue for deciding who they would vote for in the upcoming election. Now one-in-ten (10%) do the same.

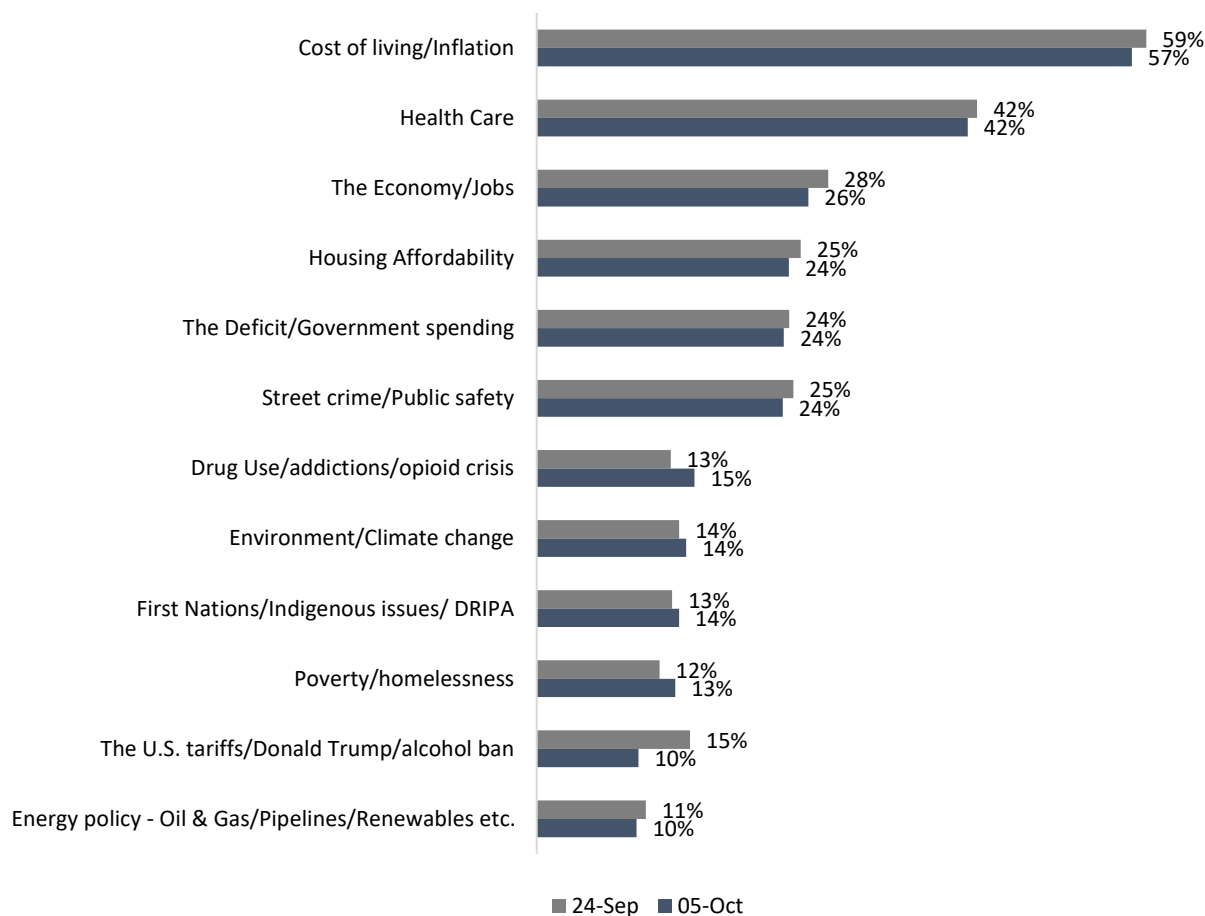
There has been little movement as to what voters say is driving their choices: cost of living/inflation continues to be the top choice, followed by health care. The economy/jobs, housing affordability, the deficit and public safety are in a second tier, selected by one-quarter of the population. The U.S. tariffs issue finds itself in a tier below that, and behind the opioid crisis, climate change, DRIPA, and poverty as concerns motivating British Columbians' votes:

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Now, thinking ahead to the election, which of the following issues would you say are the most important to you when it comes to deciding which party and candidate to support?

(Up to three issues chosen; those selected by 10% or more shown)



For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, click here.

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Angus Reid Institute Electoral Record British Columbia Provincial Elections		
May 2017		
	Actual	Angus Reid
BC Liberals	40%	40%
BC NDP	40%	41%
BC Greens	17%	15%
Other	3%	4%
Avg. Error		-1.0
October 2020		
	Actual	Angus Reid
BC Liberals	34%	35%
BC NDP	48%	45%
BC Greens	15%	16%
Other	3%	4%
Avg. Error		-1.5
October 2024		
	Actual	Angus Reid
BC NDP	45%	45%
BC Conservatives	43%	40%
BC Greens	8%	12%
Other	4%	3%
Avg. Error		-1.75

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