

Majority (63%) of Voters Support NDP-Liberal Cooperation to Form Government if Election Results in Minority

Mulcair (34%) Edges Harper (32%), Trudeau (28%) as Party Leader who would Make Best Prime Minister

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Toronto, ON – If the Federal Election of October 19th results in a minority government, a majority (63%) of voters would ‘support’ (30% strongly/33% somewhat) ‘the Liberals and NDP cooperating together to form a government to prevent the Conservatives from governing again’, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News. Conversely, just 36% of voters ‘opposes’ (21% strongly/15% somewhat) such an arrangement. Support for cooperation is very strong among both NDP (86%) and Liberal (84%) voters.

Since the merger of the Progressive Conservatives with the Canadian Alliance Party, the Conservatives have been the beneficiary of a united right juxtaposed against a fragmented left. With no party clearly emerging as a front-runner in the election campaign so far, the likelihood of a minority government is high. Some form of cooperation between the Liberals and the NDP may end up being the only way to defeat the Conservatives, although there has been a general avoidance of the word “coalition” to date.

During the previous federal campaign in April 2011, Canadians were evenly split on whether they preferred a coalition between the NDP and Liberals (46%) or a Harper majority

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government (46%), while 8% at the time didn't know which they'd prefer. It appears that attitudes have changed since then.

Given that the NDP presently has more vote support than the Liberals, it's likely that Thomas Mulcair would be the central figure in such a relationship, and many voters believe he's ready for the top job. In fact, thinking about which of the major party leaders would make the best Prime Minister, Thomas Mulcair (34%) edges Stephen Harper (32%) and Justin Trudeau (28%), while 6% don't know which of these leaders would make the best Prime Minister. In April of 2015, a similar Ipsos poll had Stephen Harper (38%) well ahead of both Mulcair (31%) and Trudeau (30%), suggesting that Harper's lost his luster, while Mulcair is beginning to shine.

The Harper Conundrum...

Despite the fact that vote support for the Harper Conservatives appears stalled in the low 30s with dubious prospects for growth, four in ten (41%) voters continue to 'approve' (11% strongly/30% somewhat) of the performance of the Conservative government under Stephen Harper. While this is down 3 points since the end of July, if everybody who approved of his government voted for the Conservatives, the Tories would cruise to victory. On the other hand, six in ten (58%) 'disapprove' (34% strongly/24% somewhat) of its performance, and 1% doesn't know.

Where the Harper Tories perform even better is on their management of the Canadian economy, which is the central issue of the campaign. Half (48%) 'approve' (10% strongly/38% somewhat), while the other half (51%) 'disapprove' (21% strongly/30% somewhat), and 1% doesn't know.

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Despite relatively high approval ratings for a government that has been in power for nearly a decade, the desire for change appears to be the strongest sentiment of them all: 67% of voters think it's time for another party to take over, compared to 31% who believe the government deserves to be re-elected. Moreover, a majority (56%) 'disagrees' (36% strongly/20% somewhat) with the notion that 'Stephen Harper and the Conservatives are best to deliver proven leadership for a strong Canada' (their campaign slogan), compared to a minority (43%) that 'agrees' (19% strongly/24% somewhat) with this sentiment, and 1% that doesn't know.

NDP Seen as Change Agent over the Liberals...

With such a strong desire for change, it remains to be seen whether this sentiment will consolidate around one of the opposition parties, or whether the change vote will remain split. The data reveal that the NDP is seen as the preferred change agent over the Liberals:

- Six in ten (62%) voters 'agree' (24% strongly/38% somewhat) that '**Tom Mulcair and the NDP** are the most ready to deliver change to Canada if elected on October 19th', while four in ten (36%) 'disagree' (17% strongly/19% somewhat). Two percent (2%) don't know.
- In comparison, voters are evenly split on whether they 'agree' (49% total - 16% strongly/32% somewhat) or 'disagree' (50% total - 25% strongly/25% somewhat) that '**Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party** are the best to deliver real change to Canada if elected on October 19th'. Two percent (2%) don't know.



These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between August 7 and 10, 2015 on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 2,022 Canadians eligible to vote was interviewed: 1,022 were interviewed online via the Ipsos I-Say Panel, and 1,000 interviews were conducted by live-interviewer telephone (including 40% of interviews conducted on cellphone). Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all eligible voters been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

***Darrell Bricker, PhD
CEO
Ipsos Global Public Affairs
(416) 324-2001***

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2015 Federal Vote Support
August 11, 2015, percentage of decided voters

