

CANADIANS APPROVE OF FEDS APPROACH TO H1N1/SWINE FLU

LIBS HAVE NARROW EDGE IN CLOSE NATIONAL RACE

[Ottawa – July 30, 2009] – A majority of Canadians approve the job the Harper government is doing to deal with the H1N1 virus, also called the swine flu. While media stories have ebbed and flowed about the seriousness of the pandemic, both currently and in the future, a majority of Canadians are content that the federal government is adequately prepared.

It is worth noting, however, that younger people, who are most vulnerable to the H1N1 virus, are also the least supportive of the government's approach so far.

"The swine flu issue is reflective of the broader problem the opposition parties have, particularly the Liberals," said EKOS President Frank Graves.

"While there is no affection or enthusiasm for the Harper government outside of its core base, there is also no burning sense of dissatisfaction. Many Canadians who say they intend to vote for other parties nonetheless give general approval to the direction of the government and, as we can see with the swine flu, also of its handling of particular issues of public concern."

This week's survey of vote intention shows the Liberals enjoying a narrow lead nationally. Since parliament rose in June, the two main parties have essentially been neck-and-neck. The Liberals may take some satisfaction in having resisted the common trend of governments improving their standing during the summer when they do not face the daily gauntlet of question period. However, the Liberals have not returned to the levels of support they enjoyed in the spring. Moreover, their lead in the crucial battleground of Ontario remains precarious.

"The Tories would probably narrowly lose an election if it were held right now," said Graves. "But the voters don't see any compelling reason to have an election just to replace a fragile Conservative minority with a fragile Liberal minority."

The gender gap is very large now, with the Tories relying disproportionately on men for their support, and the Liberals on women. There is also a striking education gap between the supporters of the two parties: the Tories enjoy around half the Liberals' support among the university educated. The Conservatives do relatively better among the college-educated.

HIGHLIGHTS

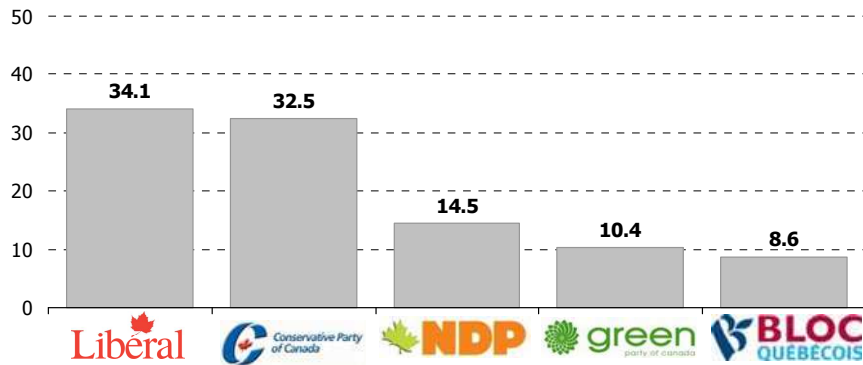
- **National federal vote intention:**
 - **34.1% LPC**
 - **32.5% CPC**
 - **14.5% NDP**
 - **10.4% Green**
 - **8.6% BQ**
- **Gov't handling of H1N1 virus:**
 - **52% approve**
 - **31% disapprove**
 - **17% do not know/refused**

Please note that the methodology is provided at the end of this document.

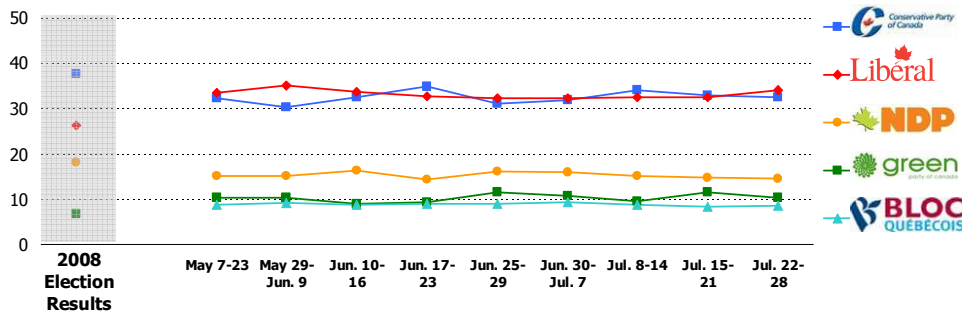
Top Line Results:

Federal vote intention

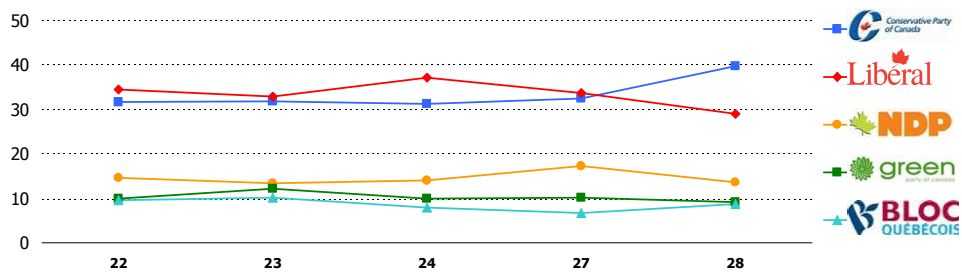
Q. If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?



Weekly tracking of federal vote intention



Weekday tracking of federal vote intention (July 22-28)



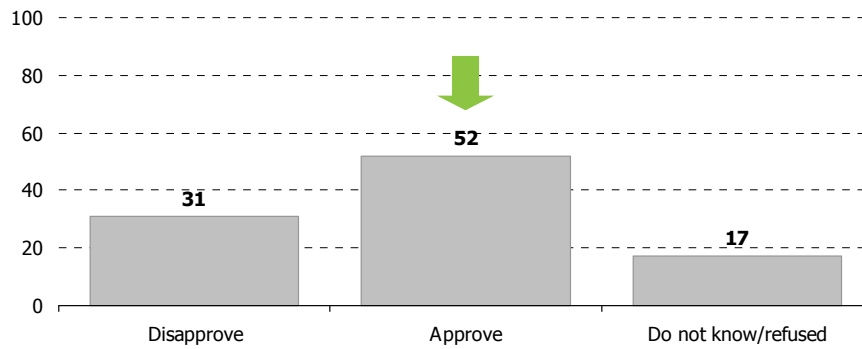
Note: The data on federal vote intention are based on decided voters only. Our survey also finds that 11.3% of Canadians say they are undecided.

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BASE: Decided voters; most recent data points Jul. 22-28 (n=2675)

Government of Canada's handling of the H1N1 virus

Q. There has been a lot of talk lately about the H1N1 virus, also known as swine-flu. How would you rate the Government of Canada's handling of this issue? Would you say you...



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BASE: Canadians; Jul. 22-28 (n=3161)

Methodology:

EKOS' weekly tracking polls are conducted using Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) technology, which allows respondents to enter their preferences by punching the keypad on their phone, rather than telling them to an operator.

In an effort to reduce the coverage bias of land-line only RDD, we created a dual land-line/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able reach those with both a land-line and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and land-line only households. This dual frame yields a near perfect unweighted distribution on age group and gender, something almost never seen with traditional land-line RDD sample or interviewer administered surveys.

The field dates for this survey are the July 22-28, 2009.¹ In total, a random sample of 3,161 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 2,675 decided voters). The margin of error associated with total sample is +/- 1.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Please note that the margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as region, sex, age, income). All the data have been statistically weighted to ensure the samples composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.

¹ Please note that these dates are not inclusive of the weekends as we do not survey on Saturday or Sunday.