

FEDERAL POLITICAL ISSUES

Health Care, Economy, Environment and Poverty Will Define Next Federal Election

Governing Conservatives seen as more capable of handling the economy, but Liberals hold the upper hand on the environment.

[VANCOUVER – Aug. 30, 2008] – Many Canadians claim that four issues will be very important as they ponder their choices in the next federal election, a new *Toronto Star* / Angus Reid poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, 79 per cent of respondents cited health care as a "Very Important" issue when they decide which party to vote for in the next federal election.

The economy was second on the list with 75 per cent, followed by the environment with 61 per cent, and poverty with 53 per cent.

Five other issues did not reach the 50 per cent mark in the "Very Important" category: the War in Afghanistan (39%), the fiscal imbalance (37%), funding and infrastructure for cities (35%), child care (32%) and Canada-U.S. relations (30%).

The survey also reviewed which of the two main federal parties has the confidence of Canadians to deal with each of these nine electoral issues. The Tories hold the upper hand on Canada-U.S. relations (39% to 20%), the economy (37% to 21%), the fiscal imbalance (34% to 17%), funding and infrastructure for cities (31% to 21%) and the war in Afghanistan (31% to 19%).

The Grits are seen as more confident to deal with child care (27% to 22%), poverty (26% to 18%) and the environment (32% to 22%). Health care was a toss-up, with 28 per cent of respondents picking the Liberals, and 26 per cent selecting the Conservatives.

KEY FINDINGS

- **"Very Important" Electoral Issues for Canadians: Health Care 79%, Economy 75%, Environment 61%, Poverty 53%, War in Afghanistan 39%, Fiscal Imbalance 37%, Funding and infrastructure for cities 35%, Child care 32%, Canada-U.S. relations 30%.**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From August 27 to August 28, 2008 Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,012 adult Canadians. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 3.1 %, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding

Federal Political Issues

Below is a list of nine issues. Please tell us whether each of these issues will be very important, moderately important, not too important, or not important at all when you decide which party to support in the next federal election.

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Not too important	Not important at all
The economy	79%	18%	1%	0%
Health care	78%	18%	3%	0%
The environment	60%	29%	7%	2%
Poverty	53%	32%	10%	2%
War in Afghanistan	42%	33%	14%	8%
Fiscal Imbalance	38%	42%	14%	2%
Funding and infrastructure for cities	35%	47%	14%	2%
Child care	35%	33%	19%	11%
Canada-U.S. Relations	30%	43%	19%	3%

Federal Political Issues

Which of the two main federal parties do you have more confidence in to handle each of the following issues?

	Conservative Party	Liberal Party	New Democratic Party	None of these / Not sure
Canada-U.S. Relations	40%	16%	8%	36%
The economy	36%	19%	9%	35%
Fiscal Imbalance	32%	15%	8%	44%
Funding and infrastructure for cities	26%	18%	11%	45%
War in Afghanistan	33%	18%	11%	39%
Health care	26%	20%	21%	34%
Child care	23%	16%	24%	37%
The environment	19%	24%	21%	36%
Poverty	19%	13%	30%	39%

Angus Reid Strategies is a full-service polling and market research firm which is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995.

Angus Reid Strategies, along with its sister company, Vision Critical, is now the largest Canadian-owned market research enterprise. In addition to its four offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices San Francisco, New York and London, England. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.

Over the last year, Angus Reid has covered five elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes. <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=194>

More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF.WP.pdf>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
www.angusreidstrategies.com**