

2008 FEDERAL ELECTION

Half of Canadians Were Decided Before Federal Campaign Began

Two-in-five Liberal, NDP and Green voters had made up their minds before the writ was dropped; Tories and Bloc voters more certain.

[CALGARY – Oct. 28, 2008] – Many Canadian voters knew which federal political party they would back in this month's federal election before the writ was dropped, and Liberal Party supporters were clearly not enthused by their leader, a new Angus Reid poll has found.

In the online survey of 908 Canadian adults who voted in the 2008 federal election, 54 per cent of respondents claim they decided which party to vote for before the campaign began, including 70 per cent of Conservatives and 62 per cent of Bloc Québécois supporters.

Only 15 per cent of respondents chose a party on election day, including 20 per cent of New Democratic Party (NDP) voters and 30 per cent of those who cast a ballot for the Green Party.

Roughly half of respondents to this survey (49%) say they voted equally for the party and its leader, while one third (34%) say they supported the party more than its leader.

Two-in-five Liberal Party backers (62%) say they voted more for the party than for its leader, compared to less than 40 per cent for each of the remaining parties.

In the final weeks of the campaign, the discussions about "strategic voting" intensified as a possible way to boost the number of Liberal and NDP lawmakers in the House of Commons, and to facilitate the election of at least one Green MP. Only 12 per cent of respondents say they voted for a candidate that

KEY FINDINGS

- **54% of Canadian voters decided who to support before the campaign began; 15% made up their minds on election day**
- **49% voted equally for the party and its leader**
- **12% voted strategically—choosing a candidate that had the best chance of winning in their riding, instead of the candidate and/or party they actually liked**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From October 16 to October 17, 2008 Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of **908 Canadian adults** who voted in the 2008 federal election. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- **3.2%**, **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.*

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had the best chance of winning in their riding, instead of the candidate and/or party they actually liked, while 85 per cent say they voted for the candidate and/or party they liked, whether they had a chance to win or not. Respondents who backed the Liberals (19%) and the Bloc (18%) were more likely to partake in "strategic voting".

Overall, Canadian voters report a positive experience at the polling stations, with more than 90 per cent expressing satisfaction with both the amount of time it took them to cast their ballot once they arrived, and the way they were treated by volunteers.

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2008 Federal Election						
When did you decide which party to vote for?						
	Party supported in the 2008 federal election					
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Grn
On election day	15%	10%	17%	20%	10%	30%
After the leaders debates	12%	6%	18%	15%	9%	15%
Before the leaders debates	15%	12%	15%	21%	18%	12%
Before the campaign began	54%	70%	39%	40%	62%	41%
Not sure	4%	2%	10%	4%	0%	2%

2008 Federal Election						
Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?						
	Party supported in the 2008 federal election					
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Grn
I voted for the party more than for the leader	34%	26%	62%	25%	18%	37%
I voted for the leader more than for the party	13%	17%	6%	19%	3%	10%
I voted equally for the party and its leader	49%	54%	28%	51%	77%	36%
Not sure	5%	3%	4%	5%	2%	17%

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2008 Federal Election						
Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?						
	Party supported in the 2008 federal election					
	Total	Con.	Lib.	NDP	BQ	Grn.
I voted strategically—I voted for a candidate that had the best chance of winning in my riding, instead of the candidate and/or party I actually liked	12%	8%	19%	12%	18%	1%
I did not vote strategically—I voted for the candidate and/or party I liked, whether they had a chance to win or not	85%	87%	76%	86%	81%	97%
Not sure	4%	4%	5%	3%	2%	1%

2008 Federal Election			
Thinking about your experience on election day, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following...?			
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Not sure
The amount of time it took you to cast your ballot once you arrived at the polling station	92%	8%	0%
The way you were treated by volunteers at your polling station	93%	7%	0%

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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 five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. 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.

Angus Reid Strategies, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=349>

Since 2006, Angus Reid Strategies has covered five provincial 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**

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