

BATTLEGROUND ONTARIO

AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF ONTARIO'S FEDERAL POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

- **In Seat-Rich Ontario, Martin's Liberals (43%) Hold 12-Point Lead over Harper's Conservatives (31%) – NDP (19%) & Others (6%) Trail**
- **As Confidence Vote Looms, Governing Grits have Almost Identical Support among Ontarians as in 2004 Election, and Lead Tories in GTA 905 Belt (+23), Toronto (+21), North (+17), and Southwest (+7) – With Tie in East, Opposition Conservatives only Lead in Hamilton-Niagara (+5)**
- **Moreover, Martin Leads Harper as Best PM (37% vs. 23%), and Best PM for National Unity (40% vs. 17%) & stable/productive government (38% vs. 24%) – And, All Three Leaders are Tied on who is Best at Eliminating Corruption**
- **But 46% say they could switch vote choice during campaign, and Tory voters (36%) are less likely to switch than Liberal (48%) or NDP (54%) voters**
- **Only 22% of Ontarians want a June Election**
 - **Whereas 38% Want to Wait for Gomery Report, and 31% "Do Not Want an Election at Anytime in the Foreseeable Future"**

From May 3 to 9, 2005, Leger Marketing – the Canadian representative of the Gallup International Association – conducted telephone interviews among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,000 adult Ontarians. The margin of error for the total sample is $\pm 3.1\%$, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current regional, gender, and age Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of the province. The Decided Voters sample (n=791) has an associated margin of error of $\pm 3.5\%$, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies between totals due to rounding.

Founded in 1986, Leger Marketing is the largest independent full-service research firm in Canada, with more than 350 employees spread over its offices in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Quebec City, New York City, and Shanghai. Leger conducts quantitative and qualitative research on behalf of an extensive array of public and private sector clients on a local, national, and global scale. Leger is the Canadian representative of the Gallup International Association, and is the polling Agency of Record for Sun Media, Marketing Magazine, and the Canadian Press news service.



Federal Vote Intentions in Ontario: 2004 Election Comparison

- Representing more than a third (34%), 106 of Canada’s 308 Parliamentary Seats are in Ontario. Given current electoral consolidations and shifts, and the fact that 74 – or 56% – of the governing Liberals’ current 132 seats are in Ontario, this province will prove to be the crucial battleground in the next Federal Election campaign. Thus, Leger Marketing has conducted an extensive survey among a robust sample of 1,000 Ontarians about the federal political landscape.
- One of the most notable findings in this study is that current voting intentions in Ontario are almost identical to the final 2004 Federal Election results in the province. Last year, the Liberals won 75 seats with 45% of the vote, the Conservatives won 24 seats with 31% of the vote, and the NDP won 7 seats with 18% of the vote. At the moment, the Liberals (43%) hold a 12-point lead over the Tories (31%), with the NDP (19%) and Other Parties (6%) trailing.
- Regionally, the Grits lead in the GTA 905 Belt (+23), Toronto (+21), North (+17), and SouthWest (+7). With a tie in the East, the Opposition Conservatives only lead in Hamilton-Niagara (+5).

Federal Vote Intentions in Ontario: Decided Voters							
Q1a. As you may know, there is a possibility that there might be a federal election in June. If a federal election is held in June, which political party would you vote for? Would it be ...? Q1b. Even if you have not made up your mind yet, which party are you most likely to vote for? Total Sample: N=1,000. Undecided Voters = 14%. Abstain/Spoil Ballot = 2%. Refuse to Say = 5%. Decided Voters Sample (n=791) = Decided Voters (Q1A) + Leaners (Q1B).							
	ONTARIO	Toronto	GTA 905 Belt (Suburbs)	Hamilton-Niagara	Southwest	East	North
Liberals	43%	46%	54%	34%	39%	37%	44%
Conservatives	31%	25%	31%	39%	32%	37%	27%
NDP	19%	22%	11%	22%	23%	15%	26%
Some Other Party	6%	8%	4%	5%	6%	10%	2%

*Regional Quotas (before weighting): Toronto (n=250; ±6.2%), GTA 905 Belt (n=250; ±6.2%), Hamilton-Niagara (n=135; ±8.4%), Southwest (n=135; ±8.4%), East (n=135; ±8.4%), and North (n=95; ±10.1%)

*Regional Segments (before weighting) of Decided Voters: Toronto (n=200; ±6.9%), 905 Belt (n=209; ±6.8%), Hamilton-Niagara (n=101; ±9.8%), Southwest (n=107; ±9.5%), East (n=104; ±9.6%), and North (n=70; ±11.7%)

*GTA 905 Belt (Suburbs) is comprised of the Regions of Halton, Peel, York and Durham.

Certainty of Vote Choice

- When asked “And, is your mind definitely made up about voting for this party, or could you change your mind during an election campaign?”, more than half (54%) of Ontarians indicate that their mind is “definitely made up” about their current voting intent, compared to 46% who say that they “could change their mind during an election campaign”. (Q2)
 - **Important Note:** Among Decided Voters, Conservative supporters (64%) are noticeably more likely to be certain about their current vote choice than those supporting the Liberals (52%) and NDP (46%).

Voting Pools: Analysing Second Choices

- As illustrated in the table below, the main rivals for the Liberals in Ontario are the NDP. The NDP represent the best opportunity for Liberal gains, as 56% of NDP supporters regard the Grits as their second choice. Although the NDP voting pool is the smallest and the Liberals are also the leading second choice of Conservative supporters (44%), it should be noted that Tory voters are much more certain about their current vote choice than those supporting the NDP. Moreover, if Liberal supporters were to stray from the brand, more than half (57%) would “switch” to the NDP – compared to a third (32%) who would vote Conservative.
- The main rivals for the Conservatives are the Liberals – the party with the largest pool of supporters. The opportunity for gains among current Liberal supporters (32%) is almost double that among the NDP (17%). Thus, with the Liberals representing the primary target for both opposing parties, they face a campaign where they will have to defend attacks from two fronts.

Second Vote Choice among Decided Voters (with a Second Choice)			
Q3. And if, for some reason, you could not support this party, which party would you then be most likely to support?			
Second Choice	Decided Liberal Voters	Decided Conservative Voters	Decided NDP Voters
Liberals		44%	56%
Conservatives	32%		17%
NDP	57%	30%	
Some Other Party	11%	26%	27%



Leadership Preferences

- Among Ontarians, Paul Martin (37%) holds a 14-point lead over Stephen Harper (23%) in terms of who they think would be “the best Prime Minister of Canada”. Jack Layton trails with 13%.
- When Ontarians consider who would be “the best at maintaining national unity, in the face of rising separatism in Quebec”, Martin (40%) posts a commanding 23-point lead over Harper (17%). Layton trails with 11%.
- Martin (38%) enjoys another 14-point lead over Harper (24%) in terms of who Ontarians think would be “the best at providing stable and productive government”. Layton trails with 10%.
- Perhaps most notably, all three leaders are in a statistical tie in terms of who Ontarians think would be “the best at eliminating corruption in the federal government” – with Harper (23%) holding a slight edge over Martin (20%) and Layton (20%).

Best Prime Minister: Overall, National Unity, Stability, & Eliminating Corruption				
Q4. Forgetting for a moment which party you may be supporting... Which one of these three party leaders do you think would be ... [Option A always asked first. Order of Options B, C, & D randomized.]				
	A. Best PM of Canada	B. Best at Maintaining National Unity	C. Best at Providing Stable & Productive Government	D. Best at Eliminating Corruption
Paul Martin	37%	40%	38%	20%
Stephen Harper	23%	17%	24%	23%
Jack Layton	13%	11%	10%	20%
None (Volunteered)	14%	10%	12%	17%
Don't Know/Refused	13%	21%	16%	19%



Only 22% of Ontarians Want a June Election

- **Almost Seven-in-Ten (69%) do not want a federal election in June, with 38% preferring to wait until the release of the Gomery Commission Report and – notably – 31% who “do not want a federal election to be called at any time in the foreseeable future”.**

Election Demand/Timing							
<p>Q5. And, thinking about how you feel right now, which of the following three viewpoints best represents when you most prefer to have the next federal election? Is it ... [Order of first two options randomized. Last option always asked last]</p> <p>I want a federal election to be held in June. I want a federal election to be held soon after the Gomery Commission Report is released this Fall I do NOT want a federal election to be called at any time in the foreseeable future</p>							
	ONTARIO	Toronto	905 Belt (Suburbs)	Hamilton-Niagara	Southwest	East	North
June	22%	18%	19%	25%	23%	29%	19%
After Gomery Report	38%	39%	41%	41%	35%	35%	42%
Do <u>Not</u> Want Election	31%	37%	30%	24%	29%	27%	34%
Don't Know/Refused	9%	6%	10%	10%	12%	9%	5%

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