



FEDERAL ELECTION 2006 : POST-DEBATE POLL

- *Grits lead by 8 as voting intentions barely move after debates*
- *73% of Canadians say they don't want to discuss politics at Holiday gatherings*
- *Two out of three support a full stop on campaign activities between X-mas and New Year's*

UNDER EMBARGO
RELEASE DAY AND TIME : DECEMBER 22, 6:00 PM EST

DETAILED REPORT

Methodology

This Leger Marketing survey was conducted with **1500** adult Canadians between December 17 and December 21, 2005. A sample of this size yields a maximum margin of error of $\pm 3.1\%$, 19 times out of 20. The data presented here were weighted by age, gender, region and language according to the latest Statistics Canada information.

Founded in 1986, Leger Marketing is the largest independent full-service research firm in Canada, with more than 500 employees spread over its Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Quebec City, New York City and Philadelphia offices. Leger conducts quantitative and qualitative research on behalf of an extensive array of public and private sector clients on a local, national and global level. Leger is the Canadian representative of the Gallup International Association.

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1. Grits Maintain 8 Point Lead Into Week Four of the Campaign

According to this Leger Marketing survey completed between December 17 to December 21, the Liberal Party of Canada (36%) holds an 8 point lead over the Conservative Party (28%), while the NDP is third in voting intentions at 17%, the Bloc Québécois 12% and the Green Party of Canada 5%. In the most contested regions, the Liberals hold on to a 12 point lead in Ontario, while the survey confirms tight three way races in the Prairies and in BC. With the Bloc at 50% and the Liberals at 31%, Quebec numbers remain largely unchanged (See table 1)

These national numbers show that vote intent is fairly stable since the start of the campaign as national figures for both the Liberals and Conservatives have only moved 1 point since our December 15 survey (pre-debate). (See Graph 1 – next page)

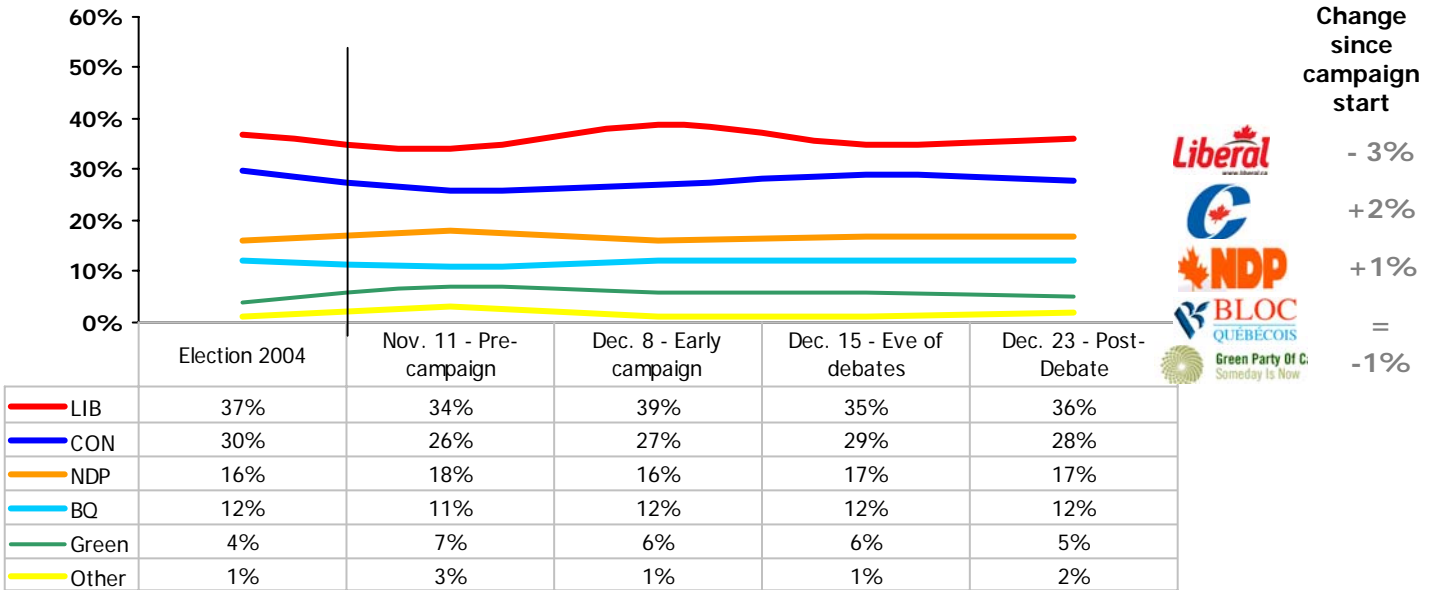
Table 1 – FEDERAL VOTING INTENTIONS

Question: If federal elections were held today, for which of results the following political parties would you be most likely to vote for? Would it be for...? (If the respondent did not have an opinion the following question was asked): Even if you have not yet made up your mind, which political party would you be most likely to vote for?

	Before Distribution n=1500	After Distribution n=1210	AP n=91	QC n=291	ONT n=461	PR n=80	AB n=119	BC n=169
	29%	36%	40%	31%	43%	35%	23%	34%
	23%	28%	32%	7%	31%	27%	54%	32%
	13%	17%	24%	10%	17%	25%	11%	24%
	10%	12%	-	50%	-	-	-	-
	4%	5%	2%	0%	6%	13%	10%	5%
Other	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	5%
Abstain/Spoil ballot	4%							
Don't know	12%							
Refusal	3%							

- Distribution of undecided is proportional.

Graph 1: Evolution of Voting Intentions in Canada
November 11 - December 23 2005



2. One Third Could Still Change Their Minds!

In total, one third of Canadian voters (33%) said they could still change their minds between today and January 23, showing that the vote has not gelled yet. It is in the Prairies (37%), Atlantic Canada (37%) and Ontario (34%) where volatility is highest, while the vote is much more stable in Quebec (21% could change their vote). It should be noted that current Bloc (12%) and Conservative (24%) voters are the ones least likely to change their vote, indicating that these two parties enjoy a base that remains more firm. Conversely, NDP supporters (35%) and Green Party supporters (44%) are the ones where the probability of switching their allegiance is highest. (See Table 2)

When asked who they would support if they changed their minds, in other words what is their second choice, 22% of potential switchers would opt for the Liberals, while another 16% choose the Conservatives as their number two. When looking at net vote change (voting intentions + potential switchers and – potential leavers), voting intentions are left unchanged, except for a 1 point loss for the Liberals. In other words, potential vote change figures indicate that current volatility in voting intentions could be the advantage of one party over another.

Table 2 – VOTE CHANGE

Question: *Is it possible that you could still change your mind when it comes to the party you will support in the January 23 election? Is it ...?*

(n=1500)	Total	Region						Voting intention				
		AP	QC	ON	PR	AB	BC	Lib	CP	Bloc	NDP	GP
Possible change	33%	37%	21%	34%	37%	25%	33%	29%	24%	12%	35%	44%
Change not likely	62%	53%	73%	58%	56%	66%	60%	67%	72%	75%	63%	51%
Don't know/Refusal	8%	7%	6%	8%	8%	9%	7%	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%

Table 3 – NET VOTE CHANGE¹

Question: *And who would then be your second choice?*

(n=455)	Total	Second choice						Net Vote Change	
		Lib	Cons	NDP	Bloc	GP	Ot	Voting intentions	After Potential Vote Change
Liberal	22%	-	51%	58%	35%	19%	18%	36%	35%
Conservatives	16%	35%	-	15%	23%	25%	7%	28%	28%
NDP	17%	33%	24%	-	16%	30%	9%	17%	17%
Bloc	3%	4%	4%	11%	-	0%	0%	12%	12%
Green	5%	9%	5%	9%	0%	-	18%	5%	5%
Other	3%	2%	3%	1%	11%	0%	-	3%	3%
Don't know	34%	15%	12%	5%	8%	26%	38%	-	-
Other	3%	16%	22%	27%	27%	25%	29%	3%	3%

¹ Net vote change : This variable takes original voting intentions taking out those who could change their vote and who indicated who would be their second choice. Those who said they could change their vote yet did not name a second choice were included as staying with their original selection.

3. Campaign at Your Own Risk! Canadians Are Asking for a Break

When asked if they were looking forward to political discussions during Holiday gatherings, 73% of Canadians reacted fairly negatively. It is in Quebec where voters wish to avoid politics the most (80%). In essence, three quarters of Canadians hope to have a politics free Holiday.

Furthermore, over two thirds of Canadians (68%) also wish that party leaders completely stop campaigning between Christmas and New Year's. This suggests that trying to appeal to voters on Boxing Day would likely backfire. (Table 4 and Table 5)

As Jean-Marc Léger, President and CEO of Leger Marketing puts it: *"Warning to politicians! Canadians do not want to see you or hear from you during the Holidays. I caution any leader who will opt to go against the will of the people on this one. Canadians could decide to punish the culprit without appeal."*

Table 4 – DISCUSSING POLITICS AT FAMILY HOLIDAY GATHERINGS
Question: *Are you looking forward to discussing politics during Holiday gatherings?*

(n=1500)	Region						
	Total	AP	QC	ON	PR	AB	BC
Yes	24%	22%	19%	29%	20%	27%	22%
No	73%	75%	80%	68%	78%	72%	76%
Don't know/Refusal	2%	4%	1%	4%	2%	1%	3%

Table 5 – HONORING A HOLIDAY BREAK IN THE CAMPAIGN
Question: *In your view, should federal party leaders completely stop campaigning between Christmas and New Year's?*

(n=1500)	Region						
	Total	AP	QC	ON	PR	AB	BC
Yes, stop campaign	68%	69%	81%	64%	71%	54%	67%
No, continue campaign	20%	23%	13%	25%	15%	24%	19%
Don't know/Refusal	11%	8%	7%	11%	14%	22%	13%

