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Party Leaders are People Too

By Bruce Anderson & David Coletto

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Our latest nationwide study of political opinion included some questions that were intended to explore what underlying perceptions Canadians have about the traits and talents of the three main party leaders. We posed a series of 16 different questions, and asked respondents to indicate which of the three leaders was most closely matched to the descriptor. Respondents received a random set of 8 scenarios.

Highlights

Stephen Harper was first choice on 5 of 16 items. The plurality picked him as the leader best suited:

- To be the CEO of a large company (47%)
- To give you advice about how to invest your money (46%)
- To give you advice about your career (41%)
- To give advice to your children about their future (37%)
- To have negotiate a contract on your behalf (38%)

Mr. Harper's weaker associations were these:

- Most like to vacation with (24%)
- Most able to survive in the wilderness (24%)
- Most likely to stop and help if your car was stranded (22%)
- Trust to choose a good movie to watch (21%)

Thomas Mulcair was first choice on 1 of 16 items. The plurality picked him as best suited:

• To lend you \$100 if you needed it (38%)

However he also finished close second on the following items, (in each case to Mr. Harper):

- To have negotiate a contract on your behalf (35%)
- To give you advice about your career (36%)
- To give advice to your children about their future (33%)

Mr. Mulcair's weaker associations were these:

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- Prefer to have babysit your kids for an evening (28%)
- Most like to have over for dinner with your family (25%)
- Most want to hear sing your favourite song (23%)
- Most like to go on vacation with (21%)

Justin Trudeau was first choice on 10 of 16 items, coming out on top on these items:

- Most like to vacation with (55%)
- Trust to choose a good movie to watch (53%)
- Most want to hear sing your favourite song (47%)
- Prefer to have babysit your kids (44%)
- Most like to have over for dinner with your family (43%)
- Most able to survive in the wilderness (42%)
- Cook the best meal (41%)
- Most like to have speak at an event in your neighborhood (41%)
- Most likely to stop and help if your car was stranded (40%)
- Trust to look after your pet (40%)

Mr. Trudeau's weaker associations were these:

- To have negotiate a contract on your behalf (26%)
- To give you advice about how to invest your money (24%)
- To give you advice about your career (24%)
- To be the CEO of a large company (23%)

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Which leader	Harper	Mulcair	Trudeau
Prefer to have negotiate a contract on your behalf	38%	35%	26%
Most like to have over for dinner with your family	32%	25%	43%
Most like to go on a vacation with	24%	21%	55%
Want to speak at an event in your neighbourhood	30%	29%	41%
Prefer to have babysit your children for an evening	28%	28%	44%
Most want to hear sing your favorite song	30%	23%	47%
Most likely to lend you \$100 if you needed it	25%	38%	36%
Most likely stop and help if your car was stranded	22%	38%	40%
Be most able to figure out how to survive in the wilderness	24%	34%	42%
Cook the best meal	27%	31%	41%
Choose the best movie to watch	21%	26%	53%
You trust to look after your pet	29%	30%	40%
Give you the best advice about your career	41%	36%	24%
Have the best ideas about how to invest your money	46%	30%	24%
Trust the most to give your children advice about their future	37%	33%	30%
Make the best CEO of a large company	47%	30%	23%

Q: Which of these three federal party leaders would...

The Upshot

According to Abacus Chairman Bruce Anderson:

These numbers paint a more detailed picture of the competition among these leaders, illuminating some of their strengths and the challenges they must seek to overcome. Mr. Harper is seen as a solid choice when it comes to the some key attributes that people look for when it comes to leadership, especially financial and management skills. At the same time, he is seen as less approachable and compassionate than his rivals.

For Mr. Mulcair the result indicate that people tend to see him as compassionate and competent, themes that he has been at pains to draw out since becoming leader of the NDP. However he is also seen as somewhat less approachable than Mr. Trudeau and not on a par with Mr. Harper in terms of CEO skills and financial judgment.

For Justin Trudeau, the results underscore the popular chord he has struck, and many Canadians sense he would be able to empathize with them and be enjoyable company. These are traits many politicians aspire to, and few achieve to this level. At the same time, Mr. Trudeau finds some hesitation on the part of voters. When it comes to his ability to manage a large organization, make sound financial decisions,

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negotiate on behalf of others, these data suggest he is well liked, but that he has work to do to strengthen confidence that he is a better choice across the board

We intend to revisit these traits over time, including measuring the impact of advertising on the perceptions of these leaders' strengths and weaknesses.

Methodology

Our survey was conducted online with 1,005 Canadians aged 18 and over from January 26 to January 28, 2015. A random sample of panelists was invited to complete the survey from a large representative panel of Canadians, recruited and managed by Research Now, one of the world's leading provider of online research samples.

The Marketing Research and Intelligence Association policy limits statements about margins of sampling error for most online surveys. The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Canada's population according to age, gender, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

We offer global research capacity with a strong focus on customer service, attention to detail and value added insight. Our team combines the experience of our Chairman Bruce Anderson, one of Canada's leading research executives for two decades, with the energy, creativity and research expertise of CEO David Coletto, PhD. For more information, visit our website at http://www.abacusdata.ca/

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Prefer to have negotiate a contract on your behalf

Sample size: 515 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	38%	35%	26%	515	513
	BC	39%	32%	30%	74	67
	AB	64%	22%	14%	57	53
Region	SK/MB	43%	41%	16%	49	34
	ON	40%	31%	29%	159	200
	QC	26%	48%	26%	110	119
	ATL	31%	34%	35%	66	40
Gender	Male	42%	35%	23%	239	234
Gender	Female	35%	36%	29%	276	279
	18 - 29	36%	30%	35%	116	111
Age	30 - 44	42%	38%	21%	132	142
group	45 - 59	36%	37%	27%	145	146
	60 and over	40%	35%	25%	122	114
	Conservative Party	70%	22%	8%	124	111
	Liberal Party	17%	38%	45%	68	63
2011	NDP	20%	55%	25%	92	89
Vote	Green Party	23%	42%	35%	20	22
	Another party	18%	58%	24%	19	17
	l can't remember	57%	0%	43%	4	5

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Most like to have over for dinner with your family

Sample size: 513 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	32%	25%	43%	513	516
	BC	36%	24%	40%	69	62
	AB	56%	10%	34%	65	62
Region	SK/MB	34%	15%	51%	54	39
	ON	29%	25%	46%	157	192
	QC	25%	39%	37%	121	131
	ATL	17%	15%	68%	47	30
Gender	Male	34%	27%	39%	251	251
Gender	Female	30%	24%	47%	262	265
	18 - 29	32%	26%	43%	101	103
Age	30 - 44	33%	35%	33%	132	142
group	45 - 59	27%	22%	50%	161	158
	60 and over	38%	16%	46%	119	113
	Conservative Party	65%	10%	25%	143	130
	Liberal Party	12%	15%	73%	70	63
2011	NDP	6%	56%	38%	95	90
Vote	Green Party	19%	21%	60%	20	21
	Another party	11%	52%	37%	17	17
	l can't remember	31%	0%	69%	4	4

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Most like to go on a vacation with

Sample size: 481 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	24%	21%	55%	481	472
	BC	33%	26%	41%	71	63
	AB	42%	14%	43%	63	58
Region	SK/MB	30%	10%	60%	52	36
	ON	24%	13%	63%	147	180
	QC	5%	37%	58%	97	103
	ATL	26%	22%	51%	51	32
Gender	Male	25%	23%	52%	237	227
Gender	Female	23%	19%	59%	244	244
	18 - 29	16%	28%	56%	91	90
Age	30 - 44	19%	26%	55%	109	120
group	45 - 59	25%	14%	61%	151	139
	60 and over	34%	18%	48%	130	124
	Conservative Party	46%	11%	43%	134	122
	Liberal Party	4%	9%	87%	67	63
2011	NDP	3%	48%	49%	88	80
Vote	Green Party	29%	38%	33%	12	12
	Another party	6%	57%	37%	14	12
	l can't remember	47%	29%	24%	3	2

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Want to speak at an event in your neighborhood

Sample size: 520 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

	Row %	Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	30%	29%	41%	520	501
	BC	35%	24%	41%	88	78
	AB	50%	21%	29%	60	57
Region	SK/MB	39%	16%	45%	52	36
	ON	32%	24%	44%	156	186
	QC	16%	50%	34%	106	109
	ATL	12%	21%	67%	58	35
C III	Male	31%	27%	42%	256	246
Gender	Female	29%	30%	41%	264	255
	18 - 29	29%	37%	33%	117	107
Age	30 - 44	30%	32%	38%	120	125
group	45 - 59	31%	26%	43%	150	138
	60 and over	30%	21%	49%	133	130
	Conservative Party	58%	13%	29%	133	118
	Liberal Party	12%	10%	78%	77	64
2011	NDP	10%	56%	34%	90	85
Vote	Green Party	18%	40%	42%	22	24
	Another party	2%	51%	47%	24	22
	l can't remember	51%	0%	49%	4	3

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Prefer to have babysit your children for an evening

Sample size: 515 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	28%	28%	44%	515	518
	BC	30%	21%	48%	73	64
	AB	51%	22%	27%	59	57
Region	SK/MB	39%	8%	52%	52	36
	ON	27%	27%	45%	155	196
	QC	15%	45%	41%	121	131
	ATL	21%	19%	60%	55	34
Gender	Male	28%	33%	39%	244	241
Gender	Female	27%	25%	48%	271	277
	18 - 29	29%	30%	41%	95	93
Age	30 - 44	21%	36%	43%	123	132
group	45 - 59	29%	26%	46%	166	166
	60 and over	31%	23%	45%	131	126
	Conservative Party	55%	16%	29%	139	122
	Liberal Party	13%	25%	63%	73	70
2011	NDP	3%	53%	44%	97	93
Vote	Green Party	14%	45%	41%	24	26
	Another party	6%	14%	81%	18	16
	l can't remember	0%	14%	86%	4	5

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Most want to hear sing your favorite song

Sample size: 507 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

	Row %	Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	30%	23%	47%	507	515
	BC	34%	17%	50%	69	61
	AB	60%	10%	30%	54	51
Region	SK/MB	24%	24%	52%	47	34
	ON	31%	20%	50%	169	215
	QC	21%	37%	42%	109	119
	ATL	17%	20%	63%	59	36
Gender	Male	31%	27%	41%	236	236
Gender	Female	30%	19%	52%	271	280
	18 - 29	15%	36%	49%	94	87
Age	30 - 44	26%	27%	47%	134	150
group	45 - 59	39%	15%	46%	151	151
	60 and over	36%	18%	47%	128	127
	Conservative Party	53%	10%	37%	133	120
	Liberal Party	21%	14%	64%	75	74
2011	NDP	15%	37%	48%	103	99
Vote	Green Party	19%	31%	50%	16	18
	Another party	32%	31%	37%	12	14

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Most likely to lend you \$100 if you needed it

Sample size: 502 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	25%	38%	36%	502	493
	BC	22%	44%	34%	73	60
	AB	46%	24%	30%	57	52
Region	SK/MB	43%	25%	31%	45	31
	ON	22%	36%	42%	159	194
	QC	21%	50%	29%	117	124
	ATL	15%	34%	52%	51	31
Gender	Male	27%	39%	34%	253	240
Gender	Female	24%	38%	38%	249	253
	18 - 29	23%	42%	34%	106	102
Age	30 - 44	25%	46%	29%	117	132
group	45 - 59	24%	31%	45%	161	153
	60 and over	29%	36%	35%	118	106
	Conservative Party	50%	25%	24%	121	105
	Liberal Party	5%	35%	60%	81	76
2011	NDP	6%	70%	24%	86	82
Vote	Green Party	14%	49%	37%	18	20
	Another party	6%	56%	38%	16	14
	l can't remember	15%	28%	57%	5	5

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Most likely stop and help if your car was stranded

Sample size: 508 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	22%	38%	40%	508	499
	BC	28%	30%	42%	72	63
	AB	38%	21%	41%	53	50
Region	SK/MB	31%	23%	47%	51	37
	ON	21%	42%	37%	156	191
	QC	13%	45%	41%	113	121
	ATL	9%	44%	47%	63	37
Gender	Male	21%	40%	39%	245	230
Gender	Female	23%	36%	42%	263	269
	18 - 29	20%	43%	37%	103	100
Age	30 - 44	23%	36%	41%	126	140
group	45 - 59	19%	39%	42%	139	129
	60 and over	24%	36%	41%	140	130
	Conservative Party	44%	31%	24%	133	118
	Liberal Party	3%	37%	60%	71	66
2011	NDP	4%	64%	31%	89	82
Vote	Green Party	7%	46%	47%	22	24
	Another party	9%	38%	52%	17	15
	l can't remember	0%	0%	100%	2	3

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Be most able to figure out how to survive in the wilderness

Sample size: 493 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	24%	34%	42%	493	492
	BC	34%	26%	40%	80	71
	AB	28%	25%	47%	51	48
Region	SK/MB	26%	27%	47%	48	34
	ON	27%	34%	39%	149	184
	QC	16%	43%	41%	110	121
	ATL	15%	28%	57%	55	34
C	Male	27%	32%	40%	247	245
Gender	Female	21%	35%	44%	246	246
	18 - 29	23%	49%	28%	94	92
Age	30 - 44	26%	35%	39%	124	136
group	45 - 59	23%	28%	49%	148	147
	60 and over	25%	26%	49%	127	117
	Conservative Party	48%	23%	29%	139	120
	Liberal Party	9%	22%	69%	71	72
2011	NDP	13%	41%	46%	91	86
Vote	Green Party	13%	44%	44%	17	17
	Another party	26%	37%	37%	20	20
	l can't remember	0%	20%	80%	3	3

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Cook the best meal

Sample size: 498 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	27%	31%	41%	498	489
	BC	32%	35%	33%	82	73
	AB	42%	12%	46%	55	51
Region	SK/MB	25%	36%	39%	54	38
	ON	27%	36%	37%	148	184
	QC	20%	31%	49%	97	105
	ATL	23%	22%	56%	62	38
Gender	Male	30%	31%	39%	256	251
Gender	Female	25%	31%	44%	242	238
	18 - 29	28%	36%	36%	103	97
Age	30 - 44	29%	32%	39%	116	126
group	45 - 59	26%	26%	48%	152	145
	60 and over	27%	33%	40%	127	121
	Conservative Party	44%	22%	33%	127	110
	Liberal Party	22%	28%	50%	71	66
2011	NDP	9%	50%	40%	90	82
Vote	Green Party	25%	19%	56%	13	14
	Another party	14%	21%	66%	14	14
	l can't remember	27%	0%	73%	3	4

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Choose the best movie to watch

Sample size: 510 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

	Row %	Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	21%	26%	53%	510	508
	BC	29%	19%	52%	81	74
	AB	41%	25%	34%	54	51
Region	SK/MB	14%	13%	73%	45	32
	ON	22%	24%	55%	150	186
	QC	11%	41%	48%	121	129
	ATL	16%	16%	68%	59	36
Carda	Male	25%	30%	45%	251	240
Gender	Female	17%	23%	60%	259	268
	18 - 29	12%	31%	57%	94	95
Age	30 - 44	20%	26%	54%	135	147
group	45 - 59	23%	21%	57%	154	144
	60 and over	28%	30%	42%	127	121
	Conservative Party	42%	16%	42%	135	123
	Liberal Party	7%	21%	72%	77	74
2011 Vote	NDP	11%	43%	46%	90	89
	Green Party	19%	17%	64%	20	23
	Another party	0%	28%	72%	19	17
	l can't remember	27%	17%	56%	5	4

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | You trust to look after your pet

Sample size: 507 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	29%	30%	40%	507	504
	BC	30%	25%	45%	76	66
	AB	49%	25%	26%	56	52
Region	SK/MB	25%	22%	52%	53	38
	ON	29%	28%	43%	158	197
	QC	23%	41%	36%	109	119
	ATL	23%	37%	40%	55	33
Gender	Male	29%	30%	41%	233	224
Gender	Female	29%	30%	40%	274	280
	18 - 29	32%	35%	33%	94	91
Age	30 - 44	28%	33%	39%	120	128
group	45 - 59	30%	29%	40%	166	162
	60 and over	27%	26%	47%	127	123
	Conservative Party	55%	16%	29%	114	104
	Liberal Party	11%	23%	66%	75	70
2011	NDP	11%	55%	34%	97	91
Vote	Green Party	26%	21%	53%	14	18
	Another party	30%	44%	27%	17	15
	l can't remember	0%	42%	58%	6	6

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Give you the best advice about your career

Sample size: 507 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	41%	36%	24%	481	468
	BC	35%	39%	26%	74	66
	AB	58%	18%	24%	48	42
Region	SK/MB	57%	31%	12%	49	36
	ON	42%	33%	26%	139	176
	QC	33%	47%	20%	114	114
	ATL	33%	32%	35%	57	33
Gender	Male	47%	36%	17%	242	229
Gender	Female	35%	35%	30%	239	239
	18 - 29	44%	27%	29%	106	98
Age	30 - 44	36%	42%	22%	126	131
group	45 - 59	45%	35%	21%	145	140
	60 and over	39%	36%	25%	104	100
	Conservative Party	81%	11%	8%	114	99
2011 Vote	Liberal Party	17%	27%	56%	58	56
	NDP	15%	68%	17%	99	93
	Green Party	19%	56%	25%	18	16
	Another party	36%	60%	4%	20	18
	l can't remember	34%	0%	66%	2	2

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Have the best ideas about how to invest your money

Sample size: 500 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	46%	30%	24%	500	507
	BC	42%	27%	31%	74	67
	AB	64%	20%	16%	62	57
Region	SK/MB	61%	17%	22%	46	33
	ON	47%	28%	24%	150	191
	QC	38%	43%	19%	114	128
	ATL	39%	22%	39%	54	31
Gender	Male	53%	27%	21%	256	252
Gender	Female	41%	33%	27%	244	255
	18 - 29	43%	33%	24%	105	105
Age	30 - 44	39%	44%	18%	117	131
group	45 - 59	47%	25%	29%	153	148
	60 and over	57%	18%	25%	125	123
	Conservative Party	91%	5%	4%	121	113
	Liberal Party	29%	22%	49%	79	74
2011	NDP	23%	61%	16%	85	83
Vote	Green Party	30%	48%	22%	24	26
	Another party	18%	69%	13%	15	16
	l can't remember	100%	0%	0%	4	3

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | Make the best CEO of a large company

Sample size: 492 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	47%	30%	23%	492	491
	BC	60%	20%	20%	74	67
	AB	69%	15%	16%	53	50
Region	SK/MB	56%	27%	17%	52	36
	ON	43%	31%	26%	156	196
	QC	32%	44%	25%	102	109
	ATL	46%	26%	28%	55	33
Gender	Male	52%	29%	19%	245	243
Gender	Female	41%	31%	28%	247	249
	18 - 29	41%	32%	26%	107	100
Age	30 - 44	46%	32%	22%	112	117
group	45 - 59	45%	30%	25%	148	154
	60 and over	54%	26%	21%	125	120
2011 Vote	Conservative Party	81%	12%	6%	127	117
	Liberal Party	31%	21%	48%	65	59
	NDP	26%	54%	20%	87	87
	Green Party	37%	37%	26%	17	19
	Another party	30%	51%	18%	18	14
	l can't remember	73%	0%	27%	3	3

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Which of these three federal party leaders would... | You trust most to give your children advice about their future

Sample size: 498 Fields dates: January 26 to 28, 2015

		Conservative Leader Stephen Harper	NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair	Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau	Raw	Weighted
	Canada	37%	33%	30%	498	482
	BC	42%	23%	36%	78	64
	AB	73%	17%	10%	49	46
Region	SK/MB	48%	27%	25%	43	31
	ON	38%	31%	30%	148	185
	QC	21%	50%	29%	115	118
	ATL	19%	28%	52%	65	38
Gender	Male	43%	31%	25%	237	223
Gender	Female	32%	34%	34%	261	259
	18 - 29	28%	46%	25%	98	94
Age	30 - 44	36%	43%	22%	109	119
group	45 - 59	38%	25%	37%	158	149
	60 and over	44%	22%	33%	133	120
	Conservative Party	79%	10%	11%	143	125
	Liberal Party	13%	29%	58%	58	53
2011 Vote	NDP	4%	62%	34%	93	85
	Green Party	16%	56%	28%	19	21
	Another party	6%	60%	34%	20	17
	l can't remember	25%	23%	52%	4	3



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