

HIGHLIGHTS

The Battle for Quebec

By Bruce Anderson & David Coletto

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In 2011, the Jack Layton led New Democrats won 59 of 75 seats in Quebec. The NDP won 43% of the vote, and the Liberals only 14%.

What's different today?

The NDP are polling roughly 10 points lower than their last election result and the Liberals have doubled their support to 30%. The net effect: a 29-point NDP margin over the Liberals has shrunk to 4 points today.

Both parties have new leaders. Thomas Mulcair is a popular leader in Quebec, but Justin Trudeau is also well regarded, much more so than his predecessor.

In our poll last month, we oversampled in Quebec (n=650) in order to take a closer look at the contest between these two key political figures.

Here's what we found.

The vast majority of Quebecers (80%) "want a more progressive government in Ottawa", and a majority (56%) says they "will vote for whichever leader has the best chance of beating Stephen Harper".

Across the province, 60% think Mulcair if elected would be a more competent PM than Trudeau, but 67% say Trudeau is more likely to win the next election.

Mulcair is seen as someone who has values closer to those of the average Quebecer, while Trudeau is seen as conveying the best image of Quebec and Quebecers elsewhere, and better at motivating people to follow his leadership. When it comes to advancing the interests of Quebec, the two are tied.

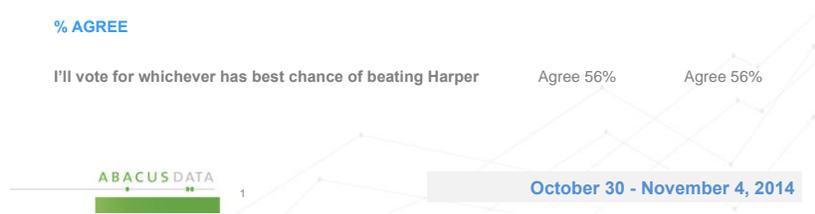
Trudeau v Mulcair

WHICH OF THESE LEADERS

	All Quebec	Francophones (n=600)
Is more likely to win the next election	Trudeau 67%	Trudeau 64%
Would be a more competent PM if elected	Mulcair 60%	Mulcair 64%
Best potential to advance the interests of Quebec	TIED	Mulcair 58%
Has values which are closer to your own	Mulcair 55%	Mulcair 62%
Conveys best image of Quebec/Quebecers	Trudeau 52%	Mulcair 51%
Better able at motivating people to follow his leadership	Trudeau 56%	TIED

% AGREE

I'll vote for whichever has best chance of beating Harper Agree 56% Agree 56%



Mulcair is seen as better on the environment and poverty, has a more narrow lead on economic and foreign policy issues and Trudeau has a modest advantage when it comes to advancing the interests of women and younger Quebecers.

Trudeau v Mulcair

WHICH OF THESE LEADERS

	Quebec	Francophones (n=600)
Best approach on environmental issues	Mulcair 69%	Mulcair 69%
Would do most to help the less well off	Mulcair 62%	Mulcair 66%
Most to improve future for young Quebecers	Trudeau 59%	Trudeau 55%
Better on foreign policy	Mulcair 55%	Mulcair 62%
Best approach to managing the economy	Mulcair 54%	Mulcair 60%
Most to advance interests of women	Trudeau 53%	Mulcair 53%

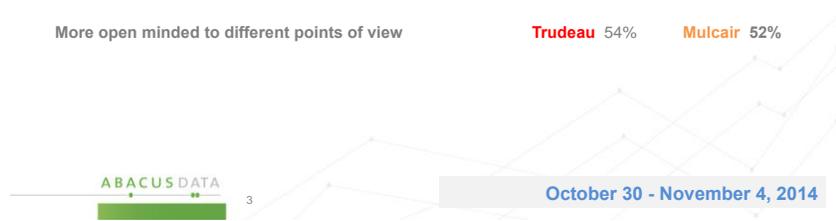


When it comes to some key personality traits: Trudeau is seen as more passionate, energetic, open to different points of view and inclined to find a good compromise for all. Mulcair is seen as stronger, more decisive, more compassionate and more down to earth.

Trudeau v Mulcair

WHICH OF THESE LEADERS IS...

	All Quebec	Francophones only (n=600)
More down to earth	Mulcair 65%	Mulcair 69%
Stronger, more decisive	Mulcair 59%	Mulcair 63%
More passionate and energetic	Trudeau 57%	Trudeau 54%
More compassionate	Mulcair 54%	Mulcair 60%
Most inclined to find a good compromise for all	Trudeau 54%	Mulcair 52%
More open minded to different points of view	Trudeau 54%	Mulcair 52%



Francophone voters in Focus

Most experts agree that the looking at the province wide numbers can provide a distorted view, if there are big differences along linguistic lines. A key question is, how do the two compare among francophone voters.

The good news for the NDP is this: Mulcair has an advantage over Trudeau on almost every indicator we measured, and in many instances he enjoys a gap of 20 points or more.

The bad news for the NDP is this: Trudeau is clearly more competitive than Michael Ignatieff was, is preferred by 35%-57% of francophone voters depending on the criteria measured. Most critically, a majority of francophone voters (56%) say they'll vote for whoever has the best chance of beating Harper, and 64% say Trudeau is more likely to win the next election.

The Pierre Trudeau Legacy

There's lots of interest in the question of what role the Trudeau name and legacy plays in Justin Trudeau's political success to date. In Quebec, here's what we find:

- Across the province, 53% have a good impression of Pierre Trudeau, including 47% of francophones, 56% of NDP voters and one in four BQ voters.
- 42% say they resent the policies of Pierre Trudeau. New Democrats are less likely to feel this way (34%) while 63% of BQ voters harbor this resentment.

- While 42% resentment may seem large, far fewer (24%) say they “can’t support Justin because of their feelings about Pierre”. This level of resistance is found among just one in five New Democrats and one in three BQ voters.
- The opposite point of view was tested too. An equal number (25%) say they are more inclined to support Justin Trudeau because of their feelings about Pierre Trudeau. This includes 12% of NDP and 13% of BQ voters.
- Finally one thing NDP and BQ partisans share is a desire for more progressive government. Across the province, 48% agree “If I want a more progressive government it makes most sense to vote Liberal”. This view is held by 44% of francophone voters, 45% of NDP voters, and 26% of BQ voters.

The Trudeau Legacy & Progressive Gov’t

% AGREE	Quebec	Franco	NDP 2011	BQ 2011
I resent the policies of Pierre Trudeau	42%	45%	34%	63%
Can’t support Justin because of Pierre	24%	25%	18%	33%
More inclined to support Justin because of Pierre	25%	20%	12%	13%
Have a good impression of Pierre Trudeau	53%	47%	56%	25%
If I want more progressive gov’t best vote Liberal	48%	44%	45%	26%



The upshot?

The results foretell one of the most important and competitive aspects of next year’s federal election. The NDP has advantages of incumbency, a strong progressive brand, and a popular leader. However, repeating the results achieved in 2011 will be no easy feat.

Thomas Mulcair is well established and has qualities that are broadly appreciated, especially so among francophone voters. At the same time, Justin Trudeau is hardly unpopular: he is seen as dynamic, open minded, a good advocate for women and young Quebecers as well as someone who conveys a positive image of the province.

The role of his father’s personality and policies seems fairly muted, and cuts both ways. There is a mild downside among BQ voters. But NDP voters tend to have a largely positive view of Pierre Trudeau.

The numbers suggest that for the NDP the biggest challenge lies in the fact that they do not appear poised to win in the rest of the country, while Justin Trudeau looks like he could fashion such a victory. For the many Quebec voters who crave a more progressive government in Ottawa, there is less uneasiness about Justin Trudeau than there is about another four years of Conservative government.

Methodology

Our survey was conducted online with 650 Quebec residents aged 18 and over from October 30 to November 4, 2014. 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 +/- 3.9%, 19 times out of 20. The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Quebec's population according to age, gender, language, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

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