

ANALYSIS OF THE 2008 CAMPAIGN

THE STORY SO FAR AND THE NEW PIVOTAL QUESTIONS

[OTTAWA – September 18, 2008] A deeper analysis of the campaign to date should provide encouragement to Conservative supporters and could be quite disheartening for Liberal supporters.

Increasingly, the question appears to be shifting from the initial, “Who will win?” to whether it will be a majority or a minority for the Conservatives, and who will lead the diminished and fragmented opposition?

Let us examine some the evidence supporting this new line of questioning.

Question 1 - Will it be a majority or a minority?

The campaign is beginning to look more “locked in” – particularly for the Tories. There are several lines of evidence to support this conclusion. First, there is a great deal of stability in the polls and, apart from a slight slump in the first week of the campaign, we are not seeing (as we did in 2006) the electorate recoil from the prospect of a Conservative majority.

Second, the Conservatives are doing particularly well among the “more likely to vote” segments of the population, or perhaps more to the point, they are weaker among those not likely to vote (i.e., the younger, and those of lower socioeconomic standing).

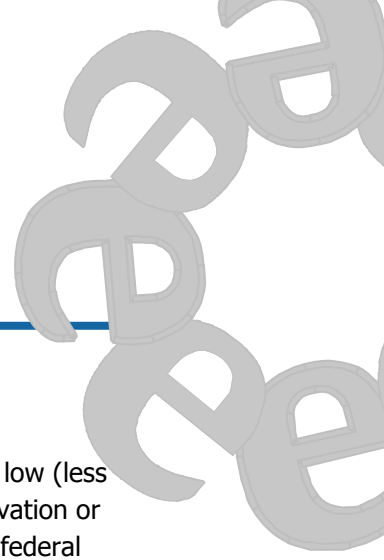
Third, they have the highest loyalty/voter retention from 2006 (for a more in-depth discussion of this issues, see our recent analysis on retention rates at www.ekoselection.com). Indeed, members of the Conservative voter base are *least* likely to change their minds between now and the federal election and *most* likely to say that they do not have another party in mind as an alternative or “second choice”. Moreover, the politically promiscuous and available voters are neither large enough nor clearly channelled enough to disrupt a Tory march to power.

It is these and other findings that lead us to conclude that Conservatives have the firmest base and the most committed voters at this stage of the campaign.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The campaign is beginning to look “locked in”, with more than 7 in 10 voters saying they will not change their mind between now and election day.**
- **Analysis suggests that the CPC has firmest base and the most committed voters at this stage of the campaign.**

Please note that the methodology and detailed tables of these and other results discussed in this release are provided at the end of this document.



Question 2 – Who will lead the opposition?

As mentioned, the “undecided” vote is unlikely to be a key factor in this election. It is low (less than 10% nationally) and stable, and at this point, showing no evidence of clear motivation or direction (i.e., there is no sense that these individuals are leaning towards any of the federal parties).

What this means is that there are not a lot of potential votes that will be up for grabs and those that are divided almost equally between the Liberals, NDP and Green Party. For example, for few CPC voters who are not totally committed, there is only a mild preference for the Liberals as a second choice. In fact, they are almost equally likely to support the NDP. Likewise, Green Party, NDP, and Bloc voters also show near equal tendencies to select any of the other parties as their second choice.

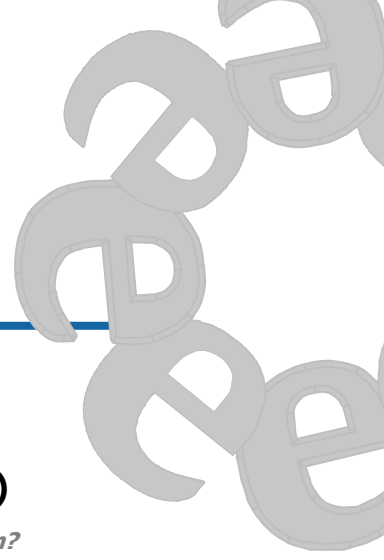
While the chances are still slim, the NDP and the Liberals have the best hopes for picking up additional votes as the parties selected most often as “second choice”. Potential mobility to the Liberals is greatest amongst women and Generation X’ers who are both less committed and who do show a clear lean to the LPC as a second choice.

Detailed Tables:

Likelihood of Changing Vote Intention (by current vote intention)

Q. How likely is it that you will change your mind between now and the federal election on October 14?

BASE: Decided Voters	Current Vote Intention						
	CANADA	CPC	LPC	NDP	GP	BQ	Undecided
Not likely (1-3)	73	84	77	76	64	75	36
Somewhat likely (4)	9	5	8	9	14	8	14
Likely (5-7)	18	11	15	15	22	18	51








Likelihood of Changing Vote Intention (by demographics)

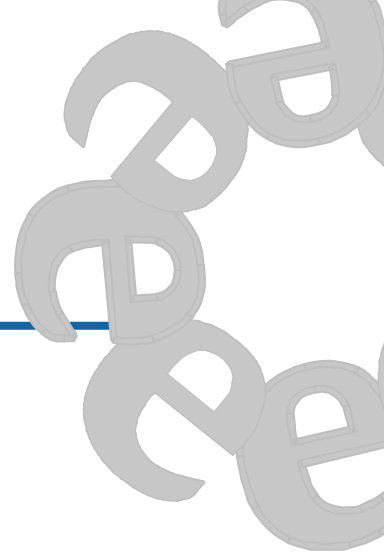
Q. How likely is it that you will change your mind between now and the federal election?

BASE: Decided Voters	CANADA	Sex		Age				Income		
		M	F	<25	25-44	45-64	65+	<\$40 K	\$40-80K	+\$80 K
Not likely (1-3)	73	78	68	64	70	76	79	72	72	76
Somewhat likely (4)	9	7	10	13	9	8	6	8	9	9
Likely (5-7)	18	15	21	23	20	16	15	20	19	15

Second Choice (by current vote intention)






Q. Which Party would be your second choice?

BASE: Decided Voters	CANADA	Current Vote Intention					
		CPC	LPC	NDP	GP	BQ	Undecided
	11	--	18	14	17	15	13
	17	20	--	31	28	13	10
	18	16	32	--	26	27	9
	15	11	25	23	--	20	9
	5	4	3	6	7	--	3
No second choice	35	48	22	26	21	25	56



Second Choice (by demographics)

Q. Which Party would be your second choice?

BASE: Decided Voters	CANADA	Sex		Age				Income		
		M	F	<25	25-44	45-64	65+	<\$40 K	\$40-80K	+\$80 K
	11	10	11	14	11	11	7	12	11	9
	17	14	19	17	20	16	13	16	16	20
	18	20	17	18	17	20	18	17	19	19
	15	16	14	17	14	16	16	11	16	19
	5	5	4	7	5	4	3	7	4	3
No second choice	35	35	34	27	33	34	43	38	34	31

Methodology:

EKOS' daily tracking polls are conducted using Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) technology, which allows respondents to enter their preferences by punching the keypad on their phone, rather than telling them to an operator.

Each weekday evening, a nationally representative sample of approximately 1,000 Canadians, 18 years of age and older is surveyed. The daily tracking number presented in this report is based on a three-day rolling average of surveys collected September 15, 16, and 17.

The margin of error associated with this three-day rolling sample of 3,892 decided voters (including leaning) is +/-1.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Please note that the margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as region, sex, age, income). All the data have been statistically weighted to ensure the samples composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.