

MANITOBA POLITICAL SCENE

New Democrats Hold Slight Edge Heading into Manitoba Ballot

A majority of respondents reject the proposal to create new seats to be filled exclusively by Aboriginal vote.

[WINNIPEG – Oct. 3, 2011] – The governing New Democratic Party (NDP) is ahead of its main rival by just three points as voters in Manitoba get ready for a provincial election, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative sample of 800 Manitoba adults, 46 per cent of decided voters and leaners would cast a ballot for the NDP candidate in their riding, while 43 per cent would back the Progressive Conservative Party. The provincial Liberal Party is a distant third with eight per cent, followed by the Green Party with three per cent.

The NDP garners the backing of a majority of voters in Winnipeg (51%), while the Tories are dominating in rural areas (53%).

The Progressive Conservatives have the best retention rate of all contending parties (88%), while the NDP is slightly lower at 78 per cent. The situation is more dire for the Liberals, who are holding on to less than half of their voters in the 2007 election (46%) and the Greens, who are keeping just 30 per cent.

Most Progressive Conservative voters (82%) and New Democrat voters (75%) say they will stick with their choice in tomorrow's election. Conversely, 42 per cent of Green voters and 52 per cent of Liberal voters say they may change their mind before casting their ballot.

Half of Manitobans (51%) expect the NDP under Premier Greg Selinger to form the government after the election, while 26 per cent believe the Progressive Conservatives under leader Hugh McFadyen will emerge victorious.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: New Democrats 46%, Progressive Conservatives 43%, Liberals 8%, Greens 3%**
- **Best Premier Selinger 32%, McFadyen 24%, Gerrard 5%, Beddome 2%**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From September 30 to October 2, 2011, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 800 randomly selected Manitoba adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 4.5%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Manitoba. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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Issues, Approval and Momentum

One third of respondents (32%) think crime is the most important issue facing Manitoba today, while 24 per cent select health care and 11 per cent pick the economy.

Selinger heads to election day with the best approval rating (46%), followed by McFadyen (40%), Liberal leader Jon Gerrard (28%) and Green Party leader James Beddome (20%). While many Manitobans do not have a true impression of Beddome, he manages to post a positive momentum score (+4), ahead of Gerrard (-10), McFadyen (-15) and Selinger (-17).

Selinger is the top selection on the preferred premier question (32%), followed by McFadyen (24%), Gerrard (5%) and Beddome (2%). The incumbent head of government holds a 13-point lead on this question among Winnipeg residents, and is barely ahead of McFadyen in the rest of the province.

On issues, Selinger is regarded as the best suited leader to deal with the economy (33%), education (32%), job creation (32%), and health care (30%). He is tied with Beddome on the environment (22%). McFadyen gets his best rating on dealing with crime (34%) and federal/provincial relations (32%). He is tied with the incumbent premier on managing the deficit (28%).

A majority of respondents (55%) are opposed to Gerrard's proposal to expand the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba by four seats, to be filled exclusively by an aboriginal vote. The idea is less popular in rural Manitoba (58%) than in Winnipeg (52%).

Analysis

The survey shows a province where two parties continue to dominate. Selinger could wind up with a result that is very close to what the Gary Doer-led New Democrats achieved in the 2007 election, thanks in great part to the high level of support for his party in Winnipeg. Selinger is clearly ahead as the preferred premier, and holds an approval rating that is just a few points shy of 50 per cent.

The Progressive Conservatives are on pace for a larger share of the vote than what they received four years ago. McFadyen has connected well in rural areas and is seen as the best leader to fight crime. Still, he trails Selinger on the best premier question by eight points.

The two minor parties appear destined to remain in single digits, as their voters are not particularly committed. In fact, the Manitobans who voted Liberal in 2007 and are backing another party this time around are choosing the NDP over the Tories by a 2-to-1 margin (33% to 15%).

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About Angus Reid Public Opinion

Angus Reid Public Opinion is a public affairs practice headed by Dr. Angus Reid: an industry visionary who has spent more than four decades asking questions to figure out what people feel, how they think and who they will vote for. A team of talented and experienced practitioners with a unique and profound understanding of global issues conduct high quality research throughout the world on a daily basis for corporations, governments, academic researchers, and non-profit organizations.

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

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Manitoba Political Scene

As you may know, the Manitoba provincial election is scheduled for Oct. 4. If the provincial election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	TOTAL	Manitoba Region		
		Winnipeg	Rural	2007 Election
New Democratic Party	46%	51%	39%	48%
Progressive Conservative	43%	35%	53%	38%
Liberal	8%	8%	8%	12%
Green Party	3%	5%	1%	1%
Other / Independent	0%	1%	0%	0.4%

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	TOTAL	Party Support in 2007 Manitoba Election			
		NDP	PC	LIB	GRN
New Democratic Party	46%	78%	8%	33%	22%
Progressive Conservative	43%	14%	88%	15%	28%
Liberal	8%	7%	2%	46%	16%
Green Party	3%	1%	1%	4%	30%
Other / Independent	0%	0%	1%	2%	4%

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Manitoba Political Scene

And how certain are you that you will vote for this party?

	Voting Intention in 2011 Manitoba Election			
	NDP	PC	LIB	GRN
I will definitely vote for this party	75%	82%	48%	58%
I could change my mind before the election takes place	25%	18%	52%	42%

Manitoba Political Pulse

Which leader and party do you think will win the election and form the next government?

	TOTAL	Manitoba Region	
		Winnipeg	Rural
Premier and New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Greg Selinger	51%	56%	44%
Progressive Conservative leader Hugh McFadyen	26%	19%	35%
Liberal Party leader Jon Gerrard	1%	1%	1%
Green Party leader James Beddome	1%	2%	0%
Not sure	21%	22%	19%

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Manitoba Political Pulse

What do you think is the most important issue facing Manitoba today?

	TOTAL
Crime	32%
Health Care	24%
Economy	11%
Government Spending	8%
Poverty	6%
Environment	5%
Tax Relief	4%
Unemployment	3%
Education	2%
Ethics / Accountability	1%
Energy / Electricity	1%
Or, some other issue	2%

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Manitoba Political Pulse

Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of each of the following people?

	Premier and New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Greg Selinger	Progressive Conservative leader Hugh McFadyen	Liberal Party leader Jon Gerrard	Green Party leader James Beddome
Approve	46%	40%	28%	20%
Disapprove	42%	46%	46%	29%
Not sure	12%	14%	26%	51%

Manitoba Political Pulse

In the past three months, would you say your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?

	Premier and New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Greg Selinger	Progressive Conservative leader Hugh McFadyen	Liberal Party leader Jon Gerrard	Green Party leader James Beddome
Improved	13%	16%	10%	13%
Stayed the same	50%	44%	56%	36%
Worsened	30%	31%	20%	9%
Not sure	8%	8%	14%	42%
Momentum Score	-17	-15	-10	+4

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Manitoba Political Pulse

Which of these leaders would make the best Premier of Manitoba?

	TOTAL	Manitoba Region	
		Winnipeg	Rural
Greg Selinger	32%	33%	31%
Hugh McFadyen	24%	20%	29%
Jon Gerrard	5%	5%	5%
James Beddome	2%	3%	1%
None of them	17%	19%	14%
Not sure	20%	21%	20%

Manitoba Political Pulse

Which of these leaders is best suited to deal with each of the following issues?

	Crime	Health Care	Economy	Environment	Education	Job Creation	Managing the Deficit	Federal/ Provincial Relations
Greg Selinger	19%	30%	33%	22%	32%	32%	28%	27%
Hugh McFadyen	34%	19%	28%	15%	21%	24%	28%	32%
Jon Gerrard	7%	18%	4%	4%	9%	4%	5%	5%
James Beddome	1%	2%	1%	22%	2%	2%	2%	1%
None of them	10%	7%	8%	10%	8%	8%	11%	8%
Not sure	28%	24%	24%	26%	27%	29%	26%	27%

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Manitoba Political Pulse

As you may know, Liberal Party leader Jon Gerrard has proposed expanding the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba by four seats, which will be filled exclusively by an aboriginal vote. All things considered, do you support or oppose this idea?

		Manitoba Region	
	TOTAL	Winnipeg	Rural
Support	30%	33%	27%
Oppose	55%	52%	58%
Not sure	15%	15%	15%

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