

Voters Ponder What Conservative Majority Would Mean for Canada

More private health care, reduced funding for the arts and low taxes are some of the perceived policies.

[CALGARY – Sept. 27, 2008] – More private medical services and a smaller budget for the arts are just some of the characteristics Canadians think a Conservative majority would bring to the country, a new *Toronto Star* / Angus Reid poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative sample of 1,508 adult Canadians, 66 per cent of respondents the Conservative Party would increase the participation of private medical care in the national system if it manages to form a majority government after the Oct. 14 ballot.

Also, 64 per cent of respondents think a majority mandate for the Tories would mean less funding for programs related to arts and film.

More than two-in-five Canadians (42%) would see a Tory majority introducing reforms to allow senators to be directly elected. Also, 39 per cent say the threat of Quebec separatism would be subdued with the Tories in full control of the House of Commons.

On economic matters, many Canadians (44%) would expect a Tory majority government to

KEY FINDINGS

- **66% of Canadians think a Tory majority would expand the role of private health care providers**
- **64% think it would also reduce funding for programs related to the arts and film**
- **At least 44% say a Conservative majority would mean low taxes and a balanced budget**
- **Bloc voters most likely to say that Tory majority would recriminalize abortion and repeal same-sex marriage**

Full topline results are at the end of this release

From September 24 to September 25, 2008 Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,508 adult Canadians. The margin of error for the total sample is +/-2.5 %, 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 Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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maintain a balanced budget for the duration of the legislative term, and 47 per cent say it would keep low taxes across the country. However, 40 per cent of Canadians disagree on these two points.

On social issues, 30 per cent of respondents across Canada say that a Conservative majority in the House of Commons would seek to recriminalize abortion, but 51 per cent do not foresee this happening. And while 35 per cent say that a Stephen Harper-led majority government would repeal the legislation that allows same-sex marriage, almost half of Canadians (47%) say this would likely not be the case.

Respondents who would vote for the Bloc Québécois in this election paint a bleaker picture of a Conservative majority. More than half of them say that this administration would recriminalize abortion and repeal same-sex marriage, and more than 70 per cent say that it would also mean more private health care and less funding for arts and films. Notably, a significant number of Bloc supporters (35%) think that a Tory majority would subdue Quebec separatism.

Remarkably, Canadians who intend to vote for the Tories next month are the least likely to say that abortion or same-sex marriage would be re-criminalized by a Tory majority in the House of Commons (18% and 24% respectively). Tory supporters are also the most inclined to believe this scenario would bring about Senate reform (62%, against less than 41% of supporters of other federal parties).

Green Party supporters are the least likely to say that Harper's Tories would maintain a balanced budget (21%), that they would keep taxes low (28%), or that they would introduce reforms to the Senate (31%).

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A Conservative Majority Government

Suppose for a moment that the Conservative Party forms a majority government after the next federal election. How likely do you think each of the following situations is to happen under a Conservative majority government?

| | Very likely | Moderately likely | Not too likely | Not likely at all | Not sure |
|---|-------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------|
| Abortion is recriminalized | 13% | 17% | 27% | 24% | 18% |
| The legislation that allows same-sex couples to marry is repealed | 16% | 19% | 29% | 18% | 18% |
| The role of private health care providers is expanded | 32% | 34% | 14% | 4% | 17% |
| Funding for programs related to the arts and film is reduced | 38% | 26% | 14% | 7% | 16% |
| A process is implemented to allow Canadians to elect their senators | 13% | 29% | 22% | 12% | 24% |
| A balanced budget is run for the entire legislative term | 19% | 25% | 23% | 17% | 16% |
| Taxes are kept low across the entire country | 18% | 29% | 24% | 16% | 14% |
| The threat of separatism in Quebec is subdued | 14% | 25% | 24% | 17% | 21% |

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 (“Very Likely” and “Moderately Likely” listed)

| | Con | Lib | NDP | BQ | Green |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Abortion is recriminalized | 18% | 46% | 43% | 58% | 27% |
| The legislation that allows same-sex couples to marry is repealed | 24% | 54% | 49% | 56% | 34% |
| The role of private health care providers is expanded | 72% | 72% | 76% | 70% | 65% |
| Funding for programs related to the arts and film is reduced | 63% | 76% | 75% | 81% | 65% |
| A process is implemented to allow Canadians to elect their senators | 62% | 41% | 34% | 41% | 31% |
| A balanced budget is run for the entire legislative term | 82% | 23% | 29% | 49% | 21% |
| Taxes are kept low across the entire country | 79% | 29% | 33% | 62% | 28% |
| The threat of separatism in Quebec is subdued | 65% | 23% | 32% | 35% | 18% |

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Angus Reid Strategies is a full-service polling and market research firm which is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995.

Angus Reid Strategies, along with its sister company, Vision Critical, is now the largest Canadian-owned market research enterprise. In addition to its four offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices San Francisco, New York and London, England. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.

Over the last year, Angus Reid has covered five elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes. <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=194>

More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF.WP.pdf>

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

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
www.angusreidstrategies.com**

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