

CARP Election Issues Poll Report May 21, 2015

Key Findings

The CARP electorate is engaged, demanding and volatile; they will change their political allegiances now in a way unthinkable in the past in order to achieve their goals for the country.

Virtually every member has voted and all will vote next time. While they see Stephen Harper as the best Prime Minister by a wide margin, he is given the lowest approvals of all four leaders, a political phenomenon known as the “strict father” leader stereotype, not liked, but respected. The party and leader that, overall, is best liked on several dimensions, is the NDP, although they are not seen as likely to win the next election.

The Conservatives and the NDP are equally likely to be seen as the best parties for listening older Canadians, but the Conservatives are also seen as the party that wants power over all else. The Conservatives and the Liberals are both matched for having the best vision for Canada.

The three leading “doorstep issues” for members in the coming campaign are home care and long term care, pharmacare, and CPP enhancement. They see the federal government as the central governing authority of the country, with a responsibility to all Canadians, not as some impartial coordinator between provinces.

Many have become more engaged in politics since the last election, mostly non-supporters of the government, and many believe the recent provincial elections will have the effect of sensitizing voters to important issues.

Members think some youth don’t vote because they are genuinely turned off politics by the bad actors and because they think their vote doesn’t matter. The majority of CARP members believe Canada is becoming less democratic as time passes.

The promises that might change members’ votes include a national home and dementia care strategy, a guaranteed annual minimum income and a national pharmacare plan.

Members watch debates, and about a quarter have seen their vote change because of a debate. The Conservatives are now in first place in electoral preference, due to the Liberals sharply diving, due in turn to the NDP sharply increasing, both in vote share and expectations of victory. The three parties are headed to parity.

Detailed Findings

Virtually every CARP member votes.

The last federal election was held on May 2, 2011. Did you vote in this election/The next federal election is scheduled for no later than October 19, 2015. Will you vote in this election?

	Last Election	Next Election
Voted	99%	98%
Did not vote	2%	1%
DON'T KNOW	n/a	1%

Stephen Harper is seen as best PM (35%), followed by Tom Mulcair (24%) with Justin Trudeau in third place (17%). One tenth choose Elizabeth May or none of these (10% each)

Overall, regardless of the party you would vote for, which of the federal leaders would make the best Prime Minister?

Stephen Harper	35%
Tom Mulcair	24%
Justin Trudeau	17%
Elizabeth May	10%
NONE OF THESE	10%
DON'T KNOW	8%

Highest approvals are for Tom Mulcair (53%), followed by Elizabeth May (49%) and Justin Trudeau (43%). Despite being seen as best PM, Harper has the lowest approval rating (36%).

Do you approve or disapprove of...?

	Harper	Mulcair	Trudeau	May
APPROVE	36%	53%	43%	49%
Approve strongly	13%	14%	7%	16%
Approve	23%	39%	36%	33%
DISAPPROVE	62%	30%	48%	34%
Disapprove	17%	24%	26%	20%
Disapprove strongly	45%	16%	22%	14%
DON'T KNOW	2%	8%	8%	18%

Conservatives and New Democrats are equally likely to be seen as the best party for older Canadians (25% each), while the Liberals trail (17%). The Conservatives are clearly seen as the party that just wants to get elected rather than serve (60%), while the Conservatives (29%) and Liberals (25%) are seen to have the best vision for Canada.

Which of the federal parties is the best at listening to the concerns of older Canadians, and acting on their behalf/is most interested in getting elected, rather than doing what's best for Canadians/has the best, broadest vision for the Canada we want to create?

	Older Canadians	Get Elected	Best Vision
Conservatives	25%	60%	29%
New Democrats	25%	7%	19%
Liberals	17%	24%	25%
Greens	4%	1%	6%
NONE OF THESE	17%	3%	11%
DON'T KNOW	13%	7%	11%

Home care (30%), pharmacare (17%) and expanding CPP (13%) are the doorstep issues for most CARP members.

Which of the following issues do you want candidates to discuss on your doorstep in the 2015 election?

Home care and long term care	30%
National pharmacare plan	17%
Expanding CPP	13%
Senior poverty	9%
End-of-life care	8%
Affordable housing	6%
Return age limit for OAS to 65	4%
Better dementia care	1%
Elder abuse	1%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	8%

When asked what role the federal government should play in Canada, the answer, cited by half, is governing for all Canadians (48%), followed by being the primary governing authority (19%). Few see it as being headwaiter to the provinces (1%).

Which of the following do you see as the most important role the federal government plays in Canada?

To govern Canada for all Canadians	48%
Primary governing authority	19%
Defense, foreign affairs, taxation and not much else	8%
Fund and guarantee health standards	7%
Promote economic development and commerce	6%
Equal partner with the provinces	6%
Cheerleader for the National Dream	3%
Headwaiter to the provinces	1%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	2%

Have you become more politically engaged since the last election or less politically engaged?

MORE ENGAGED	38%
Don't support government	30%
Support government	8%
LESS ENGAGED	12%
Don't support government	6%
Support government	6%
NO CHANGE	46%
Don't support government	18%
Support government	28%
DON'T SUPPORT GOVERNMENT	54%
SUPPORT GOVERNMENT	42%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	2%

Voters are seen to have been sensitized to election issues as a result of recent provincial elections (27%), and the wins by opposition parties is seen to be a negative for the government (20%). Some say these opposition victories are good news as they will pull the federal government to the centre (11%).

We have had recent elections in Ontario, PEI, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Alberta. What effect have these provincial elections had on the federal electoral landscape?

Sensitized voters to important electoral issues	27%
Opposition elected/bad for government	20%
Opposition victories pull government to centre	11%
Good for federal government/voters like a split	7%
Election fatigue will drive down turnout	5%
Election fever will drive up turnout	3%
Train volunteers/improve election readiness	2%
NO EFFECT	13%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	12%

Low turnout by youth is seen to be because they are turned off by the nasty rhetoric (28%) and because they don't believe their vote counts (26%). Half this proportion of members say youth have little sense of civic duty or can't be bothered (13% each).

Why do you think younger Canadians under 35 are not as politically engaged as older Canadians?

Turned off by vitriol and insincerity	28%
Don't believe vote makes a difference	26%
Little sense of civic duty	13%
Can't be bothered	13%
Lack of civics education in school	6%
Voting is learned behavior	6%
Politicians don't tailor programs to them	5%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	3%

More believe Canada is less democratic than other first world states (29%) than think it is more democratic (22%).

How democratically governed a country is Canada compared to other leading first world countries like the US, the UK, France and Germany?

MORE DEMOCRATIC	22%
Much more democratic	5%
Somewhat more democratic	17%
About the same as others	43%
LESS DEMOCRATIC	29%
Somewhat less democratic	20%
Much less democratic	9%
DON'T KNOW	7%

Two thirds agree Canada is becoming less democratic (65%).

Has Canada become more democratically governed, less democratically governed or has it not changed in the past 5 years?

More	6%
Less	65%
No change	26%
DON'T KNOW	3%

Vote-shifting promises could include a national home care, dementia care, chronic care, end-of-life care strategy (21%), a guaranteed annual minimum income (14%) or a national pharmacare plan (11%).

Which one promise, if made by a politician you were not planning to vote for, could make you change your vote to vote for that politician?

Create national home care/dementia/end-of-life care	21%
Guaranteed Annual Minimum Income	14%
National pharmacare plan	11%
Expand CPP	7%
Restore Canada Post door-to-door delivery	4%
Restore OAS age from 67 to 65	2%
NONE OF THESE	33%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	8%

The wide majority of CARP members pay attention to debates (84%) and half do so sometimes (50%).

Do you watch or listen to the debates during an election campaign?

YES	84%
Always	34%
Sometimes	50%
NO	16%
Not very often	12%
Not at all	4%

The majority say a politician’s performance in debates affects their opinion (59%), and just more than half say it does so with “some impact” (54%).

Does the performance a politician delivers in a debate have an impact on your voting decision?

YES	59%
Great impact	5%
Some impact	54%
NO	41%
Little impact	30%
No impact	11%
DON'T KNOW	1%

One quarter say vote has been changed by a debate they saw or heard (23%).

Has your vote ever been changed because of a debate you saw or heard?

Yes	23%
No	78%

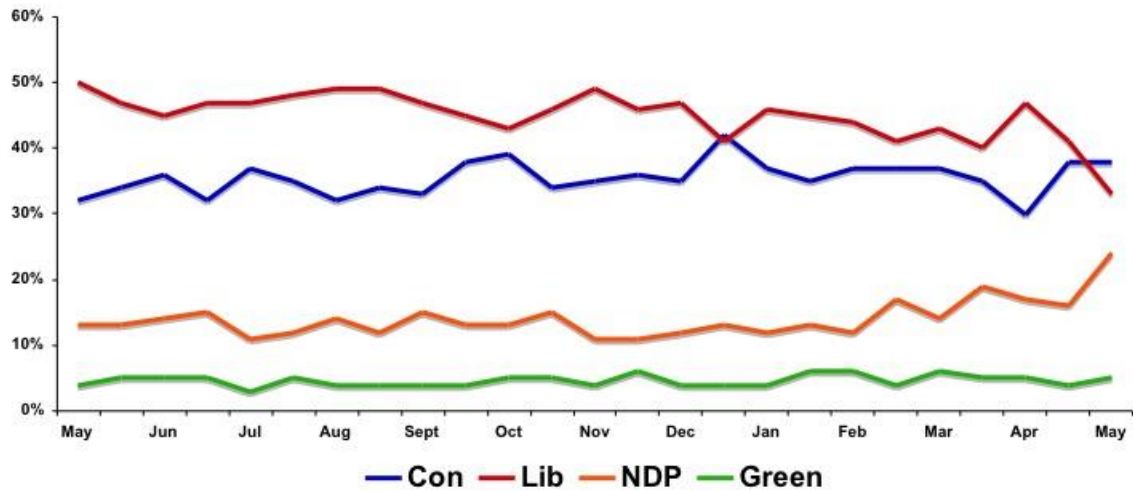
One third of members say they vote a platform (35%), one fifth vote a leader (21%) and one sixth vote a party (16%) or candidate (15%). One tenth vote for change (10%).

Which one factor determines your vote more than any other in an election?

Platform	35%
Leader	21%
Party	16%
Candidate	15%
Time for a change	10%
Campaign	1%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	3%

Electoral Preference

The Liberals (33%) have dipped below the Conservatives, steady at 38%, while the NDP have eaten into the Liberal lead (24%). The parties are trending towards parity..



Along with a member preference for them, most expect the Conservatives to win the next election (54%), followed by the Liberals (34%). The NDP does better on this measure than recently (11%).

Which party do you EXPECT to win the next election?

	Feb 10	Mar 10	Mar 24	Apr 10	Apr 27	May 19
Liberals	45%	45%	40%	45%	37%	34%
Conservatives	52%	52%	54%	48%	56%	54%
NDP	2%	4%	1%	6%	5%	11%
Green	*	*	*	*	*	*

More than 3600 CARP Poll™ online panel members responded to this poll between May 7 and 19, 2015. The margin of error for a probability sample this size is about plus or minus 2%, 19 times out of 20