

FIVE YEARS OF HARPER

# Canadians Offer Mixed Reviews on the Effect of Harper's Government

*Conservative voters believe Canada now plays a more constructive role on the world stage, but most opposition supporters disagree.*

[OTTAWA – Jan. 20, 2011] – Canadians are split in their assessment of various topics on the fifth anniversary of Stephen Harper's tenure as Prime Minister, a new Angus Reid / *Toronto Star* poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,008 Canadian adults, 30 per cent of respondents say they are better off now than they were five years ago, while 29 per cent are about the same, and 38 per cent report being worse off now.

## Personal Finances

One-in-four Canadians (26%) say their current personal financial situation is excellent or good, while 32 per cent deem it poor or awful. However, more than a third of Canadians (36%) say they are now more pessimistic about their own financial situation than five years ago.

## Safety

Three-in-five Canadians (58%) rate the level of safety in their own community as excellent or good, while only nine per cent deem it poor or awful. However, 22 per cent of respondents claim that they feel less safe now than five years ago.

## International Relations

Two-in-five Canadians (38%) rate Canada's current role in the world stage as excellent or good, while one-in-five (21%) consider it as poor or awful. While three-in-five Conservatives (60%) are happy with

### KEY FINDINGS

- **30% say they are better off now than they were five years ago, 29% are about the same, 38% report being worse off now**
- **43% believe Stephen Harper has performed about the same as they expected when he first took office five years ago, 34% think he has done worse, 12% think he has done better**

*Full topline results are at the end of this release.*

*From January 13 to January 14, 2011, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,008 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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Canada's role in international relations, less than a third of respondents who voted for other parties in 2008 concur.

More than a third of respondents (37%) say that Canada's role in the world has not changed since 2006, but three-in-ten (29%) believe the country now plays a less constructive role than it did five years ago—including a majority of Liberal Party voters (51%) and Bloc Québécois voters (59%).

### Harper's Tenure

Two-in-five Canadians (43%) believe Stephen Harper has performed in about the same fashion as they expected when he first took office five years ago, while one third (34%) think he has done worse. Only 12 per cent of respondents think Harper has performed better than they expected.

Quebecers are particularly critical of Harper, with three-in-five (60%) saying he has performed worse than they originally expected. Conversely, 22 per cent of Albertans, 19 per cent of respondents in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and 16 per cent of British Columbians say Harper has done better than they anticipated.

More than a third of Conservative voters (36%) say Harper has been a better prime minister than they envisioned, but less than one-in-ten respondents who voted for the other federal parties concur.

### Analysis

Canadians are not particularly concerned with the issue of public safety at this point, and their views on personal finances are reasonably similar—even after party allegiance is factored in. The key disparity is on international relations. The Conservative base appears to provide a ringing endorsement for the current prime minister's actions on the world stage, but supporters of the opposition parties are very critical of Canada's current role.

When it comes to the "better off" question, the sentiments are mixed. More Grits than Tories acknowledge that their situation is roughly the same, and New Democratic Party (NDP) supporters are above the national average on being better off now than in 2006.

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***About the Vision Critical Public Affairs practice***

*The Vision Critical Public Affairs practice is 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 conducts 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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### Five Years of Harper

Would you say you are better off now, about the same, or worse off now than you were five years ago?

	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
Much better off	10%	8%	6%	9%	13%	11%
Moderately better off	20%	25%	20%	26%	14%	27%
About the same	29%	30%	35%	23%	23%	29%
Moderately worse off	23%	25%	23%	30%	29%	26%
Much worse off	15%	11%	16%	12%	17%	7%
Not sure	4%	0%	0%	1%	4%	0%
Better off (NET)	30%	34%	26%	35%	27%	38%
Worse off (NET)	38%	36%	39%	42%	46%	33%

### Five Years of Harper

How would you rate current personal financial situation?

	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
Excellent	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	3%
Good	24%	26%	31%	21%	29%	28%
Average	40%	46%	35%	47%	32%	43%
Poor	25%	19%	26%	21%	28%	18%
Awful	7%	4%	4%	5%	5%	7%
Not sure	2%	0%	1%	1%	4%	0%
Excellent / Good	26%	30%	34%	26%	31%	32%
Poor / Awful	32%	24%	30%	26%	33%	26%

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Five Years of Harper						
Would you say you are more optimistic or more pessimistic about your personal financial situation today than you were five years ago?						
	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
Much more optimistic	7%	6%	5%	9%	10%	17%
Moderately more optimistic	20%	25%	20%	25%	22%	16%
Neither more nor less optimistic	34%	38%	40%	30%	31%	37%
Moderately more pessimistic	21%	22%	22%	21%	18%	24%
Much more pessimistic	15%	9%	12%	14%	9%	6%
Not sure	3%	0%	0%	1%	10%	0%
Optimistic (NET)	27%	31%	25%	34%	32%	33%
Pessimistic (NET)	36%	31%	34%	35%	27%	30%

Five Years of Harper						
How would you rate the current level of safety in your community?						
	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
Excellent	16%	16%	14%	14%	9%	17%
Good	41%	46%	56%	45%	54%	41%
Average	32%	28%	24%	37%	25%	36%
Poor	8%	8%	6%	4%	6%	4%
Awful	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Not sure	1%	0%	0%	1%	5%	0%
Excellent / Good	58%	62%	70%	59%	63%	58%
Poor / Awful	9%	10%	7%	4%	7%	6%

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### Five Years of Harper

Do you feel safer or less safe in your own community than you did five years ago?

	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
<b>Much safer</b>	4%	3%	2%	2%	4%	8%
<b>Moderately safer</b>	10%	9%	8%	10%	6%	8%
<b>No more or less safe</b>	62%	64%	71%	66%	65%	64%
<b>Moderately less safe</b>	17%	18%	13%	17%	14%	16%
<b>Much less safe</b>	5%	6%	6%	2%	7%	2%
<b>Not sure</b>	3%	1%	0%	2%	5%	2%
<b>Safer (NET)</b>	14%	12%	10%	12%	10%	16%
<b>Less safe (NET)</b>	22%	23%	18%	20%	21%	18%

### Five Years of Harper

How would you rate Canada's current role on the world stage?

	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
<b>Excellent</b>	6%	12%	1%	3%	0%	0%
<b>Good</b>	32%	48%	26%	23%	14%	30%
<b>Average</b>	36%	30%	37%	43%	27%	27%
<b>Poor</b>	16%	6%	28%	25%	36%	15%
<b>Awful</b>	5%	1%	7%	5%	19%	16%
<b>Not sure</b>	6%	3%	1%	1%	4%	11%
<b>Excellent / Good</b>	38%	60%	27%	26%	14%	30%
<b>Poor / Awful</b>	21%	7%	35%	30%	55%	31%

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<b>Five Years of Harper</b>						
Would you say Canada plays a more constructive role or a less constructive role on the world stage than it did five years ago?						
	<b>Party support in the 2008 federal election</b>					
	<b>Canada</b>	<b>Con</b>	<b>Lib</b>	<b>NDP</b>	<b>BQ</b>	<b>Green</b>
<b>Much more constructive</b>	6%	9%	2%	6%	0%	0%
<b>Moderately more constructive</b>	20%	37%	15%	11%	6%	15%
<b>Unchanged</b>	37%	35%	28%	33%	27%	29%
<b>Moderately less constructive</b>	18%	12%	29%	26%	23%	26%
<b>Much less constructive</b>	11%	2%	22%	16%	36%	21%
<b>Not sure</b>	9%	4%	3%	7%	7%	9%
<b>More constructive (NET)</b>	25%	47%	17%	17%	6%	15%
<b>Less constructive (NET)</b>	29%	14%	51%	43%	59%	47%

<b>Five Years of Harper</b>						
How would you describe the current level of partisanship in Ottawa?						
	<b>Party support in the 2008 federal election</b>					
	<b>Canada</b>	<b>Con</b>	<b>Lib</b>	<b>NDP</b>	<b>BQ</b>	<b>Green</b>
<b>Too partisan</b>	29%	31%	47%	37%	45%	36%
<b>About the right level of partisanship</b>	20%	31%	17%	21%	32%	13%
<b>Not partisan enough</b>	9%	7%	13%	6%	6%	4%
<b>Not sure</b>	42%	31%	23%	35%	17%	47%

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Five Years of Harper						
Do you believe that there is more partisanship or less partisanship in Ottawa today than five years ago?						
	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
Much more partisanship	13%	13%	24%	17%	22%	12%
Moderately more partisanship	15%	16%	25%	16%	11%	20%
Same amount of partisanship	26%	35%	21%	24%	44%	20%
Moderately less partisanship	6%	10%	5%	8%	5%	9%
Much less partisanship	4%	2%	7%	4%	0%	3%
Not sure	37%	24%	17%	31%	18%	35%
More partisanship (NET)	27%	29%	50%	33%	34%	32%
Less partisanship (NET)	10%	13%	13%	12%	5%	12%

Five Years of Harper						
<i>To the 227 respondents who believe that there is more partisanship in Ottawa today than five years ago: Which political party do you believe is most responsible for this increase in partisanship?</i>						
	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
Conservatives	61%	35%	81%	73%	85%	54%
Liberals	16%	33%	7%	2%	4%	24%
NDP	2%	6%	1%	1%	4%	0%
Bloc	2%	1%	3%	0%	4%	0%
All share the blame equally	14%	22%	6%	19%	4%	22%
None of them	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Not sure	4%	4%	1%	3%	0%	0%

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### Five Years of Harper

*To the 227 respondents who believe that there is more partisanship in Ottawa today than five years ago: Which political party do you believe is most responsible for this increase in partisanship?*

	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
<b>Conservatives</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Liberals</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>NDP</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Bloc</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>All share the blame equally</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>None of them</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

### Five Years of Harper

Stephen Harper became Prime Minister of Canada almost five years ago. So far, has Stephen Harper performed better than you expected, worse than you expected, or about the same as you expected?

	Region						
	Canada	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
<b>Better than I expected</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>About the same as I expected</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Worse than I expected</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>22%</b>

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### Five Years of Harper

Stephen Harper became Prime Minister of Canada almost five years ago. So far, has Stephen Harper performed better than you expected, worse than you expected, or about the same as you expected?

	Gender and Age					
	Canada	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
<b>Better than I expected</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>About the same as I expected</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Worse than I expected</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1%</b>

### Five Years of Harper

Stephen Harper became Prime Minister of Canada almost five years ago. So far, has Stephen Harper performed better than you expected, worse than you expected, or about the same as you expected?

	Party support in the 2008 federal election					
	Canada	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green
<b>Better than I expected</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>About the same as I expected</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Worse than I expected</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>

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