



Provincial Politics

THE GAP WIDENS

ANALYSIS REPORT

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Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among 1,000 Quebecers from February 7 to February 10, 2007. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1,000 respondents is ± 3.1 , 19 times out of 20.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the final results were weighted according to gender, age, mother tongue and region to ensure a sample representative of the Québec population.

1. The Liberal Party Takes the Lead

If elections had been held in Québec between February 7 and February 10, the Liberal Party would have obtained 35% of the vote, five points ahead of the Parti Québécois, which would have received 31% of the vote. Action démocratique would have profited from 21% of the vote. Other parties shared 12% of voting intentions: 5% for Québec solidaire, 5% for the Green Party and 2% for other parties. In comparison with Leger Marketing's last poll conducted at the end of January, the Liberal Party has gained two points, while the Parti Québécois has lost one. The ADQ also loses a few points compared to the last poll.

The Parti Québécois is in the lead among Francophones, with 36% of voting intentions versus 28% for the Liberal Party and 22% for the Action démocratique. Among non-Francophones, the Liberal Party is the only contending party with 69% of the vote. Though trailing behind the leader, the Action démocratique deserves an "honourable mention" among this section of the population, faring better than the Parti Québécois with 13% versus 9%.

Table 1 – PROVINCIAL VOTING INTENTIONS IN QUÉBEC

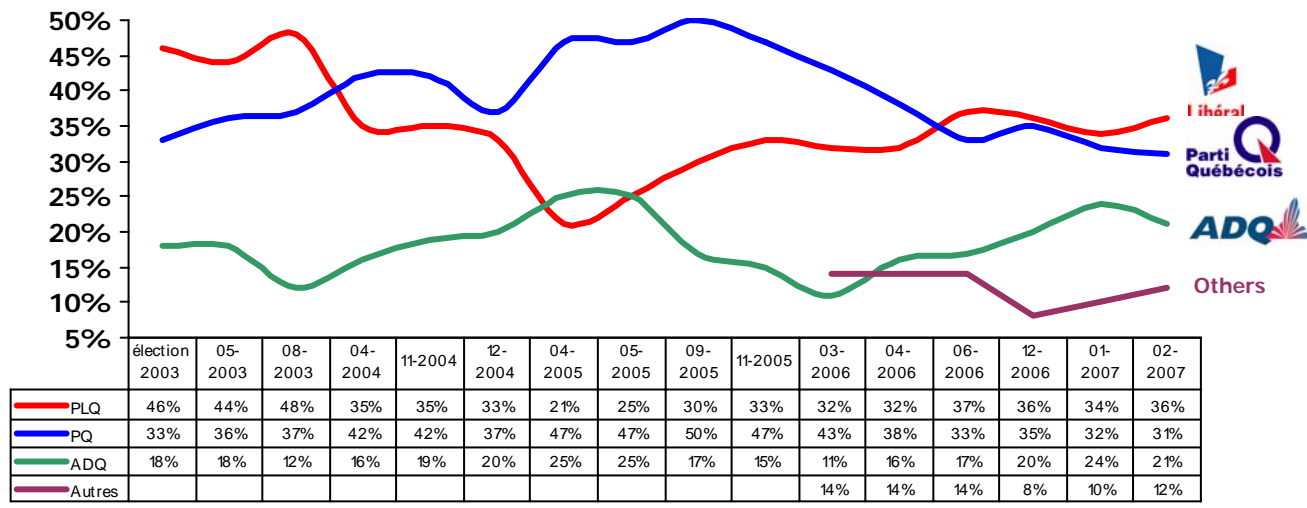
Question: *If PROVINCIAL elections were held today, for which political party would you be most likely to vote? Would it be for Jean Charest's Liberal Party, André Boisclair's Parti québécois, Mario Dumont's Action démocratique, Françoise David's Québec Solidaire or Scott McKay's Green Party? If the respondent did not have an opinion the following question was asked: Even if you have not yet made up your mind, which political party would you be most likely to vote for?*

	Before Distribution n=1 000	After Distribution n=859	Franco-phones n=744	Non-franco n=112
... Jean Charest's Liberal Party	31%	36%	28%	69%
... André Boisclair's Parti Québécois	27%	31%	36%	9%
... Mario Dumont's Action démocratique	18%	21%	22%	13%
... Françoise David's Québec solidaire	5%	5%	6%	3%
... Scott McKay's Green Party	4%	5%	5%	4%
Another party	2%	2%	2%	2%
Would not vote/Would spoil ballot	3%	-	-	-
Don't know	1%	-	-	-
Refusal	7%	-	-	-

Note 1: Distribution of undecided is proportional to voting intentions.

Note 2: **Numbers in red** indicate a significant higher difference and **numbers in blue** indicate a significant lower difference.

Evolution of Voting Intentions April 2003 to February 2007



2. 40% of Voters Satisfied with Charest Government

Overall, 40% of respondents say they are satisfied with the Liberal government led by Jean Charest. More specifically, 6% are very satisfied and 34% are somewhat satisfied. Among Liberal voters, satisfaction with the government reaches 72%. PQ voters are the most critical of the government with only 17% satisfied with its performance. ADQ voters are slightly more lenient with 29% satisfied.

Table 2 – SATISFIED WITH THE GOVERNMENT

Question: *Would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the Liberal government led by Jean Charest?*

	Total n=1 000	Liberal Voters n=300	PQ Voters n=251	ADQ Voters n=196
TOTAL SATISFIED	40%	72%	17%	29%
... Very satisfied	6%	14%	1%	0%
... Somewhat satisfied	34%	58%	16%	29%
TOTAL DISSATISFIED	57%	25%	82%	70%
... Somewhat dissatisfied	35%	18%	49%	39%
... Very dissatisfied	23%	7%	33%	31%
Don't know/ Refusal	2%	3%	1%	1%

3. The Leaders are Still Neck and Neck

Since the last poll conducted at the end of January, Quebecers's perception of which leader would make the best premier has not changed. The three main party leaders are still tied if you take the poll's margin of error into account.

Among Francophones, Boisclair and Dumont are tied at 30%, ahead of Jean Charest who obtains 18%. Non-francophones favour Jean Charest with 49%, followed by Mario Dumont with 18% and André Boisclair with 10%.

Table 3 – THE BEST PREMIER

Question: *In your opinion, which of the following political personalities would make the best Premier of Québec?*

	Total n=1 000	Francophones n=869	Non-francophones n=131
... Mario Dumont	28%	30%	18%
... André Boisclair	26%	30%	10%
... Jean Charest	24%	18%	49%
... Françoise David	6%	6%	5%
None of them	9%	9%	7%
Don't know / Refusal	7%	6%	11%

4. The Environment is Top Priority after Healthcare

Improving the health care system is still a central priority for Quebecers, 34% consider it the top priority in the next provincial election campaign. However, second place goes to neither the economy nor education (the other "traditional" priorities), but to the environment which was chosen by 21% of Quebecers as the top priority in the next campaign. Economic development follows with 13%, education with 9% and federal-provincial relations including the fiscal imbalance with 6%. Reasonable accommodation, despite being a topic of interest with Quebecers as illustrated in the discussions of the past few weeks, is seen as a secondary issue with only 6% of respondents saying that it should be the most important issue in the next campaign.

Table 4 – CAMPAIGN ISSUES

Question: *Among the following choices, which issue is THE MOST IMPORTANT to you in the next provincial election? Is it...?*

	Total n=1 000	Liberal Voters n=300	PQ Voters n=251	ADQ Voters n=196
... improving the healthcare system	34%	40%	35%	32%
... the environment	21%	17%	22%	19%
... economic development and jobs	13%	15%	8%	13%
... managing the educational system	9%	10%	7%	9%
... federal-provincial relations and the fiscal imbalance	6%	7%	7%	7%
... reasonable accommodation	6%	5%	8%	8%
... family policy	4%	2%	5%	5%
... regional development	3%	2%	3%	6%
... Quebec's national question	2%	1%	5%	0%
Don't know / Refusal	2%	1%	0%	1%

5. Charest Champions the Economy, Boisclair the Environment and Dumont Regional Areas

Though the race for the best Premier of Quebec is tight, voters find each leader has distinctive talents. Jean Charest is perceived as the leader who does the best work on federal-provincial relations (48%) and economic development (35%). The PQ leader is seen as the best for education (33% - tied with Mario Dumont who obtains 30%), the environment (33%) and Québec's national question (37%). The ADQ leader dominates as the champion of reasonable accommodation (35%), regional development (38%) and family policy (38%).

Thus, depending on the agenda that will monopolize discussions during the campaign, the PQ leader, André Boisclair, could have a slight advantage since he is perceived as the best leader on two out of the four top priorities for Quebecers - education and the environment - while the game is tied for the healthcare system. The Liberal leader is banking on the economy, an important priority for Quebecers, where he is perceived as the best. The Liberal leader has a solid lead on his rivals when it comes to the fiscal imbalance, but this is a secondary issue according to the poll. As for the ADQ leader, he excels when it comes to issues that Quebecers consider the least important (except for education).

Table 5 – PERFORMANCE OF LEADERS PER ISSUE

Question: *Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields?*
(n=1 000)

	Jean Charest	André Boisclair	Mario Dumont
... improving the healthcare system	28%	29%	27%
... managing the educational system	21%	33%	30%
... the environment	25%	33%	27%
... economic development and jobs	35%	29%	22%
... federal-provincial relations and the fiscal imbalance	48%	22%	19%
... reasonable accommodation	21%	26%	35%
... Quebec's national question	28%	37%	21%
... regional development	23%	24%	38%
... family policy	25%	22%	38%

Questionnaire

QJ1A:

If PROVINCIAL elections were held today, for which political party would you be most likely to vote? Would it be for...?

READ THE FIRST 5 CHOICES - (in rotation) - ONLY ONE ANSWER

...Jean Charest's Liberal Party.....	01	=> +2
...André Boisclair's Parti Québécois	02	=> +2
...Mario Dumont's Action Démocratique	03	=> +2
...Françoise David's Québec Solidaire party.....	04	=> +2
...Scott McKay's Green Party.....	05	=> +2
(Do not read) another party	06	=> +2
Would not vote	07	=> +2
Would spoil ballot.....	08	=> +2
Don't know	98	
Refusal.....	99	=> +2

QJ1B:

Even if you have not yet made up your mind, for which of the following political parties would you be most likely to vote? Would it be for ...?

READ THE FIRST 5 CHOICES - (in rotation) - ONLY ONE ANSWER

...Jean Charest's Liberal Party.....	01
...André Boisclair's Parti Québécois	02
...Mario Dumont's Action Démocratique	03
...Françoise David's Québec Solidaire party.....	04
...Scott McKay's Green Party.....	05
(Do not read) another party	06
Would not vote	07
Would spoil ballot.....	08
Don't know	98
Refusal.....	99

QJ2A:

Would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the Liberal government led by Jean Charest?

Very satisfied	1
Somewhat satisfied	2
Somewhat dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	4
Don't know	8
Refusal.....	9

QJ2B:

In your opinion, which of the following political personalities would make the best Premier of Québec? Would it be...?

READ THE 4 CHOICES - (in rotation) - ONLY ONE ANSWER

... Jean Charest.....	01
... André Boisclair.....	02
... Mario Dumont.....	03
... Françoise David.....	04
None of them.....	97
Don't know.....	98
Refusal.....	99

QJ2:

Among the following choices, which issue is THE MOST IMPORTANT to you in the next provincial election? Is it...?

READ THE 9 CHOICES (in rotation) - ONLY ONE ANSWER

...improving the healthcare system.....	01
...managing the educational system.....	02
...the environment.....	03
...economic development and jobs.....	04
...federal provincial relations and the fiscal imbalance.....	05
...reasonable accommodation.....	06
...Québec's national question.....	07
...regional development.....	08
...family policy.....	09
Don't know.....	98
Refusal.....	13

QJ3A:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Improving the health care system.

Jean Charest.....	1
André Boisclair.....	2
Mario Dumont.....	3
None.....	4
Don't know.....	8
Refusal.....	9

QJ3B:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Managing the education system.

Jean Charest.....	1
André Boisclair.....	2
Mario Dumont.....	3
None.....	4
Don't know.....	8
Refusal.....	9

QJ3C:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: The environment.

Jean Charest	1
André Boisclair	2
Mario Dumont	3
None	4
Don't know	8
Refusal	9

QJ3D:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Economic development.

Jean Charest	1
André Boisclair	2
Mario Dumont	3
None	4
Don't know	8
Refusal	9

QJ3E:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Federal provincial relations.

Jean Charest	1
André Boisclair	2
Mario Dumont	3
None	4
Don't know	8
Refusal	9

QJ3F:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Reasonable accommodation of minorities.

Jean Charest	1
André Boisclair	2
Mario Dumont	3
None	4
Don't know	8
Refusal	9

QJ3G:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Québec's national question.

Jean Charest	1
André Boisclair	2
Mario Dumont	3
None	4
Don't know	8
Refusal	9

QJ3H:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Regional development.

Jean Charest	1
André Boisclair	2
Mario Dumont	3
None	4
Don't know	8
Refusal	9

QJ3I:

Between Jean Charest, André Boisclair and Mario Dumont, WHICH ONE would do the best work in the following fields: Family policy.

Jean Charest	1
André Boisclair	2
Mario Dumont	3
None	4
Don't know	8
Refusal	9

QJ4:

A provincial election campaign usually includes a leaders' debate. Among the two following scenarios, WHICH ONE do you prefer?

READ THE 2 CHOICES (in rotation) - ONLY ONE ANSWER

...a THREE-party leaders' debate between JEAN CHAREST's QLP, ANDRÉ BOISCLAIR'S PQ and MARIO DUMONT's ADQ	1
...a FIVE-party leaders' debate between JEAN CHAREST's QLP, ANDRÉ BOISCLAIR's PQ, MARIO DUMONT's ADQ, FRANÇOISE DAVID of Québec Solidaire and SCOTT MCKAY of the Green Party of Québec	
Don't know	8
Refusal	9