

Gap between NS Liberals and PCs continues to narrow

- Seven percentage points now separate Liberals and Progressive Conservatives.
- Premier Stephen McNeil remains most preferred leader, but Tim Houston (PC) and Gary Burrill (NDP) see rise in preference.
- Nova Scotians divided over satisfaction with performance of McNeil government.

HALIFAX, NS December 12, 2018: Support for the Nova Scotia Liberal Party continues to slide from its 2018 highs, according to the latest survey by **Corporate Research Associates Inc.** Fewer than four in ten decided voters say they would support the Liberals if a provincial election were held today (38%, down from 43% in August and 45% in May 2018). Although Liberal strength has eroded since the spring, the party's support is exactly where it was 12 months ago (38%).

Meanwhile, support for the Progressive Conservatives is holding steady under the new leadership of Tim Houston, with 31% of Nova Scotians backing the party (compared to 32% in August and 29% in May). The gap between the Liberals and PCs is now 7 percentage points, the closest since February 2018, when it stood at 3 points. Support for the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party is 24% (compared to 21% in August and 23% in May), while 6% express a preference for the Green Party (compared to 4% in August and 3% in May).

The number of undecided voters sits at 31%, while 4% support none of the parties or do not plan to vote, and 3% refuse to state their preference.

In terms of which leader Nova Scotians most wish to see as premier, Liberal leader Stephen McNeil is favoured by 28% (compared to 31% in August). Tim Houston, elected PC leader on October 27, is preferred by 22% of voters, compared with the 18% August rating for Houston's predecessor, interim PC leader Karla MacFarlane. NDP leader Gary Burrill is favoured by 18% (up from 15% in August), Green Party leader Thomas Trappenberg is preferred by 5% (unchanged from August), and Ryan Smyth of the Atlantica Party is favoured by 1% (unchanged).

Twenty-two percent of Nova Scotians cannot identify who their preferred leader is, while 4% endorse none of the listed party leaders.

Nova Scotians remain divided on the question of satisfaction with the McNeil government. Fewer than one-half are satisfied with the Liberal government's performance (46%, compared to 47% in August), while another one-half are dissatisfied (48%, compared to 46%). Satisfaction is highest in mainland Nova Scotia outside Halifax (51%) and lowest in Cape Breton (33%).

These results are part of the **CRA Atlantic Quarterly**[®], an independent, quarterly telephone survey of Atlantic Canadians, and are based on a sample of 801 adult Nova Scotians, conducted from November 1 to 23, 2018, with overall results accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 95 out of 100 times.



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CRA Atlantic Quarterly® – November 2018

Nova Scotia Political Results

Sample: 801 Nova Scotians (18 years plus)
 Interview Dates: November 1 to 23, 2018
 Overall Margin of Sampling Error: ± 3.5 percentage points (95% confidence level);
 Percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding

How satisfied are you with the overall performance of the provincial government led by Premier Stephen McNeil?					
	November 2017	February 2018	May 2018	August 2018	November 2018
Completely satisfied	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Mostly satisfied	42%	35%	41%	43%	43%
Mostly dissatisfied	31%	32%	28%	30%	29%
Completely dissatisfied	16%	24%	17%	16%	19%
Don't know/No answer/Neither	7%	6%	9%	8%	3%

Current overall margin of error is ± 3.5 percentage points based on a sample size of 801.

If a provincial election were held today in Nova Scotia, for which party would you vote?					
Party	November 2017	February 2018	May 2018	August 2018	November 2018
Liberal Party	38%	37%	45%	43%	38%
Progressive Conservative Party	29%	34%	29%	32%	31%
New Democratic Party	27%	25%	23%	21%	24%
Green Party	5%	4%	3%	4%	6%
TOTAL DECIDED VOTE	99%	100%	100%	100%	99%
None/Do not plan to vote/Other	6%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Refused to state	6%	4%	6%	4%	3%
Don't know/Undecided	28%	26%	29%	34%	31%

Current margin of error for decided/leaning voters is ± 4.6 percentage points based on a sample size of 493.

Which one of the following individuals would you most prefer as Premier of Nova Scotia?					
Leader	November 2017	February 2018	May 2018	August 2018	November 2018
Stephen McNeil of the Liberal Party	28%	27%	30%	31%	28%
Jamie Baillie/Interim leader Karla MacFarlane/Tim Houston of the PC Party	21%	25%	20%	18%	22%
Gary Burrill of the NDP	18%	21%	18%	15%	18%
Thomas Trappenberg of the Green Party	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%
Jonathan Dean/Ryan Smyth of the Atlantica Party	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
None/Other	9%	6%	6%	6%	4%
Don't know/No answer	19%	17%	21%	24%	22%

Current overall margin of error is ± 3.5 percentage points based on a sample size of 801.