

TODAY'S WEATHER

LIGHT RAIN
SHOWERS

18 °C

4 Day Forecast | Traffic



workopolis 45% of applicants get the interview

Get the job

Vancouver 2010 OFFICIAL SUPPLIER

Wednesday, June 17, 2009 | Today's Toronto Star | Login

PHOTO VIDEO COLUMNISTS BLOGS TWITTER RSS MOBILE NEWSLETTERS ALERTS



thestar.com Web find a Business
Advanced Search | Full Text Article Archive

AUTOS
CAREERS
CLASSIFIEDS
DEATH NOTICES
REAL ESTATE

HOME NEWS OPINION BUSINESS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT LIVING TRAVEL WHEELS HEALTHZONE YOURHOME PARENTCENTRAL

Toronto & GTA | Ontario | Canada | World | Insight | Global Voices | Obituaries | Local Highlights | Science-Tech | Acts of Kindness

Canadians say EI, EI, NO to a possible election

Employment insurance reform not important enough to trigger vote, majority tell pollster

Jun 06, 2009 04:30 AM

Comments on this story (34)

SUSAN DELACOURT
OTTAWA BUREAU

OTTAWA – Most Canadians are not keen to see a federal election fought over employment insurance, according to a new poll.

A full 60 per cent of respondents told Nanos Research the current political disagreement in Ottawa over EI reform is not important enough to trigger a federal election.

The aversion to an EI election is shared across regions in Canada, the poll found, though 42 per cent of Atlantic Canadians said they thought the issue was important enough to send voters to the ballot boxes.

In Ontario, only 31 per cent of respondents thought EI was a vote-triggering issue, while 62 per cent said it was not. In Quebec, 58 per cent said they'd rather not see an election over EI.

The poll was conducted between May 26 and June 1 through a random telephone survey of 1,001 Canadians. The results are considered accurate within 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Politicians in Ottawa are at an impasse over how to reform EI, with the three opposition parties in favour of a plan to make benefits more accessible to laid-off workers with a new, lower qualifying threshold of 360 hours of employment in the previous 52 weeks.

The Conservatives are standing firmly against that proposal, arguing that it's better to give out benefits for longer periods than to make them more widely accessible. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has called the opposition's plan a recipe for higher payroll taxes.

Nik Nanos, head of the polling firm, says the response to his poll should be seen as a plea from the voters for solutions on EI, not political theatrics.

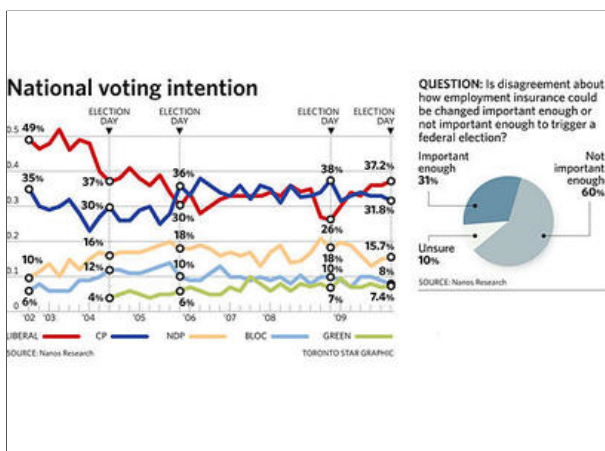
"Generally, Canadians are very pragmatic and are more interested in solutions than political posturing by the federal party leaders," he said.

"In a minority situation, there is an expectation that none of the parties will get everything they demand in regards to EI reform.

The questions will be whether the opposition (parties) judge the changes enough, or whether the issue is a show stopper."

Though these results may make the parties hesitant to provoke a summer election, a second Nanos poll also showed Liberal fortunes continuing to rise – which could be an incentive for the official Opposition to hit the campaign trail.

The latest figures show the Liberals at 37.2 per cent nationally, compared to the Conservatives with 31.8 per cent and the NDP at 15.7 per cent.



Question: Is disagreement about how employment insurance could be changed important enough or not important enough to trigger a federal election?

Print
Choose text size
Report error or complaint
License this article
BOOKMARK

Advertisement

workopolis

45% of applicants get the interview

Get the job

Vancouver 2010 OFFICIAL SUPPLIER

MORE NEWS

- Accused in teen's slaying faces reduced charge
- Body of latest soldier to die in Afghanistan returns to Canada
- Embattled eHealth chair fired
- City braces for garbage strike
- Pulp mills get \$1B in aid from Ottawa
- Worker injured at Scarborough building site
- Pre-Stonehenge ruins discovered
- Online news fills void in Iran
- Payette mission on hold as NASA scrubs launch
- Nine arrested after Montreal melee

RECENT SPECIAL SECTIONS

- Do It! This Summer Guide
- Digital Photo
- Golf Magazine 2009
- Sick Kids
- Allergies & Asthma
- Home Improvement
- Home Office Guide
- Wheels Extra
- Canada's Best Diversity Employers 2009
- Investing
- Guide to Colleges & Universities

More Specials

Advertisement

Discover the best Cheap Eats in town

GO NOW



ourfaves.com DISCOVER THE BEST

Regionally, the Liberals are leading in every area except the West, where the Conservatives are at 42 per cent compared to the Liberals' 31.

In Quebec, Liberals continue to lead the Conservatives and even the Bloc – 38 per cent for the Liberals, 12 per cent for the Conservatives and 35 per cent for the BQ.

This poll, conducted among 879 respondents, is accurate within 3.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Yesterday's word that the economy lost another 42,000 jobs in May, pushing the unemployment rate up to 8.4 per cent, brought renewed calls in the House of Commons for the Conservative government to undertake a major overhaul of EI to help those being laid off.

"We are now at the lowest level of manufacturing jobs since 1976," Liberal MP Scott Brison said during question period.

"The Conservatives' response? Nothing. When will the Conservatives fix the EI system to help Canadian families survive this economic crisis?"

Bloc Québécois MP Josée Beaudin said the government should help the jobless by scrapping the current patchwork quilt of qualifications for EI across the country in favour of a single national standard, which she said would not only help the unemployed but also boost the economy.

"How can the government turn a deaf ear to cries for reform of the EI system?" Beaudin

But Human Resources Minister Diane Finley brushed aside requests for a fundamental overhaul of EI, saying the government has invested billions of dollars to improve the program. She said consultations showed the reform most favoured by Canadians was an extension of EI payments at the end of the pay-out period, which the Conservatives have already done.

"We have an economic action plan to help the unemployed," Finley said. "We have a plan to invest in infrastructure to protect jobs."

With files from Les Whittington

MOST POPULAR ON THESTAR.COM

Most Read

- Rival Yorkville hair salons in ugly battle
- Guelph student, 14, killed in wall collapse
- How to save cash on gas
- Gaston fuming after win
- Sex, drugs, lawyers mark Cirque's 25th year

SPECIAL



U.S. Open golf

Columnist Dave Perkins is at the U.S. Open. Check thestar.com every afternoon this week for more of his tales from the fairways. Plus, Dave ...



Sexy chef wants you at home

Say goodbye to the image of the pot-bellied chef brandishing a wooden spoon. There's a new generation of sexy, camera-ready ...



Naked pedal tests mettle

The phalanx of naked cyclists at Bloor and Avenue Rd. on Saturday afternoon drew a variety of responses, but I wonder how many ...



Toronto Chicken buck-buck-bucking for change

Sally, Ayr and Goldie have become a backyard fixture. Trouble is, these hens are not legally entitled to live ...

More Specials

Ads by Google

EI Appeals

Help with EI Appeals to the Board of Referees
eiappeals.ca

Stephen Harper Yes/No?

1 Minute Poll
Is Harper doing a Good Job?
Vote-About.com/Harper

Agawa Canyon Tour Train

All aboard a one-day rail excursion into the heart of Canada.
www.AgawaTrain.com

Comments on this story are now closed | [Commenting Guidelines](#)

Sort By

Skippie at 10:12am

Only want to make a minor correction to your last post.Canada already is a socialist/communist dictatorship....and has been for the last 40 years.

Submitted by Gram62 at 9:42 PM Saturday, June 06 2009

[Agree](#) 2 | [Disagree](#) 7 | [Alert a Moderator](#)

Time to Vote Liberal

Now is the time to elect a new government. With the Conservatives being the biggest spenders ever in Canadian history and with their bad record of economic management (Brian Mulroney, Mike Harris, Harper), it's time to elect another government that will bring us back to prosperity.

Submitted by BillW at 9:00 PM Saturday, June 06 2009

[Agree](#) 5 | [Disagree](#) 6 | [Alert a moderator](#)

Threats of an Election

I believe that many people are growing tired of the constant threats of an election by the Libs. Dion did it weekly,and when his bluff was finally called,they blamed the Conservatives because they lost. Now we have Ignatieff,with his weekly threats, simply because he sees his Party up in the polling.These threats have nothing to do with E.I. at all.It's political postering,and many people are sick of it.

Submitted by Mary Ewen at 4:02 PM Saturday, June 06 2009

[Agree](#) 9 | [Disagree](#) 7 | [Alert a Moderator](#)

Poll Does Not Surprise

Canadians would not want an election over the EI issue becuase we live in a pathetic nation of selfish people who think that we are superior to the Americans and everybody else. Now, if most were to lose their job, then the story and the result of the poll would be different.

Submitted by michelb at 3:23 PM Saturday, June 06 2009

[Agree](#) 7 | [Disagree](#) 4 | [Alert a moderator](#)

Iggy will make the report card a non-confidence motion

Iggy will have to do this on Opposition Day - which the Cons scheduled for the 23rd I believe,