

Public Perceptions of the Ethics of Canada's Political Leaders

October 15, 2015

Introduction

The objectives of this study were to understand:

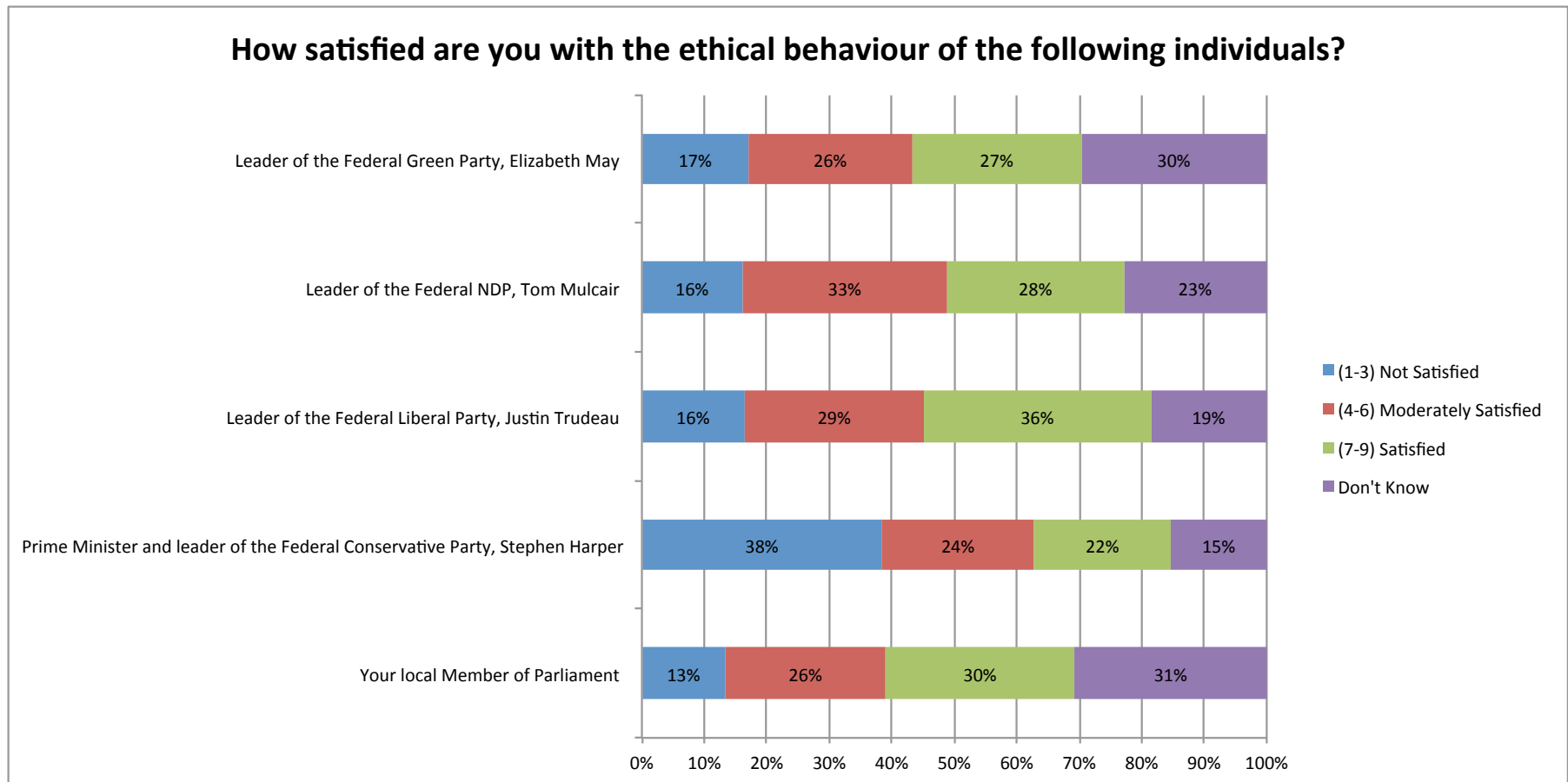
- Canadians' level of trust in their federal party leaders;
- Whether Canadians think that political processes inevitably lead to corruption and unethical behaviour;
- Which unethical behaviours Canadians believe to be most relevant to whether a politician is fit for office;
- Whether perceptions of unethical behaviour on the part of political leaders has affected Canadians' voting habits;
- How Canadians think unethical behaviour should be 'policed.'

Methodology

- This survey was a stand-alone module within a larger survey conducted by the Local Parliament Project (LPP).
- The survey was aimed at the Canadian general population, stratified on province and balanced on gender and age. We aimed for 50% men and 50% women. We aimed to have 28% of our respondents aged 18-34, 27% aged 35-49 and 46% aged 50 and higher. Our provincial targets follow the relative demographic weights of the provinces.
- Sampling for this module occurred between September 14th and October 6, 2015.
- The final sample for this module contains 1513 respondents. Quantities are representative of English-speaking Canadian citizens over the age of 18, with a credibility interval of 2.52 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- The questions in this survey module replicate many of the questions asked in our previous survey, "Public Perceptions of the Ethics of Political Leadership," Nov. 5, 2014.
- **Thanks and Acknowledgements:**

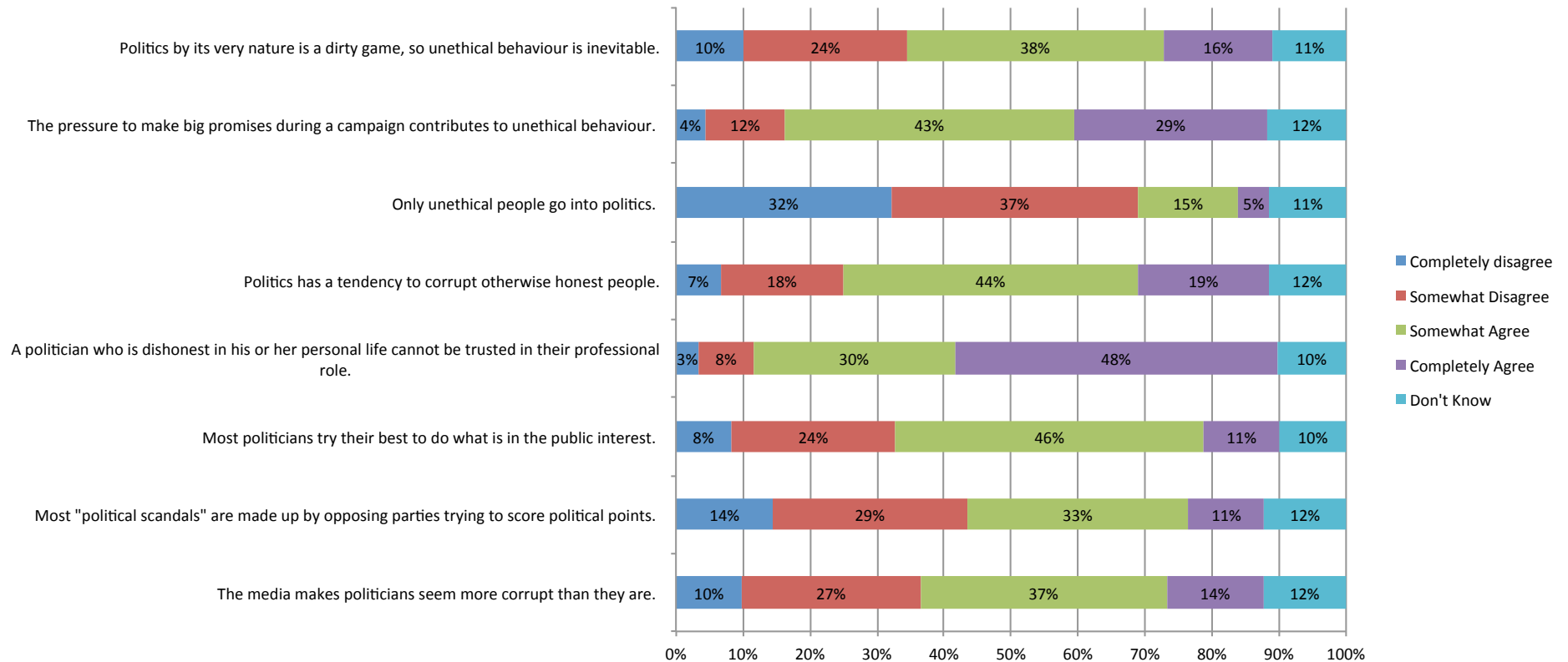
The survey sampling, programming, and weighting were performed by Daniel Rubenson, Ryerson University and Peter Loewen, University of Toronto. Rubenson and Loewen are co-Investigators on the LPP. Benjamin Allen Stevens provided research assistance with data cleaning and analysis.

Satisfaction: Specific Political Leaders



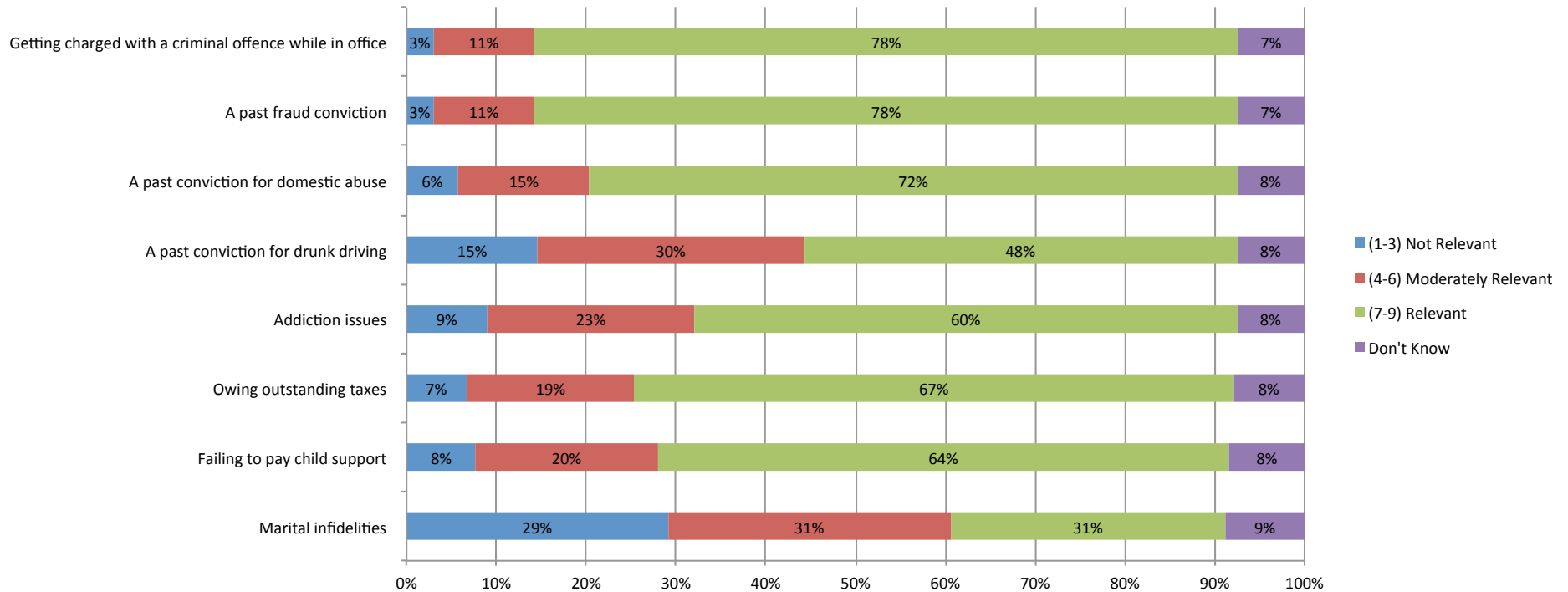
Statements About Ethics

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



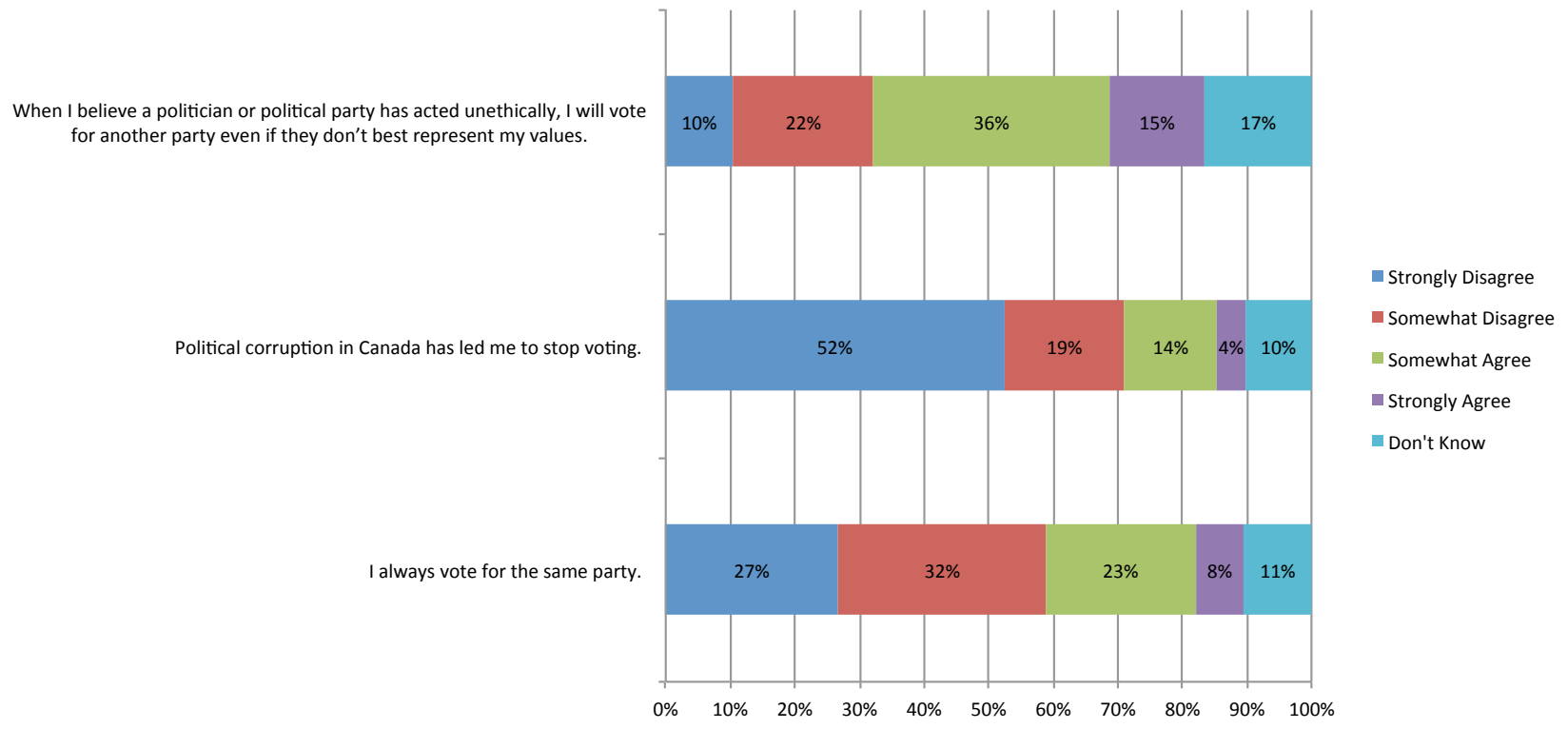
Ethics and Personal Behaviour

How relevant are the following to whether or not a politician should be considered fit for office?

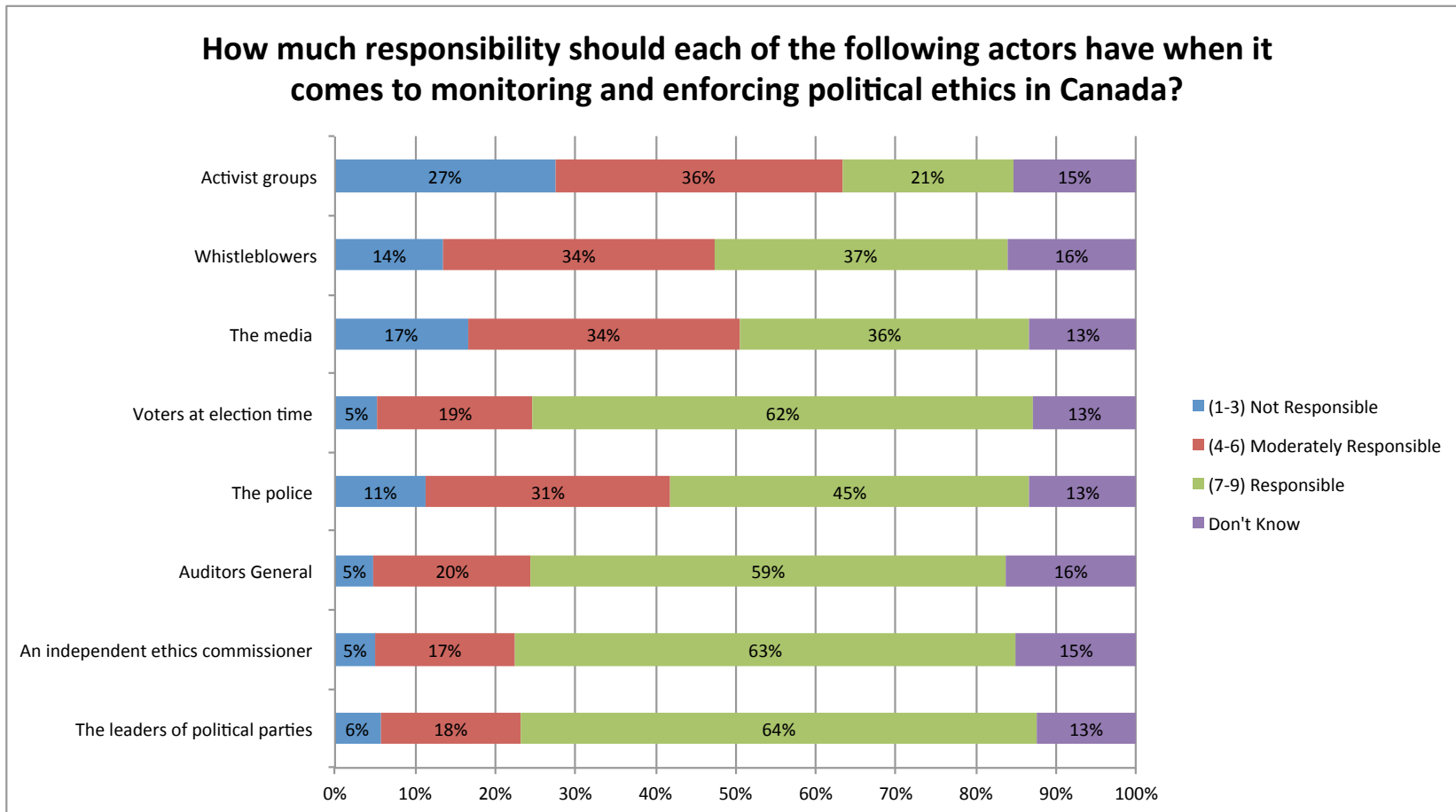


Voting Behaviour

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



'Policing' Ethical Behaviour



Key Findings

- Just 1/3 of Canadians say that they are “satisfied” with the ethical behaviour of the leaders of our federal political parties.
- Canadians reject the idea that only unethical people go into politics; instead, they lay blame on pressure to make campaign promises, and believe that politics has a tendency to corrupt otherwise honest people.
- Most Canadians believe that a person who is dishonest in his or her personal life cannot be trusted in their professional role.
- Perceptions of ethics matter to how Canadians vote: in the face of perceived corruption, some Canadians vote for a different party, while others claim to avoid voting altogether.
- Canadians believe that responsibility for ‘policing’ ethical behaviour in politics rests with party leaders and with voters at election time.

Thank you

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