

Underpinnings of the Party Slogans

An Assessment of the Conservative Party's "It's time for you to get ahead" versus the Liberal's "Choose Forward" slogans when tied to day to day living and the broader economy – with reference to the NDP's "In it for you" and the Green Party's "Not Left. Not Right. Forward Together."

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A **DART** & **Maru/Blue**

Voice Canada Poll

*This public opinion survey is branded as the **DART** & **Maru/Blue** Voice Canada Poll. Both firms are non-partisan and comprised of well-known national veteran survey/research professionals who have worked together for decades.*

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September 16, 2019 – A new **DART** & **Maru/Blue** Voice Canada Poll provides an assessment of the party slogans viewed through the lens of day to day living and the broader economy, and demonstrates how a subtle, but critical nuance in interpretation about the lives that Canadians currently have, can make a huge difference in how the parties shaping their messages for a path to victory.

It shows how the Scheer Conservatives have tapped into a *very deep well of discontent*: when most Canadians dig into their wallets and their day-to-day living, they believe *they're worse off than they were in 2015 when the Trudeau Liberals came to power*. Hence the "It's time for you to get ahead" slogan and messaging.

And it contrasts with the more complex/presumptive Trudeau Liberal theme that taps into the view of many of the same (and other) Canadians: regardless of the daily grind and any setbacks they may have experienced over the past four years, they feel good about their *more overarching current state of living*. As such, the Liberals are asking Canadians to "Choose Forward" with a continued agenda and not return to the villainized Harper days that would jeopardize all of that.

The assessment also suggests a great **irony**: the NDP's "In it for you" is *exactly* the kind of slogan/message that taps into the same discontent that the Scheer Conservatives are channelling – and should be duly exploited. If anything, this analysis below provides a good roadmap for the Singh followers to consider.

As for the Green party's "**Not Left. Not Right. Forward Together**", it offers a more political choice at the ballot box based primarily on the discontent held by Canadians for all of the other parties – more a call for refuge and strength in numbers to move the party itself forward than a clarion call based on the betterment of the pocketbook or state of living.

The **DART & Maru/Blue Voice Canada Poll** was undertaken for Sun News/Post Media as part of a regular sounding of Canadians on various issues that affect their lives as citizens, consumers, and voters. The survey was conducted among 1,517 randomly selected Canadian adults who are members of **Maru/Blue's Voice Canada** Online panel on September 11, 2019 and is considered accurate to within +/- 2.9 percentage points. The survey identified 1,253 decided or leaning voters out of the total sample. *Because of extremely small sample sizes, approval ratings cannot be provided for Prince Edward Island, Nunavut and both the Yukon and Northwest Territories.*

DART took two different measures of Canadians: the first is how they feel about their *current economic living conditions compared to four years ago* when the Trudeau Liberals were first elected to office; and, the second is based on how Canadian's react when hearing statements on various aspects of Canada's economy their living conditions from leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others to form *assessment and projective perspectives*. The results of both were then tallied and averaged separately into two corresponding indices.

What emerges, not unexpectedly, from the analysis are two separate themes – the first about livability which frames the thrust of the Conservative Party of Canada early campaign emphasis on affordability while the second appears to be the frame the conceptual entreats of the Liberal Party of Canada for voters on broader concepts tied to the economy and livability.

This is not only evident in terms of the themes but is also of the political geographic and sociodemographic battlegrounds between the two parties as they battle for the hearts and minds of Canadians.

And, it's critical to note that there's a big difference between assessing one's *current state of living* when *compared to four years ago* and the broader concept of *livability* today without asking for that rear view mirror comparison, but rather a different kind of comparison with what you might have if

given the choice. This is an age old campaign rhetoric: “are you better off than you were?” versus “will you be better off in the future with us versus them?”.

On the one hand, when Andrew Scheer intones to Canadians by speech and slogan with “**It's time for you to get ahead**”, it connects and causes leverage with real time affordability and economic comparisons that Canadians have to where they were four years ago: for the most part, *they believe they are worse off than they were in 2015*. The findings reveal, for the most part, that has the most traction is attached to views on the affordability of day to day living, the ability to get ahead financially, the Canadian economy, and their personal financial situation – all of which are perceived in a highly negative fashion, while views on current working conditions, the most positive of the grouping, is barely above water. In short, Mr. Scheer is in the pocketbook of every Canadian and it has a significant impact in certain regions of the country and in terms of various socioeconomic demographic elements of the population.

By focusing on this thematic, Mr. Scheer and the Conservatives have tapped into a very potent undercurrent – when Canadians are divorced from the bigger, more conceptual, perspectives on the economy, job creation and livability, outside of Québec they are incredibly disgruntled and deeply forlorn about their current state of affairs.

On the other hand, the data clearly identifies that the more aspirational “**Choose Forward**” slogan and talking points for the Liberal party resonates differently with where *their* campaign is apparently targeted both geographically and towards the “middle-class”: Québec, Atlantic Canada, Ontario, British Columbia, younger Canadians (aged 18 – 34), those with middle to upper income (both likely believing they are part of the “middle class”), those with higher education and those whose mother tongue is French. This appears to be very highly targeted (narrowcasted) effort that completely counters the messaging from the Conservative party.

For the Liberals, the *best attribute driver* for the **Assessment and Projective Perspectives Index** is the that individuals feel good about their *current state of living* and has the best resonance in every province/region except Alberta with Québec at the highest end of the scale followed by Atlantic Canada and British Columbia (with Ontario right in the middle of the pack.)

By apparently providing the thrust of the Liberal campaign around a key attribute with a slogan to “Choose Forward”, it captures a collective perspective with strong resonance in key areas of the country that the Liberals need to win: the slogan appears to take the leading attribute, frame it, and then ask Canadians whether they want to go back to the days of a previous Harper Conservative ruling party or to move this perspective forward under the leadership of the incumbent Trudeau government.

But when the *negative drivers* are examined, it also shows that the Trudeau government is actually on fairly thin ice. To varying degrees, the following statements can be powerfully used *against* the Trudeau Liberals because of their negative resonance in those same areas:

- The federal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good job managing the economy and creating jobs
- Feel that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong
- Leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others say that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong

This is bolstered by the fact that these perspectives hurt the Liberals when voters hear the statements from the Conservatives in provinces that they need the most to win a minority or majority government. For example, in Ontario this index indicates that **Ontario** has a **-14** on the belief of leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others [who] say that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong. As such, there is little room for third party support for the Liberals among this group for the view that the economy is in good shape and job growth is strong and likely reflects the self assessments that the Conservatives are using for their own campaign aspirational and assessment projections.

These three negative drivers, when *combined* with the findings of the *current economic living conditions compared to four years ago*, create a very lethal combination against the Liberals. This is likely the reason that Liberal party’s *personal attacks on both Mr. Scheer and his individual party members* as well as singling out social policy issues on things such as same-sex marriage/abortion continue to escalate in the province of Ontario and in some other spots across the country: their War Room

knows that this is the highly negative personification they want inflict because the positive attributes they are using on the economy, reflected in “moving forward”, can’t do it alone.

Finally, we have said little in this analysis about the other two main parties and their slogans: the NDP’s “**In it for you.**” And the Green Party’s “**Not Left. Not Right. Forward Together.**” The first reason is based on current voter support of the two parties and the propensity to form either up minority or majority government – the Liberals and the Conservatives are the marquee parties of choice in the election.

The second reason relates to the slogans themselves: this analysis suggests, ironically, that there’s *much in it* for the NDP to be using the Conservative comparison assessments about the economy and living conditions where they are apparently *in it for Canadians*. It provides a great foil for the Trudeau Liberals and allows the NDP to broaden their appeal or to not only other social policy issues but also in terms of a potential choice that they might have to make in a minority government situation.

And that leaves us with the Green party slogan. While seemingly adopting some of the Liberal party positioning with “Forward Together”, it is more of an ideological than an economic/living conditions assessment (although some might make the argument that “we’re all in the same boat economically so we can move together in a better way” is a sentiment that can be captured from this slogan.)

They’re *Not Left. Not Right. Forward Together* appears to be much more of a philosophically political positioning to differentiate themselves as being the *middle party* of choice. And while the Green party does have an economic/livability platform, they have the luxury of taking the worst aspects of both of the index findings from below and weapon icing them against the other two major parties.

The data also shows a *gender gap* with women who are apparently feeling harder done by than men compared to 2015. This matters because of the time and effort Mr. Trudeau and his government have spent with a focus on gender equality and catering to issues of importance to women. And even though some might argue that how women feel worse off is directly related to their inequality in areas of the economy, there is no denying the fact that this perspective plays to Mr. Scheer and the Conservative’s mantra as the data indicates that on this index, women score a **-18.2** while men score a much lower Male **-11.6**.

On the other hand, when examining the broader concepts used by the Liberals, the data *also* shows no apparent advantage for Mr. Trudeau with both men (+51) and women (+51.4) dead even on the same attributes measured (data was added from all five aspirational attributes and averaged.) But the lesson from the findings is this: for all the time and effort that Mr. Trudeau and his government have placed on women as a political cohort, the livability dimensions and broader perspectives on the economy have certainly not bought a greater bounty at the present time. Hence, other issues such as painting the Conservatives as the revivalists of an anti-abortion society is a distinct countermeasure.

And finally, let's not forget that in order to form a majority government in Canada you need roughly between 37% and 40%. This can mean that if you find the right combination of topic and narrowcasting you can target 60 to 100 ridings in the country and dig in hard there instead of in the rest of the land. What's important for people and pundits alike then is this: every morning the leader of Canada can wake up and have almost 2/3 of the public who don't want that person in office and still win a majority of the seats to be in the driver seat.

Calculating the Net Index Score...

The index score is calculated by first determining the net of "better minus worse" (leaving "the same" as neutral) for each of the five statements. Once the *net scores* of each of the five statements are determined, they are averaged which produces the *net index score*.

The Canadian Economic Livability Index...

This index is created to determine Canadians feel about the current economic living conditions at the present time. What's important to point out is that the index *does not measure aspirational beliefs or outlooks* - the findings reflect *comparable assessments about the economy and their own living conditions related to the economy relative to the Trudeau Liberals being elected 4 years ago*.

1. *Thinking about the following, are the following much better, somewhat better, the same, somewhat worse, or absolutely worse than they were in 2015 (four years ago)?*

Net Index Score -15

- *The affordability of day to day living*

Net score -46

Better 13% (much 4%/somewhat 9%)

The same 28%

Worse 59% (absolutely 19%/somewhat 40%)

- *Your ability to get ahead financially*

Net score -16

Better 23% (much 5%/somewhat 18%)

The same 38%

Worse 39% (absolutely 15%/somewhat 24%)

- *The Canadian economy*

Net score -13

Better 25% (much 5%/somewhat 20%)

The same 37%

Worse 38% (absolutely 11%/somewhat 27%)

- *Your personal financial situation*

Net score -4

Better 29% (much 8%/somewhat 21%)

The same 38%

Worse 33% (absolutely 11%/somewhat 22%)

- *Your working conditions*

Net score **+4**

Better 21% (much 7%/somewhat 15%)

The same 61%

Worse 18% (absolutely 7%/somewhat 11%)

Ranked Index Score by Categories

- **Provinces/regions** – Alberta **-45.2**, Atlantic Canada **-27.6**, Manitoba/Saskatchewan **-25.2**, Ontario **-15.6**, British Columbia **-13.2**, Québec **+3.2**
- **Gender** – Female **-18.2**, Male **-11.6**
- **Age** – 18 – 34 **-7.4**, 35 – 54 **-22.4**, 55+ **-19**
- **Household income** – less than \$50,000 **-17**, \$50,000 – \$99,000 **-11**, \$100,000 + **-10.8**
- **Education** – High school or less **-29**, College/technical school **-20**, University **-1**

Descending order ranked index score

- Québec **+3.2**
- Education University **-1**
- Age 18 – 34 **-7.4**
- Household income \$100,000 + **-10.8**
- Household income \$50,000 – \$99,000 **-11**
- Male **-11.6**
- British Columbia **-13.2**
- Ontario **-15.6**
- Household income less than \$50,000 **-17**
- Female **-18.2**
- Age 55+ **-19**
- Education College/technical school **-20**
- Age 35 – 54 **-22.4**

- Manitoba/Saskatchewan **-25.2**
- Atlantic Canada **-27.6**
- Education High school or less **-29**
- Alberta **-45.2**

Driving issue by province/region

- Alberta: affordability of day-to-day living **(-70)**
- Atlantic Canada: affordability of day-to-day living **(-59)**
- Manitoba/Saskatchewan: affordability of day-to-day living **(-53)**
- British Columbia: affordability of day-to-day living **(-52)**
- Ontario: affordability of day-to-day living **(-51)**
- Québec: affordability of day-to-day living **(-18)**

Ranked Index Components by Category (ranked)

- **Total:** your working conditions **+3**, your personal financial situation **-4**, the Canadian economy **-13**, your ability to get ahead financially **-16**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-46**
- **British Columbia:** your working conditions **+4**, your personal financial situation **+3**, the Canadian economy **-3**, your ability to get ahead financially **-18**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-52**
- **Alberta:** your working conditions **-20**, your personal financial situation **-36**, your ability to get ahead financially **-46**, the Canadian economy **-54**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-70**
- **Manitoba/Saskatchewan:** your working conditions **-3**, your personal financial situation **-14**, your ability to get ahead financially **-28**, the Canadian economy **-28**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-53**
- **Ontario:** your working conditions **+3**, your personal financial situation *net 0*, the Canadian economy **-13**, your ability to get ahead financially **-17**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-51**

- **Québec:** your working conditions **+15**, your personal financial situation **+8**, your ability to get ahead financially **+6**, the Canadian economy **+5**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-18**
- **Atlantic Canada:** your working conditions **-1**, your personal financial situation **-17**, the Canadian economy **-27**, your ability to get ahead financially **-34**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-59**
- **Men:** your working conditions **+5**, your personal financial situation *net 0*, the Canadian economy **-8**, your ability to get ahead financially **-14**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-41**
- **Women:** your working conditions **+1**, your personal financial situation **-6**, your ability to get ahead financially **-18**, the Canadian economy **-19**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-49**
- **Aged 18 - 34:** your working conditions **+30**, the Canadian economy **-1**, your ability to get ahead financially **-8**, your personal financial situation **-24**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-34**
- **Aged 35 - 54:** your working conditions **-6**, your personal financial situation **-9**, the Canadian economy **-21**, your ability to get ahead financially **-24**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-52**
- **Aged 55+:** your working conditions **-3**, your personal financial situation **-12**, the Canadian economy **-13**, your ability to get ahead financially **-23**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-44**
- **Household income \$50,000 or less:** working conditions **+3**, your personal financial situation **-9**, the Canadian economy **-14**, your ability to get ahead financially **-21**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-44**
- **Household income \$50,000 - \$99,000:** your working conditions **+8**, your personal financial situation **-1**, the Canadian economy **-7**, your ability to get ahead financially **-11**,
- **Household income \$100,000 +:** your personal financial situation **+6**, your working conditions **+2**, your ability to get ahead financially **-7**, the Canadian economy **-11**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-44**
- **High school education or less:** your working conditions **+2**, your personal financial situation **-17**, the Canadian economy **-23**, your ability to get ahead financially **-29**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-48**
- **College/technical school:** your working conditions **-4**, your personal financial situation **-9**, your ability to get ahead financially **-20**, the Canadian economy **-21**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-47**

- **University+**: your working conditions **+14**, your personal financial situation **+13**, the Canadian economy **+3**, your ability to get ahead financially **-1**, the affordability of day-to-day living **-41**

Assessment and Projective Statements ...

The following are a series of statements regarding various conditions with respect to the Canadian economy. These are *not comparative assessments* related to economic, job, or market conditions prior to the election of the Trudeau government in 2015 but assessment and projective statements.

Projective Perspectives Index

As noted above, the Projective Perspectives Index is based on the average of the following 5 statements (top box 2 minus top box 1).

The following are the index scores by ranked province/region compared to the national Index score and which statements are driving the *most positive driving statement* of each Index number:

- **National Index** – **+7.6**: feel good about your current state of living **+24**
- **Québec** – **+21.6**: feel good about your current state of living **+36**
- **Atlantic Canada** – **+3.6**: feel good about your current state of living **+14**
- **British Columbia** – **+1.6** feel good about your current state of living **+24**
- **Manitoba/Saskatchewan** – **-2**: feel good about your current state of living **+34**
- **Ontario** – **-3** feel good about your current state of living **+24**
- **Alberta** – **-32.4**: feel good about your current state of living **-8**

In the alternate, the following is the *most negative statement* driving the bottom end of the Projective Perspectives Index from both the national and provincial/ regional areas of the country:

- **National index** – **-6**: believe the federal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good job managing the economy and creating jobs

- **British Columbia** – **-26**: believe the federal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good job managing the economy and creating jobs
- **Alberta** – **-48**: feel that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong
- **Manitoba/Saskatchewan** – **-22**: believe leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others [who] say that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong
- **Ontario** – **-14**: believe leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others [who] say that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong
- **Québec** – **+10**: believe leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others [who] say that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong
- **Atlantic Canada** – **-10**: believe leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others [who] say that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong

When you hear leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others say that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong...

- *Do you believe them?* **44%** (8% very much/36% somewhat); **Don’t believe them 56%** (23% not all/33% not very much)

Those most likely to believe this statement hail from Québec (55%) followed by those from Atlantic Canada (45%), Ontario (43%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (39%), British Columbia (37%) and Alberta (29%). With respect to socioeconomic and demographic groups, those most likely to believe this are aged 18 – 34 (49%), those with highest (\$100,000 +48%) and middle income (\$50,000 – \$99,000.47 percent), and those most educated (University +52%) and those whose mother tongue is French (53%).

- *Do you feel that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong?* **Agree 53%** (9% very much/44% somewhat); **Disagree 47%** (agree 16% not all/32% not very much)

Those most likely to feel that Canada’s economy is in good shape and job growth is strong are from Québec (65%), followed by those from British Columbia (54%), Atlantic Canada (53%),

Ontario (52%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (48%) and Alberta (26%). With respect to socioeconomic and demographic groups, those most likely to believe this statement are young (aged 18 – 34 60%), middle income (\$50,000-\$99,000 56%), University educated (61%) and those whose mother tongue is French (63%).

- ***Do you feel optimistic about the economy and job market over the next year? Agree 51%*** (8% very much/43% somewhat); ***Disagree 49%*** (agree 13% not all/37% not very much)

Those most likely to feel optimistic about the economy and job market over the next year are from Québec (60%) followed by those from British Columbia (55%), Atlantic Canada (51%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (49%), Ontario (48%) and Alberta (33%). With respect to socioeconomic and demographic groups, those most likely to believe this statement are young (18 – 34 58%), followed by those who are middle (\$50,000 – \$99,000.54 percent) or upper income (\$100,000 +54%), higher educated (56%), and those whose mother tongue is French (60%).

- ***Do you feel good about your current state of living? Agree 62%*** (12% very much/50% somewhat); ***Disagree 38%*** (agree 13% not all/25% not very much)

Those most likely to feel good about their current state of living are from Québec (68%) followed by those from Manitoba/Saskatchewan (67%), British Columbia (62%) and Ontario (62%), Atlantic Canada (57%) and Alberta (46%). With respect to socioeconomic and demographic groups, those most likely to believe this statement are those who are the most highly compensated (household income \$100,000 +72%) and highest educated (University +71%) followed by young Canadians (aged 18 – 34 66%), those with middle income (\$50,000 \$99,000.66 percent) and those who are 55+ (65%).

- ***Do you believe the Federal Government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good job managing the economy and creating jobs: Agree 47%*** (10% very much/37% somewhat); ***Disagree 53%*** (agree 26% not all/27% not very much)

Those most likely to believe the Federal Government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good job managing the economy and creating jobs are from Québec (56%) followed by those from Atlantic Canada (53%), Ontario (46%) and British Columbia (46%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (42%) and Alberta (27%). With respect to socioeconomic and demographic groups, those most likely to believe this statement are younger Canadians (18 – 34 59%), those who are and highest educated (University +55%), those whose mother tongue is French (53%) and middle income Canadians (\$50,000-\$99,000 52%).

Section Summation...

Those most likely to agree with the various statements above are as follows:

- ***Believe leaders in the business community, economists, politicians, and others when they say that Canada's economy is in good shape and job growth is strong:*** Québec (55%), Atlantic Canada (45%) and Ontario (43%), those aged 18 – 34 (49%) and middle to higher income (48%), and University educated (52%).
- ***Feel that Canada's economy is in good shape and job growth is strong:*** Québec (65%), British Columbia (54%), Atlantic Canada (53%), Ontario (52%), those aged 18 – 34 (60%), Canadians who are middle income (\$50,000 – \$99,000 56%) those with the highest education (61%) and those whose mother tongue is French (63%).
- ***Feel optimistic about the economy and job market over the next year:*** Québec (60%) and British Columbia (55%), young Canadians (aged 18 – 34 58%) those who are middle income or higher (54%), those highest educated (56%) and those whose mother tongue is French (60%).
- ***Feel good about their current state of living:*** Québec (68%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (67%) and with Ontario and British Columbia tied (62%), young (aged 18 – 34 66%), those who are the highest earners (72%), University educated (71%) and those whose mother tongue is French (67%).

- *Believe the federal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done a good job managing the economy and creating jobs:* Québec (56%), Atlantic Canada (53%), young Canadians (aged 18 – 34 59%), those who are middle income earners (\$50,000-\$99,000 52%) those who are University educated (55%) and those whose mother tongue is French (53%).

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Methodology

*These are some of the topline findings of a **DART & Maru/Blue Voice Canada** conducted as part of a regular sounding of Canadians on various issues and matters that affect their lives as citizens, consumers, and voters. The research is created and analyzed under the direction of veteran pollster John Wright, who is a Partner of **DART C-Suite Communicators**. Data was collected by Canada's national survey sample research provider **Maru/Blue** using their **Voice Canada** Omni Online curated panel.*

*The survey was conducted among 1,517 randomly selected Canadian adults who are members of **Maru/Blue's** Online panel on September 11, 2019. The survey identified 1,253 decided or leaning voters out of the total sample. Respondents could opt in for either official language. The results have been weighted by education, age, gender, and region to match the population, according to Census data. This is to ensure the sample is representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Reporting of results from Prince Edward Island, Nunavut and both the Yukon and Northwest Territories is excluded because of extremely small sample sizes. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. Voter intent is weighted by past vote and demographics. The precision of this **DART & Maru/Blue Voice Canada Poll** is measured using a Bayesian Credibility Interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 2.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population and individual provinces.*

Visit <http://www.dartincom.ca/polls/> for the written release and detailed tables.

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