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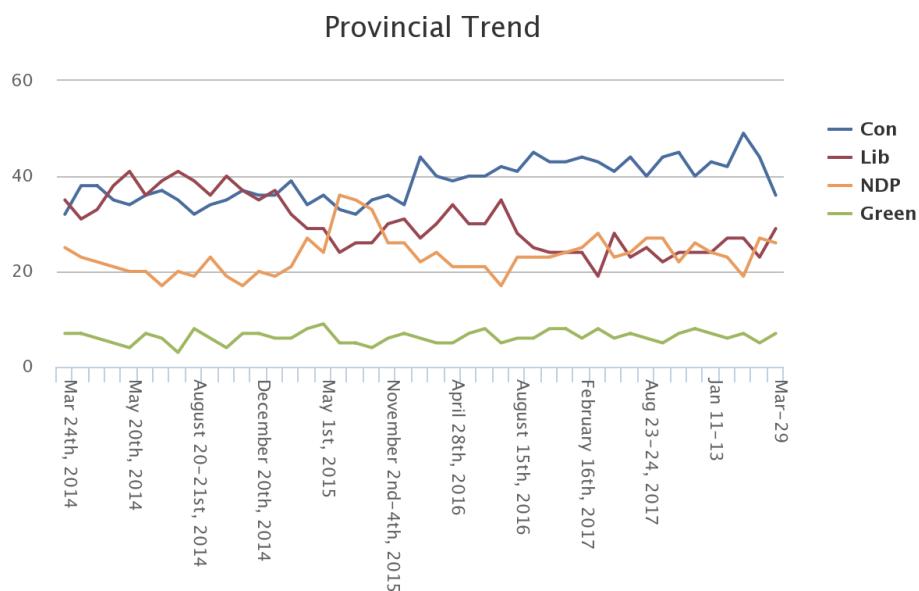
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## Budget a Lifeline for Liberals?

Toronto, March 29th - In a random sampling of public opinion taken by The Forum Poll™ among 728 Ontario voters, the gap between the Progressive Conservatives and Ontario Liberals has narrowed substantially. The Progressive Conservatives, who have led for the better part of a year now have a race on their hands with a resurgence from the Liberal party. The NDP also benefit from the PC's declining support as well.

The PCs see support from decided and leaning voters of about one-third (36%), while the Liberals (29%) are just under a third, and the NDP (26%) are at one-quarter.

If an election were held today, the PCs would win a minority government of 57 seats. The Liberals would serve as opposition with 36 seats and the NDP would win 31.



## Three-quarters heard at least something about the budget

A third (34%) have heard a lot about the budget, while 4 in 10 (42%) have heard some. About one-sixth (14%) have heard not a lot, while 1 in 10 (9%) say they've heard almost nothing.



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### **4 in 10 disapprove of the budget**

Only a quarter (24%) say they approve, with the plurality (44%) saying they disapprove. A third (32%) said they do not know whether they approve or disapprove.

### **Plurality say they are less likely to vote Liberal**

Almost half (45%) say they are less likely to vote Liberal, with a quarter (25%) saying it will have no effect on their vote, and 2 in 10 (18%) saying they are more likely to vote liberal. About 1 in 10 (9%) say they do not know.

### **More than a third say it's bad for economy**

A third (38%) say it will be bad for the economy and one-fifth saying (22%) saying it will be good. A quarter (26%) say it will be neither, and one-sixth (15%) say they do not know.

### **Ontarians divided on a balanced budget versus more spending on programs and services**

Just over half (56%) say they prefer a balanced budget to the 4 in 10 (44%) who say they prefer more spending on programs and services.

### **Overall, Ontarians are supportive of many specific elements of the budget**

Free daycare sees approval from half (53%) with 4 in 10 (41%) saying they disapprove. Few say they do not know (5%).

Spending more on special education teachers and assistants sees approval from more than half (55%) and disapproval from a third (34%). 1 in 10 (11%) say they do not know.

Spending money to expand capacity at SickKids sees approval from almost two-thirds (59%) and disapproval from just one-quarter (25%). One sixth (16%) do not know.



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Spending to reduce overcrowding at hospitals sees approval from three-quarters (74%) and disapproval from only one-sixth (17%). Only (9%) say they don't know.

Eliminating co-pay/deductibles from senior prescriptions sees approval from just under two-thirds (61%) and disapproval from about one-quarter (28%). Only (11%) say they do not know.

Expanding broadband internet in the North and rural communities sees approval from half (49%) with 4 in 10 (38%) saying they disapprove. One-sixth (14%) say they do not know.

Two-thirds (68%) say they approve of improving home care, while one-fifth (21%) say they disapprove. (12%) say they do not know.

Two-thirds (65%) say they approve of offering seniors a benefit to help with maintenance to stay in their homes longer. A quarter (24%) disapprove and (11%) say they do not know.

"The increase in support for the Liberals is as drastic as it is sudden," said Dr. Lorne Bozinoff, President of Forum Research. "We've shown nothing but a sea of blue in Ontario for more than a year, with the Liberals swapping between second and third. If the Liberals can turn this spark of life into momentum, it could open the door just slightly toward a competitive race in June. This budget looks like a good start for the provincial Liberals."

Lorne Bozinoff, Ph.D. is the president and founder of Forum Research. He can be reached at [lbozinoff@forumresearch.com](mailto:lbozinoff@forumresearch.com) or at (416) 960-9603.

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## Methodology

The Forum Poll™ was conducted by Forum Research with the results based on an interactive voice response telephone survey of 728 randomly selected Ontario Voters. The poll was conducted March 28 and 29, 2018.

Results based on the total sample are considered accurate +/- 4%, 19 times out of 20. Subsample results will be less accurate. Margins of error for subsample (such as age, gender) results are available at [www.forumresearch.com/samplestim.asp](http://www.forumresearch.com/samplestim.asp)

Where appropriate, the data has been statistically weighted by age, region, and other variables to ensure that the sample reflects the actual population according to the latest Census data.

This research is not necessarily predictive of future outcomes, but rather, captures opinion at one point in time. Forum Research conducted this poll as a public service and to demonstrate our survey research capabilities. Actual results depend on the parties' ability to get their voters out. Forum houses its poll results in the Data Library of the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto.

With offices across Canada and around the world, 100% Canadian-owned Forum Research is one of the country's leading survey research firms. This Forum Poll™ and other polls may be found at Forum's poll archive at [www.forumresearch.com/polls.asp](http://www.forumresearch.com/polls.asp)

## Budget Overall

%	Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
Reducing Overcrowding in Hospitals	74	17	9
More home care	68	21	12
Maintenance benefit (Seniors)	65	24	11
No co-pay/deductible on Seniors' Rx	61	28	11
Sick Kids	59	25	16
Special Education	55	34	11
Daycare	53	41	5
Northern/Rural Broadband	49	38	14



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**Voter intent**

*If a provincial election were held today in Ontario, which party are you most likely to vote for? + Even though you may not have made up your mind, which party are you leaning towards at this time?*

[Base=decided and leaning]

**Age/Gender**

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	699	157	120	121	145	156	401	277
Progressive Conservative	36	33	42	42	32	35	41	33
Liberal	29	27	22	27	31	35	28	31
New Democratic	26	29	27	25	32	20	26	26
Green	7	10	5	4	5	8	4	9
Another Party	2	1	4	3	0	1	1	1

**Region**

%	Total	Eastern Ontario	Toronto 416	Toronto 905	South-western Ontario	Northern Ontario
Sample	699	136	226	144	129	64
Progressive Conservative	36	41	27	41	39	29
Liberal	29	33	39	29	20	22
New Democratic	26	19	28	22	32	33
Green	7	5	3	5	10	15
Another Party	2	2	2	3	0	0



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### Awareness

*How much have you seen, read or heard about the Ontario provincial budget?*

### Age/Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	728	163	128	125	150	162	414	291
A lot	34	28	32	37	38	39	38	31
Some	42	38	37	46	47	44	44	41
Not a lot	14	17	19	11	10	14	12	17
Almost nothing	9	16	12	6	5	3	7	11

### Region

%	Total	Eastern Ontario	Toronto 416	Toronto 905	South-western Ontario	Northern Ontario
Sample	728	140	234	147	140	67
A lot	34	36	32	37	32	33
Some	42	45	38	43	45	40
Not a lot	14	9	19	9	18	22
Almost nothing	9	10	10	11	5	6



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### **Budget approval/disapproval**

*The Ontario budget for 2018 was just released. Do you approve or disapprove of this budget?*

### **Age/Gender**

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	728	163	128	125	150	162	414	291
Approve	24	21	13	18	31	37	24	25
Disapprove	44	43	49	53	44	34	52	37
Don't know	32	35	39	29	25	28	24	38

### **Region**

%	Total	Eastern Ontario	Toronto 416	Toronto 905	South-western Ontario	Northern Ontario
Sample	728	140	234	147	140	67
Approve	24	22	31	23	20	26
Disapprove	44	51	33	50	42	45
Don't know	32	27	36	27	38	29



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### Voter shift

*Overall, will this budget make you more likely, less likely, or neither more nor less likely to vote Liberal in the next Ontario provincial election?*

### Age/Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	728	163	128	125	150	162	414	291
More likely to vote Liberal	18	15	11	20	16	28	20	17
The budget will have no effect on your vote	28	26	31	24	34	26	25	31
Less likely to vote Liberal	45	45	48	49	44	40	49	40
Don't know	9	14	11	7	6	5	6	12

### Region

%	Total	Eastern Ontario	Toronto 416	Toronto 905	South-western Ontario	Northern Ontario
Sample	728	140	234	147	140	67
More likely to vote Liberal	18	20	25	18	13	14
The budget will have no effect on your vote	28	31	31	31	16	32
Less likely to vote Liberal	45	39	34	45	57	49
Don't know	9	10	10	5	14	5





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**Economy**

*Is this budget good for Ontario's economy, bad for the economy, or is it neither good nor bad for the economy?*

**Age/Gender**

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	728	163	128	125	150	162	414	291
Good for the economy	22	23	16	19	16	33	21	23
Neither good nor bad	26	17	32	21	34	29	24	28
Bad for the economy	38	41	33	44	38	30	41	33
Don't know	15	19	19	16	12	8	13	17

**Region**

%	Total	Eastern Ontario	Toronto 416	Toronto 905	South-western Ontario	Northern Ontario
Sample	728	140	234	147	140	67
Good for the economy	22	23	29	20	18	20
Neither good nor bad	26	22	25	28	25	26
Bad for the economy	38	41	31	39	38	40
Don't know	15	14	15	12	20	13



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### Balance v. More spending

Overall, which is more important to you: a balanced budget or more spending on programs and services?

### Age/Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	728	163	128	125	150	162	414	291
A balanced budget	56	55	57	63	58	48	63	48
More spending on programs and services	44	45	43	37	42	52	37	52

### Region

%	Total	Eastern Ontario	Toronto 416	Toronto 905	South-western Ontario	Northern Ontario
Sample	728	140	234	147	140	67
A balanced budget	56	55	49	58	60	55
More spending on programs and services	44	45	51	42	40	45



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