AN OVERVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN AND A REASONED GUESS AT THE OUTCOME

WYNNE LIKELY HEADED FOR MAJORITY

[Ottawa – June 11, 2014] – Wynne has recaptured what was a highly stable, modest lead (37.3 per cent, versus 31.3 for the Progressive Conservatives). The about-to-conclude 41st Ontario general election has been an interesting and closely contested contest. It featured an unusually stark choice between two highly contradictory policy visions – a minimal government, austerity platform which assigns responsibly for growth and prosperity to the private sector and a progressive state model which sees government as both a source of insulation from the fallout of a slow-moving economy and as an agent of stimulus during a period of relative stagnation. Superimposed on this issue was the other master issue of the election; the issue of regime fatigue and high concerns with the ethics and accountability of the veteran Liberal government. Other issues such as leadership also played into this campaign but those were the two dominant issues.

In short, Wynne appears headed for a victory. Indeed, with these figures, combined with a six-point lead among likely voters, Wynne is likely headed for a majority.

Daily tracking of Ontario vote intention

Q. *How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?*

LIBERAL ONTARIO	ONTARIO PC	ONTARIO NDP	green PARTY OF ONTARIO	Other
37.3	31.3	19.2	8.2	3.9
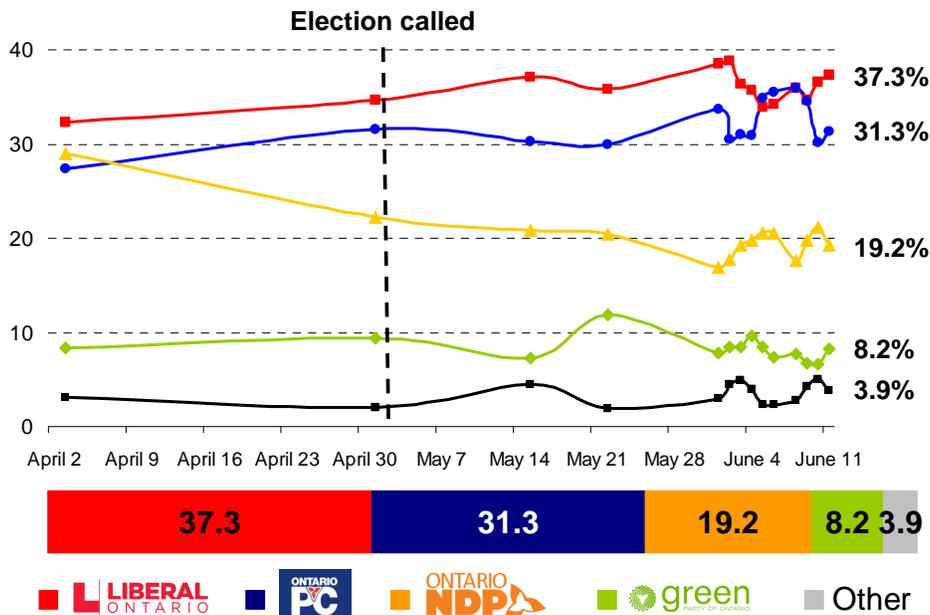
Respondents were also asked if they had already voted. Figures include the responses of those who voted in advance polls or by special ballot.

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BASE: Residents of Ontario; June 10-11, 2014 (n=1,311)

The campaign can be summarized as a five-part play:

- **Opening Act.** NDP pratfall following decision to bring down the government over a budget seen as more than acceptable compared to the dark alternative that Tim Hudak would offer. Confused and disappointed members immediately defect, leaving Horwath out of race she was tied in the week before.
- **Act Two.** A steady but modest and stable lead emerges for Kathleen Wynne who seems to winning the policy vision battle of night watchman versus activist state.
- **Act Three:** The post-debate boost to Hudak as he successfully shifts from the policy debate he was losing to a focus on ethics and accountability which is low ground for Wynne. For the first time in the campaign Hudak runs ahead on two separate nights and he has momentum.
- **Act Four.** Regression to mean as the Hudak bounce retracts to the pre-debate (Act Two) patterns and Wynne rebounds.
- **Act Five and the Closing Curtain.** While the denouement is "not over 'till it's over", it appears that Wynne will succeed in the initially improbable goal of securing a new mandate and quite possibly a majority. Exit Hudak and Wynne stage left?

Whether this is tragedy, comedy, or just a yawn depends very much on where one sits in the political spectrum. While it may seem rather surprising in light of the various claims about what the end results would be, it is notable that this result is really not that different from the results we saw in 2011 and will not come as a great surprise to the public.

Without further drama, here are our final results based on the last two nights of polling. We offer first our likely voter results, which is our best guess at what the final ballot tally will look like. We also offer the final results of what all eligible voters would have preferred.

Ontario vote intention

Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?*

Provincial results

37.3	31.3	19.2	8.2	3.9

Likely voter model

42.2	35.9	16.9	2.9	2.1

2011 Ontario Election Results

37.6	35.4	22.7	2.9	1

■ LIBERAL ONTARIO   ■ ONTARIO PC   ■ ONTARIO NDP   ■ green PARTY OF ONTARIO   ■ Other

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Note: Based on decided and leaning voters only.

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A Note on Likely Voters:

Before offering up some further diagnostics and analysis of the underlying demographic and regional patterns, we do need to explain why it is necessary to have both a likely and all-voter model and how the likely voter model was constructed.

In a more perfect world, most voters would vote and those who didn't would look very similar to those who did. This relatively more perfect world used to exist and it made the job of polling much easier and the task of evaluating pollsters much more straightforward. Alas, the new world of the permanent campaign sees many non-voters and, sometimes, more non-voters than voters. Moreover, not only are voters and non-voters systematically different, but the campaigns actively try and target those segments in order to get out (or keep home) those who are seen as helpful or harmful to their prospects for success. Therefore, good polling must both model the known population of all voters and be able to make a reasoned conjecture at the portion who will show up.

There is no textbook likely voter model and even ones which we can retrofit to the past have no assurance of working in the future (the problem of induction). We have looked carefully at what terms we can measure to come up with a reasoned guess based on observable patterns. The final model is presented below (and yes, it has been tweaked a bit to bring it into close

correspondence with what we expect given past patterns). For example, if the model shows five per cent voting "other", it is clearly flawed and needs adjustment. We focused only on tracking the unadjusted numbers during the campaign in order to provide a semantically consistent and unbiased time series for those following. The final likely voter model is unabashedly focused on one task – guessing at turnout in order to minimise the gap between predicted results and observed reality.

We have made two changes to our likely voter model since our last report. First, we no longer award additional points to those with a college or university education. This is because our analysis showed a high degree of correlation between educational attainment and likelihood to have voted in past elections. In effect, we believe we were double-counting college and university graduates by including this adjustment.

Second (and this may seem more controversial to some), we believe that our poll is exaggerating support for the Green Party and "other" parties. This is due to a combination of social desirability and those respondents who are simply so disheartened with the other party choices that they are simply choosing "none of the above", rather than expressing a genuine party preference. Indeed, in our final 2011 Ontario Election poll[1] – a survey which otherwise nailed the election result – Green Party support was exaggerated by a factor of two, while "other" was also overstated by a wide margin. For this reason, we are down-weighting Green Party and "other" support by these same margins.

To quickly summarize how the likely voter score is calculated:

- **Past vote behaviour (maximum score of 2 points).** The respondent receives one point if they voted in the 2011 federal election, one point if they voted in the 2011 Ontario election, and two points if they voted in both elections.
- **Emotional engagement (maximum score of 0.5 points).** The respondent receives half a point for indicating that they are either angry or hopeful when thinking about Kathleen Wynne's Liberal government.
- **Intention (maximum score of 2 points).** The respondent receives one point for rating their likelihood to vote as six (out of seven) or two points for rating their likelihood to vote as seven (out of seven). Alternatively, the respondent receives two points if they say they have already voted.
- **Knowing location of polling station (maximum score of 1 point).** The respondent receives one point if they "clearly" know the location of their polling station. Alternatively, the respondent receives one point if they say they have already voted.
- **Age (maximum score of 2.5 points).** The respondent receives 2.5 points if they are 65 or over, two points if they ages 45 to 64, and one point if they are ages 25 to 44.

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[1] EKOS Research Associates, "EKOS' Final Poll for the 2011 Ontario Election", October 5, 2011. Available online at: http://goo.gl/d3ItYl
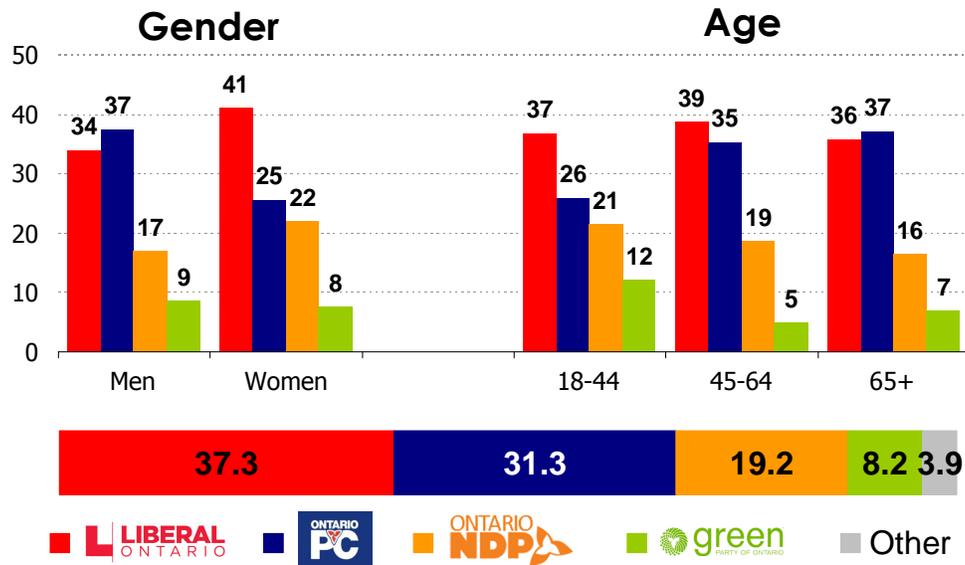
Finally, we tally the scores and identify the ~50 per cent of the population that is most likely to show up and vote on Election Day. In this case, we take all those respondents who score 6.0 or greater (out of a maximum possible score of 8.0).

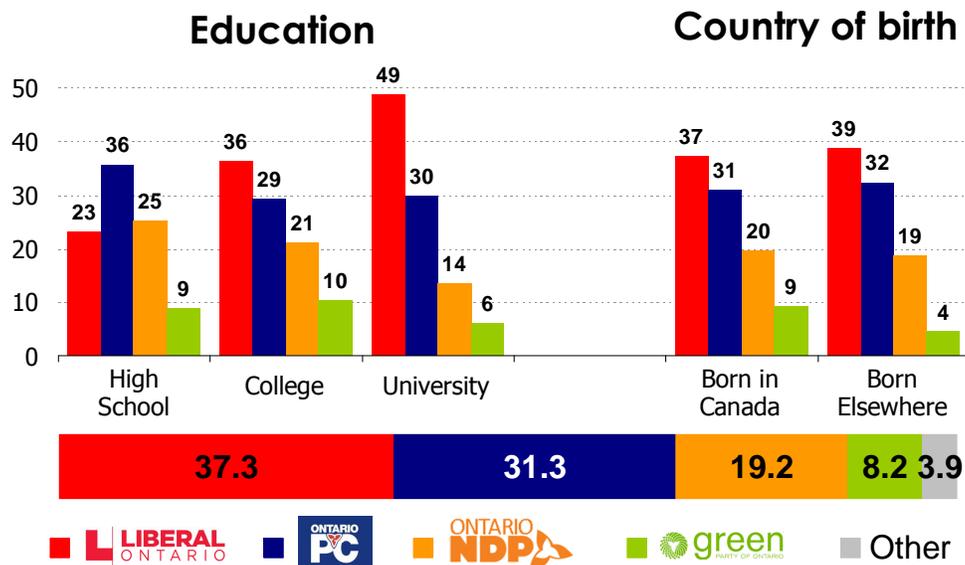# The Anatomy of Party Support

Vote intention by gender/age

Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?

Gender

	Men	Women
Liberal	34	41
PC	37	25
NDP	17	22
Green	9	8

Age

	18-44	45-64	65+
Liberal	37	39	36
PC	26	35	37
NDP	21	19	16
Green	12	5	7

37.3	31.3	19.2	8.2	3.9

■ LIBERAL ONTARIO ■ ONTARIO PC ■ ONTARIO NDP ■ green PARTY OF ONTARIO ■ Other

Respondents were also asked if they had already voted. Figures include the responses of those who voted in advance polls or by special ballot.

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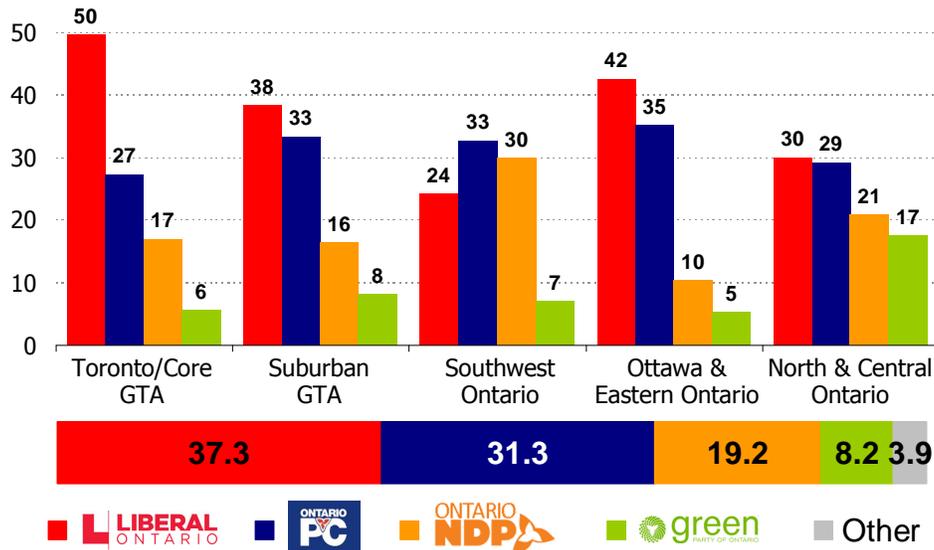
Vote intention by other demographics

Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?

Education

	High School	College	University
Liberal	23	36	49
PC	36	29	30
NDP	25	21	14
Green	9	10	6

Country of birth

	Born in Canada	Born Elsewhere
Liberal	37	39
PC	31	32
NDP	20	19
Green	9	4

37.3	31.3	19.2	8.2	3.9

■ LIBERAL ONTARIO ■ ONTARIO PC ■ ONTARIO NDP ■ green PARTY OF ONTARIO ■ Other

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Vote intention by region

Q. *How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?*

	Toronto/Core GTA	Suburban GTA	Southwest Ontario	Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	North & Central Ontario
Liberal	50	38	24	42	30
PC	27	33	33	35	29
NDP	17	16	30	10	21
Green	6	8	7	5	17

LIBERAL ONTARIO	ONTARIO PC	ONTARIO NDP	green	Other
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The demographic patterns are clear and revealing. For example, we find that Tim Hudak has shown a much stronger appeal with older males and with college graduates, but not the university educated. His supporters also revealed an "angry" emotional response to the current premier. Kathleen Wynne found greatest favour with the university educated and women, and she did well with boomers as well (all categories that she enjoys membership in). Her supporters viewed her in a "hopeful" fashion. Andrea Horwath had a less distinct constituent profile which was somewhat lower socioeconomic status and younger. They were also more "discouraged" and this combination of demographics and engagement augurs poorly for the turnout of Horwath's already diminished base.

Closing Comments

We await with more than a little curiosity the outcome of this race. We congratulate the candidates and leaders who had the courage to throw their hats in the ring. We congratulate the voters who have the commitment to actually show up and be counted. We thank the several thousand patient respondents who generously shared their views. We also thank our sponsors at iPolitics who have staked out an interest in a more ambitious program of research. We also acknowledge the skill and commitment of our colleagues and competitors who enter the arena of political polling in an era of diminished resources and rising methodological challenges.

Detailed Tables:

Provincial Vote Intention: Ontario

Q. Thinking about the upcoming provincial election on June 12th, have you already voted either at an advance poll or by special ballot?
[IF YES] How did you vote in this election?
[IF NO] How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?
[If undecided] Even if you do not have a firm idea, are you leaning towards a party?
[If yes] As it stands, towards which party are you leaning?

	LIBERAL ONTARIO	ONTARIO PC	ONTARIO NDP	green PARTY OF ONTARIO	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
OVERALL	**37.3%**	**31.3%**	**19.2%**	**8.2%**	**3.9%**	**1078**	**3.0**
REGION							
Toronto/Core GTA	49.6%	27.2%	17.0%	5.6%	0.5%	258	6.1
Suburban GTA	38.2%	33.3%	16.3%	8.1%	4.1%	268	6.0
Southwest Ontario	24.2%	32.6%	29.8%	7.0%	6.3%	217	6.7
Ottawa and Eastern Ontario	42.4%	35.1%	10.3%	5.1%	7.2%	173	7.5
NE/Central/NW Ontario	29.9%	29.2%	20.9%	17.4%	2.6%	162	7.7
GENDER							
Male	33.8%	37.4%	16.9%	8.6%	3.3%	558	4.2
Female	40.9%	25.4%	21.8%	7.5%	4.4%	510	4.3
AGE							
<45	36.7%	25.7%	21.3%	11.9%	4.4%	206	6.8
45-64	38.6%	35.2%	18.5%	4.7%	2.9%	448	4.6
65+	35.6%	37.1%	16.3%	6.8%	4.2%	413	4.8
EDUCATION							
High school or less	23.1%	35.7%	25.0%	8.7%	7.4%	191	7.1
College or CEGEP	36.3%	29.3%	21.1%	10.3%	2.8%	349	5.3
University or higher	48.7%	29.7%	13.5%	5.9%	2.2%	524	4.3
COUNTRY OF BIRTH							
Canada	37.1%	31.0%	19.5%	9.1%	3.2%	827	3.4
Other	38.6%	32.3%	18.5%	4.4%	6.2%	246	6.3

Methodology:

This study was conducted using Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology, which allows respondents to enter their preferences by punching the keypad on their phone, rather than telling them to an operator.

In an effort to reduce the coverage bias of landline only RDD, we created a dual landline/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able to reach those with a landline and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and landline only households. This methodology is not to be confused with the increasing proliferation of non-probability opt-in online panels which have recently been incorrectly reported in major national media with inappropriate margin of error estimates.

The field dates for this survey are June 10-11, 2014. In total, a random sample of 1,311 Ontario residents aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 1,078 decided voters). The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-2.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Please note that the margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as sex, age, education and region). All the data have been statistically weighted by **gender, age, and education** to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the actual population of Ontario according to Census data.