

SELINGER TOPS LEADERSHIP APPROVAL RATINGS

Women, Post-Secondary Graduates Give NDP Leader a Boost

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE


Winnipeg – NDP leader Greg Selinger enters the final days of the 2011 provincial election campaign with the highest approval ratings of any party leader, a Probe Research telephone survey of 1,000 Manitobans for the *Winnipeg Free Press* reveals. And although Mr. Selinger's approval ratings remain well below those of his predecessor, Gary Doer, Manitobans have warmed up to the new NDP leader more than his two main rivals for the Premier's chair – PC leader Hugh McFadyen or Liberal leader Jon Gerrard.

Mr. Selinger's popularity can be credited to the support of two crucial voter factions in this campaign: women voters and post-secondary graduates.

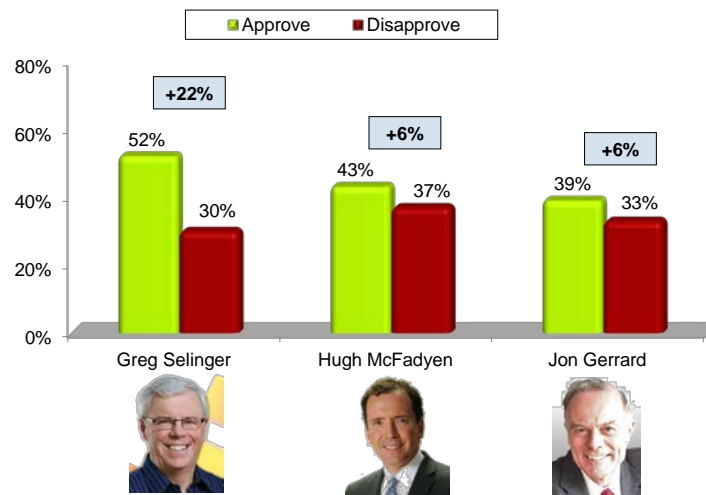
Selinger Tops on Performance Rating

When asked if they approved or disapproved of the job performances of the leaders of the province's three largest parties, one-half of Manitobans said they approved of Greg Selinger's leadership of the NDP (52%, including 16% who *strongly approve*). This compares to about four-in-ten who approved of Hugh McFadyen's leadership of the Progressive Conservatives (43%, including 13% who *strongly approve*) and Jon Gerrard's leadership of the Liberals (39%, 8% *strongly approve*).

Three-in-ten Manitobans, however, disapprove of Mr. Selinger’s leadership of the NDP (30%, including 15% who *strongly disapprove*). Mr. McFadyen had the highest proportion of those who disapprove of his leadership of his Party (37%, including 21% who *strongly disapprove*). One-third of Manitobans, meanwhile, disapprove of Mr. Gerrard’s leadership of the Liberal Party (33%, including 14% *strongly disapprove*).


Views Regarding Party Leaders

"Thinking of (PARTY LEADER), would you say you generally approve or disapprove of his performance as leader of (PARTY)? And is that strongly or moderately?" (n=1,000)



Base: All respondents

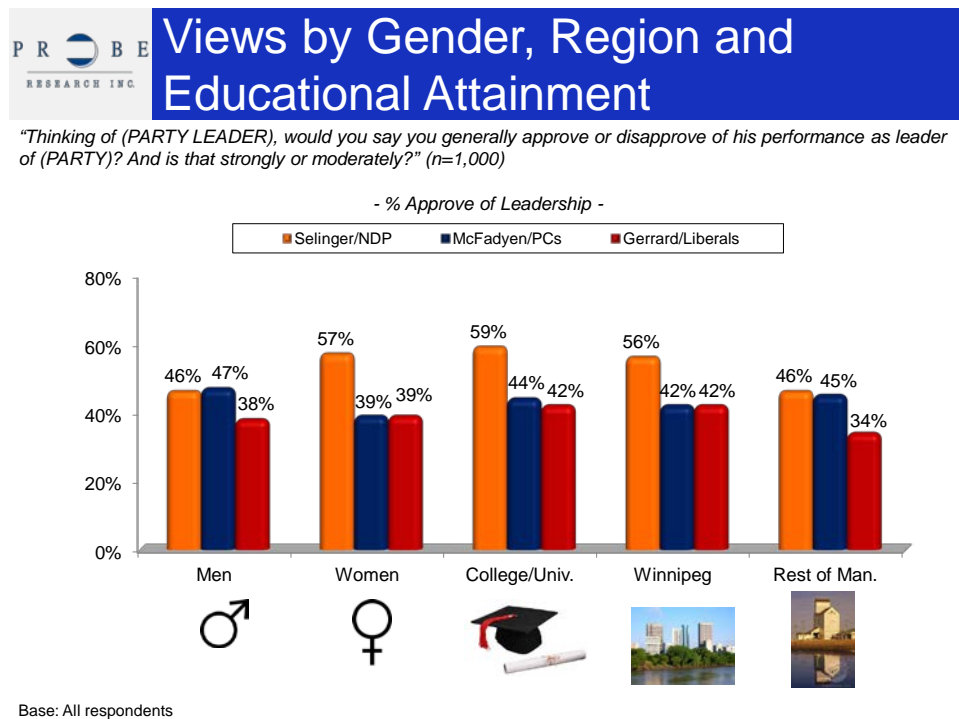
While Mr. Selinger enjoys the highest current ratings, they remain considerably lower than those enjoyed by his predecessor, Mr. Doer. Just prior to his retirement in 2009, fully two-thirds of Manitobans surveyed by Probe Research (66%) *strongly or moderately approved* of Mr. Doer’s leadership.

Interestingly, nearly one-in-five voters reserved judgement on the performance of both Mr. Selinger and Mr. McFadyen (18% and 20% undecided, respectively) while an even greater number would not rank Dr. Gerrard (28%), despite his presence at the helm of the Manitoba Liberal Party since 1999.

Women, Post-Secondary Graduates Prefer Selinger

Women are considerably more likely than men to approve of Greg Selinger's leadership of the NDP (57% versus 46% *approve*, respectively). Men, on the other hand, are just as favourably inclined toward Hugh McFadyen (47% approve) while women voters are equally split on the PC leader (39% each approve and disapprove of Mr. McFadyen).

Post-secondary graduates also voiced stronger approval ratings for Greg Selinger (59%) than they did for either Hugh McFadyen (44%) or Jon Gerrard (42%). Among those with Grade 12 education or less, there was no clear front-runner, with about four-in-ten expressing favourable views about both Greg Selinger's leadership of the NDP and Hugh McFadyen's leadership of the Progressive Conservatives (42% each). Voters in this demographic category were as likely to have no opinion about Liberal leader Jon Gerrard (34% *unsure*) as to express either approval (30%) or disapproval (36%) of his leadership.



There are also substantial regional differences in the public perceptions of the party leaders. Voters in Winnipeg voiced solid support for Greg Selinger's leadership of the NDP (56% *approve*, vs. 28% *disapprove*) while those living outside the provincial capital were cooler towards the NDP leader (46% *approve*, vs. 34% *disapprove*). There was, however, little sign of the other party leaders capitalizing on discontent towards Mr. Selinger outside Winnipeg, as Hugh McFadyen's leadership approval ratings are roughly the same in both Winnipeg and the rest of the province (42% and 45% *approve*, respectively) while Jon Gerrard's leadership approval ratings are slightly higher in Winnipeg than in other parts of the province (42% vs. 34% *approve*, respectively).

This province-wide survey was designed and conducted by Probe Research Inc. via telephone interviews conducted between September 21st and September 28th, 2011 among a random and representative sampling of 1,000 Manitoba adults. With a sample of 1,000, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within +/- 3.1 percentage points of what they would have been if the entire adult population of Manitoba had been interviewed. The margin-of-error is higher within each of the survey's population sub-groups. Modified random-digit dialing was used to ensure that all Manitoba adults would have an equal opportunity to participate in this Probe Research survey. Minor statistical weighting has been applied to this sample to ensure that the age and gender balance correspond with the province as a whole.

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