

Liberals like to portray Pierre Poilievre as scary, but a lot of Canadians simply aren't frightened ^[1]

A new poll from Abacus shows that many Canadians have no illusions about how much Poilievre could shake up things, yet the Conservatives are still holding a comfortable lead.

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Excerpts

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But a new poll from Abacus shows that many Canadians have no illusions about how much Poilievre could shake up things — beyond just axing taxes — and the Conservatives are still holding a comfortable, 16-point lead in this latest survey. It should be noted that Abacus removes undecided voters from these horse-race results.

Abacus asked a series of questions about what a Poilievre government would or would not do if it wins the next election and unseats Justin Trudeau and the Liberals.

Almost two thirds of respondents — 63 per cent — said that Poilievre would probably or definitely welcome fewer immigrants to Canada. A full 42 per cent were either fully or somewhat sure that funding to English language CBC would be cut. Almost that same number, 41 per cent, believe it will be definitely or probably be more difficult for women to get access to abortion under a Poilievre-led government.

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Opinion is more divided when it comes to the national child care program and the fledgling dental care program. While 37 per cent of respondents said the child care program was likely on the chopping block, another 36 per cent said Poilievre wouldn't do away with it.

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But perhaps the most interesting part of this line of questioning came when respondents were asked what Poilievre should do.

Only 28 per cent believed national child care and the dental program should be shut down, while 72 per cent said both should last beyond any Liberal defeat. Another 70 per cent said it shouldn't be harder to obtain an abortion under a future Conservative government. A full 80 per cent said Poilievre and the Conservatives should take climate change seriously.

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Many of the policies associated with the current Liberal government, from child care to climate change, are on the endangered list in people's opinion if the Conservatives are elected. Yet they are considered very much worth keeping by large majorities.

This reminds me of the aftermath of the 2005-06 election, when a newly elected Conservative government followed through on its promise to end the Liberals' national child care program. Ken Dryden, the minister responsible for that program, said he kept running into people during that campaign who believed they could have both — a Liberal child care program and the Conservatives' subsidy to parents.

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The poll was conducted among 2,415 Canadians from May 16 until Tuesday this week, using online panels based on the Lucid exchange platform. While opt-in polls cannot be assigned a margin of error, for comparison purposes, a random sample of this size would be considered accurate within 1.99 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Coletto believes these results show that Canadians aren't as scared of Poilievre as the Liberals may want them to be.

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