

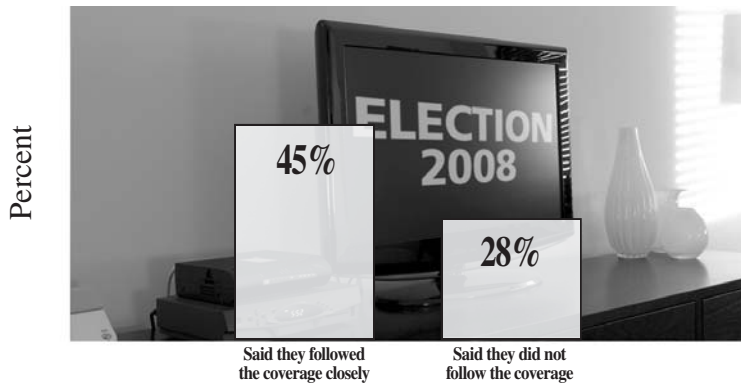


# Pol STATION

With Linda Banister

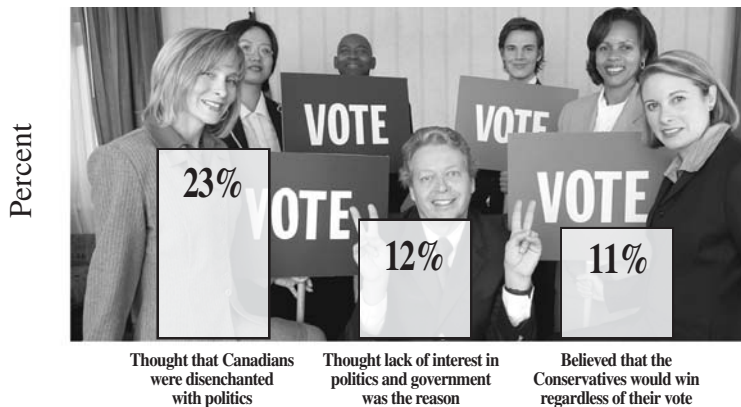
**V**oter turnout hit a record low in the most recent federal election. To gain some perspective on the issue, this month we asked Edmontonians for their thoughts on the voter turnout and the results of the federal election.

## DID YOU FOLLOW MEDIA COVERAGE PRIOR TO THE FEDERAL ELECTION?



To begin the survey, respondents were asked how closely they followed media coverage leading up to the 2008 federal election. Almost half of the respondents (45 percent) indicated they followed the coverage closely, while 28 percent reported they did not.

## WHY WAS VOTER TURN-OUT SO LOW?



Respondents were informed that voter turnout for Canadians was reported at 59.1 percent, and 52.9 percent for Albertans—a record low. They were then asked why they thought so many people in Alberta did not vote. Many (23 percent) thought that Canadians were disenchanted with politics and politicians, followed by a lack of interest in politics and governments (12 percent), and the belief that the Conservatives would win regardless of their vote (11 percent). Fifty-four percent thought the reasons why Albertans specifically did not vote were the same compared to the rest of the country. Of the 33 percent that believed the reasons were different, 24 percent thought Alberta's needs are different and that Albertans are facing different issues compared to the rest of Canada. Eighteen percent said Albertans are busier and doing better economically. Another 18 percent indicated the lack of competition in Alberta, stating they knew the Conservatives would win.

## DID YOU VOTE AND WHY OR WHY NOT?

When asked if they voted in the recent federal election, 76 percent stated they had. Their reasons included civic duty (54 percent) and wanting their voice to be heard (47 percent). Of the 23 percent that did not vote, 30 percent stated voting was inconvenient and takes too much time, followed by not knowing enough to vote (13 percent), no real choice (13 percent) and not being a Canadian citizen (13 percent). Respondents that did not vote were then asked what actions could be taken for them to be more likely to vote in the future. Twenty-two percent wanted candidates who better represented their views, and 17 percent wanted more information on candidates' positions.

## DO POLITICAL POLLS AFFECT YOUR VOTE?

Next, respondents were asked if they had seen any political poll results prior to the election. Over half of the respondents (54 percent) reported they had. Those who had voted and seen the political poll results prior to the election were then asked if the results impacted their vote. Eighty-eight percent stated it did not affect their personal vote. However, 57 percent of all respondents believed the results impact voting in general.

## WERE YOU SURPRISED AND SATISFIED WITH THE ELECTION OUTCOME?

Seventy percent of respondents indicated they were not surprised by the outcome of the election. Among the other 30 percent, 20 percent were surprised with how many seats the Conservatives won, while 17 percent thought the Conservative would win more seats.

Finally, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the results of the past election. Roughly one-quarter of respondents (24 percent) indicated they were highly satisfied, while 45 percent indicated a low level of satisfaction. Among the latter, 20 percent said their candidate's party was not elected, 20 percent indicated nothing changed as a result of the election, and 18 percent had hoped for a Conservative majority.

## Monthly Poll Station Online Question

Visit [www.edmontonians.com](http://www.edmontonians.com) to register your opinion

## Want a question included in the Edmontonians Poll?

Contact Linda at 780.451.4444 or e-mail [lbanister@edmontonians.com](mailto:lbanister@edmontonians.com).

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