



# Media Release

## **Martin expends image capital but leads as best Prime Minister by 20 points**

Ottawa – August 19, 2004 – Although Paul Martin currently has a comfortable lead as best PM, a new national survey conducted by polling firm SES Research indicates that his personal image has waned as a result of the federal campaign.

“Our polling shows that Paul Martin has expended some personal capital during the recent election,” explained Nik Nanos, President and CEO of SES Research. “But when Canadians think of who would be the best Prime Minister, Martin has been able to widen the gap over Stephen Harper from seven points leading up to election day to 20 points in the current SES poll.”

Canadians were also asked if their impressions of party leaders were more positive or more negative as a result of the recent federal election. The election had a net negative impact of 10 points on Prime Minister Paul Martin’s impression (11% positive, 21% negative). Stephen Harper received a net impact of -3 (18% positive, 21% negative), while Layton fared the best with an overall net impact of +8 (22% positive, 14% negative). Gilles Duceppe received a net impact of +4 (15% positive, 11% negative).

“NDP Leader Jack Layton was the only leader to noticeably improve his image among Canadians,” said Nanos. “Although he might have been criticized by some for his campaigning style, polling indicates that his scrappy, shoot-from-the-hip approach, resonated with some voters.”

When asked who would make the best Prime Minister, 36% of Canadians identified Paul Martin, followed by Stephen Harper (16%), Jack Layton (13%) and Gilles Duceppe (8%). One in ten Canadians (11%) said none of the leaders would make the best Prime Minister, and another 16% were unsure.

“Following the election, the number of Canadians who believe Paul Martin would make the best Prime Minister has increased. Stephen Harper, however, was the only federal leader whose preference as Prime Minister has dropped (5%),” noted Nanos.



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SES's National Omnibus Survey is conducted every three months. It is based on a random telephone sample of 1,000 Canadians, 18 years of age and older and was conducted between August 5<sup>th</sup> and August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The margin of accuracy for the aggregate survey results is 3.1 percentage points, plus or minus, 19 times out of 20. Within the larger sample sub-groups may have a wider margin of accuracy. Validation of the demographic profile of respondents indicates that the poll is a fair representation of the Canadian populace. The survey was registered with the Canadian Survey Research Council of which SES is a member.

Established in 1987, SES Canada Research Inc. is a full service marketing and public opinion research firm.

For a detailed review of the survey tables, please visit the SES Research website at <http://www.sesresearch.com> in the on-line polling library.

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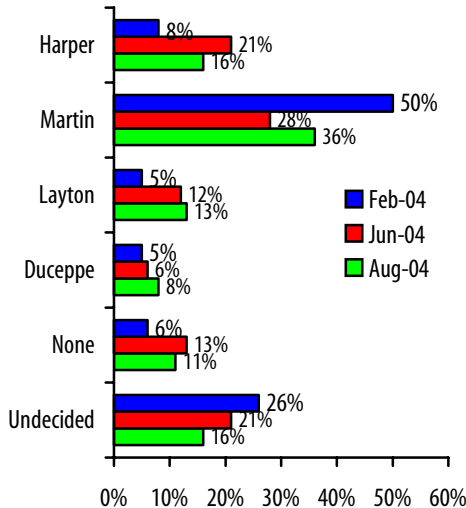
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**BEST PM**

**QUESTION:** *Of the following individuals, who do you think would make the best Prime Minister? [READ AND ROTATE]*



**COMMENTARY**

Although during the election campaign, Paul Martin's lead as best Prime Minister was reduced to 7 points, since the election he has increased his lead to 20 points. The three data points above represent the wave when Paul Martin became PM, the poll completed the week before the federal election and the current wave of research.

Polling also indicates that Stephen Harper is the only federal leader to have his best Prime Minister numbers drop since the election.

On the whole, Canadians still view the performance of the federal Liberal government as average but the percentage with a negative opinion has dropped since 2004Q2.

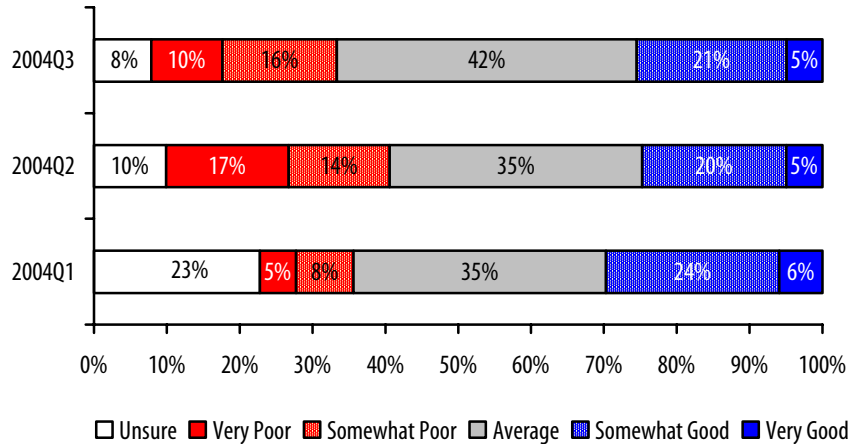
**THE METHODOLOGY**

Between August 5<sup>th</sup> and August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2004, SES conducted a total of 1,000 telephone interviews across Canada with eligible voters as part of the SES National Quarterly Omnibus. Aggregate results of the survey are accurate  $\pm 3.1\%$ , 19 times out of 20. Validation of the demographic profile of respondents indicates that the poll is a fair representation of Canadian voters.

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**GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE**

**QUESTION:** *Would you describe the performance of the current Federal Liberal Government led by Prime Minister Paul Martin as very good, somewhat good, average, somewhat poor or very poor?*



**Target Groups**

(+/- index score)	VG	SG	Aver.	SP	VP
Atlantic	+1	-2	+2	0	-2
Quebec	+1	-1	-2	-1	+4
Ontario	0	+1	0	-2	-1
West	-2	-1	0	+1	-1
Men	+1	-2	-1	0	0
Women	-2	+1	0	-1	+1
18 to 29	-2	+3	+3	-1	-2
30 to 39	-2	-2	+4	+1	-2
40 to 49	+1	-5	-3	+4	+2
50 to 59	0	+1	-3	+1	+2
60 plus	+1	0	-2	-6	+1

Note: Plus/minus index scores are based on the difference between the sub-group and the sample average. For example a +3 SG score for the Liberals among 18 to 29 year olds would indicate that 3% more 19 to 29 year olds think the Liberals have done a somewhat good job compared to the national average. Considering the sample size of 1,000 voters, readers should focus on scores of +/-5 or greater.

**ABOUT SES**

Established in 1987, SES Canada Research Inc. is a full service public opinion research and management consulting firm. In order to maximize turn-around time and increase efficiency, SES has a 168-line call centre complete with a predictive dialer. SES is regularly called upon by corporate, government and para-public clients in Canada and the United States to conduct research and provide strategic advice.

For more information on our full range of services please visit our website

[www.sesresearch.com](http://www.sesresearch.com) or contact:

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**COMMENTARY**

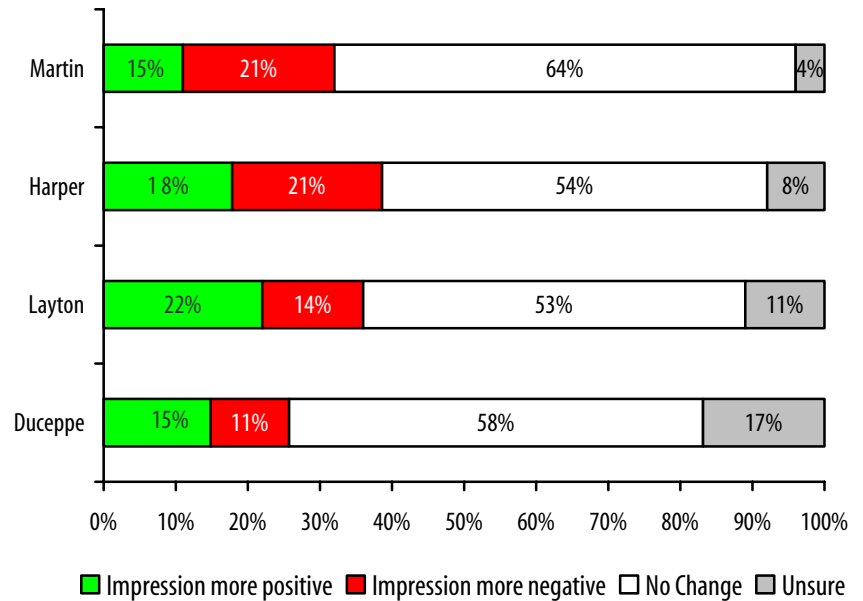
Polling indicates that Paul Martin’s image was most affected by the recent federal election campaign. When asked if their impression had become more positive or more negative, 10% more Canadians said negative than positive. However, even with this impact Martin leads as the person Canadians would consider the best Prime Minister by 20% (see 2004Q3 – Performance Stat Sheet).

NDP Leader Jack Layton was the only leader to noticeably improve his image among Canadians. Although he might have been criticized by some for his style, polling would indicate that his scrappy, shoot-from-the-hip approach, has resonated with some voters.

The non-mainstream comments made by some members of the Conservative Party did not seem to stick to Stephen Harper’s personal image since his overall personal image was relative unchanged during the election campaign.

**ELECTION IMPACT**

*QUESTION: Thinking of the recent election campaign, has your impression of the following party leaders become more positive, more negative or has it not changed as a result of the election.*



**NET CHANGE**

*QUESTION: Thinking of the recent election campaign, has your impression of the following party leaders become more positive, more negative or has it not changed as a result of the election.*

	Paul Martin (1,000)	Stephen Harper (1,000)	Jack Layton (1,000)	Gilles Duceppe (1,000)
Impression more positive	11%	18%	22%	15%
Impression more negative	21%	21%	14%	11%
No Change	64%	54%	53%	58%
Campaign Image Impact	-10	-3	+8	+4

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