

October 4, 2021

PREMIER KENNEY'S APPROVAL PLUMMETS AMID COVID-19 TURMOIL

Media Release

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Research Methodology

- **Approach:** Online survey of Adult Albertans
- **Region:** Alberta
- **Field dates:** Sep 29 - Oct 1, 2021
- **Sample size:** n=1,116
- **Panel source:** Angus Reid Forum
- **Sampling:** A random stratified sample of panelists was invited to complete the survey from the Angus Reid Forum panel
- **Weighting:** Weighted to reflect gender, age and region of the Alberta population according to Stats Canada
- **Margin of error:** The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of this size is ***+/- 2.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20***

Sample sizes:	Unweighted	Weighted	MOE*
Alberta total	n=1,116	n=1,116	+/- 2.9
Calgary	n=435	n=394	+/- 4.7
Edmonton	n=365	n=349	+/- 5.1
Northern Alberta	n=87	n=135	+/- 10.5
Central Alberta	n=104	n=124	+/- 9.6
Southern Alberta	n=125	n=114	+/- 8.8

*Margin of error: Percentage points 19 times out of 20.

The margin of error is associated with a probability sample of this size.

Accuracy of sub-samples of the data decline based on sample sizes

Premier Kenney's Approval Plummet Amid COVID-19 Turmoil

October 4, 2021

For Immediate Release

(Calgary) In the midst of a punishing 4th wave of COVID-19 in Alberta, approval for Premier Jason Kenney has tumbled to a new low according to a recent survey by ThinkHQ Public Affairs. Currently only 22% of adult Albertans now offer any degree of approval for the performance of the leader of the UCP government, compared to 77% saying they disapprove (61% strongly), and only 1% unsure.

This represents a serious decline in support for the Alberta Premier, down 16 percentage points in the past two months, after a modest uptick in approval in July. If history is a guide, Kenney's approval today is in dangerous territory. The last premier to sink to these depths in public support was Alison Redford who recorded an approval rating of only 18% in March of 2014 shortly before resigning.

Premier Kenney's Approval Plummets Amid COVID-19 Turmoil ... *continued*

Kenney has never been an overwhelmingly popular premier. During the “honeymoon” period of his new government in the second half of 2019, the UCP leader’s support reached its highest level (56%), but he and his government have been dogged by (among other things) their careening response to the COVID-19 pandemic. His slide in approval began shortly after the start of the pandemic, dropping from 52% to 31% over the course of the first year of COVID. In July, Kenney’s approval jumped up 7 percentage points driven by removal of COVID restrictions coupled with declining/stable case counts, but by the end of July COVID cases began spiking ushering in a massive 4th wave in Alberta.

By comparison, Kenney’s chief political rival, NDP leader Rachel Notley, has seen public appraisals of her performance notch up slightly since July, currently sitting at 50% approval (32% strong) vs. 47% disapproval (39% strong).

Detailed Findings

Disapproval for the Premier is widespread and relatively consistent across most demographic breaks.

- Edmonton has historically been the most hostile territory for Kenney, but today his disapproval in Calgary is very much on par with the capital region. Even in areas normally viewed as “strongholds” such as Central and Southern Alberta or purely “rural” areas of the province, the UCP leader’s approval doesn’t surpass 30%
- Men are now equally unsupportive of Kenney as women, although disapproval does decline slightly with age (even among those 55+, nearly three-quarters disapprove)
- Among those who voted UCP in the last provincial election, only 39% say they approve of Kenney’s performance since

Commentary

ThinkHQ Public Affairs Inc. President Marc Henry notes the following on these survey results:

“Jason Kenney is a leader on life-support, and his prognosis is not good. We have not seen a sitting premier with numbers this low in almost a decade; Alison Redford resigned the day it was revealed her approval at the time had dropped to 18%. That’s a ‘margin of error’ difference from Kenney’s results today.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 is the origin of much of Kenney’s troubles, but in many respects, he has been the architect of his own misfortune. The Province’s response to COVID has been unresponsive, at times contrary and disjointed, and the political gamble that was ‘The Best Summer Ever’ is now taking a punishing toll both politically for the leader and in real human costs for Albertans and the health care system.

Commentary ... continued

Kenney’s difficulties navigating COVID are in many respects a reflection of the party he leads. COVID-19 response is an issue that unites progressive voters and splits conservative ones. And the United Conservative Party today under Jason Kenney’s leadership is very much the ‘Divided Conservative Party’. The UCP is an electoral creature, sown together from two rival conservative parties primarily to unseat the NDP government. They did that, but in the face of this prolonged and punishing pandemic, the creature is tearing itself apart at the stiches. The question is, how long can it continue this course of self-destruction before it is no longer viable to prevent another Notley Government?”

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Provincial Leadership Evaluations

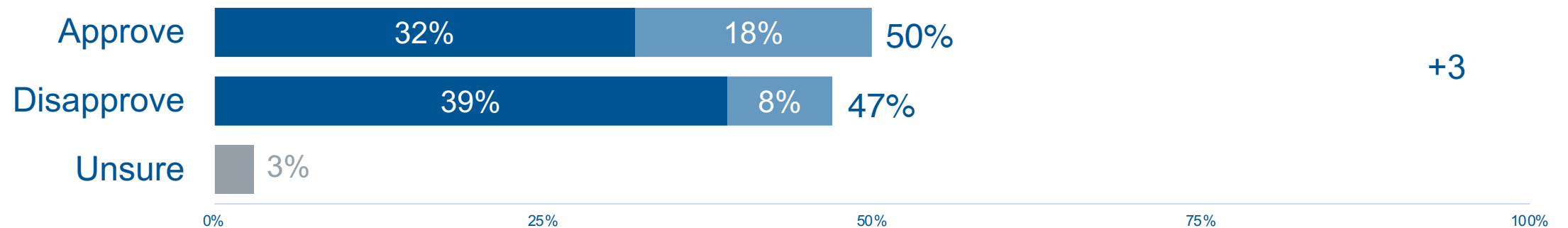
Would you generally say you approve or disapprove of the performance of the following provincial party leaders?

■ Strongly ■ Somewhat

Jason Kenney: United Conservative Party



Rachel Notley: NDP

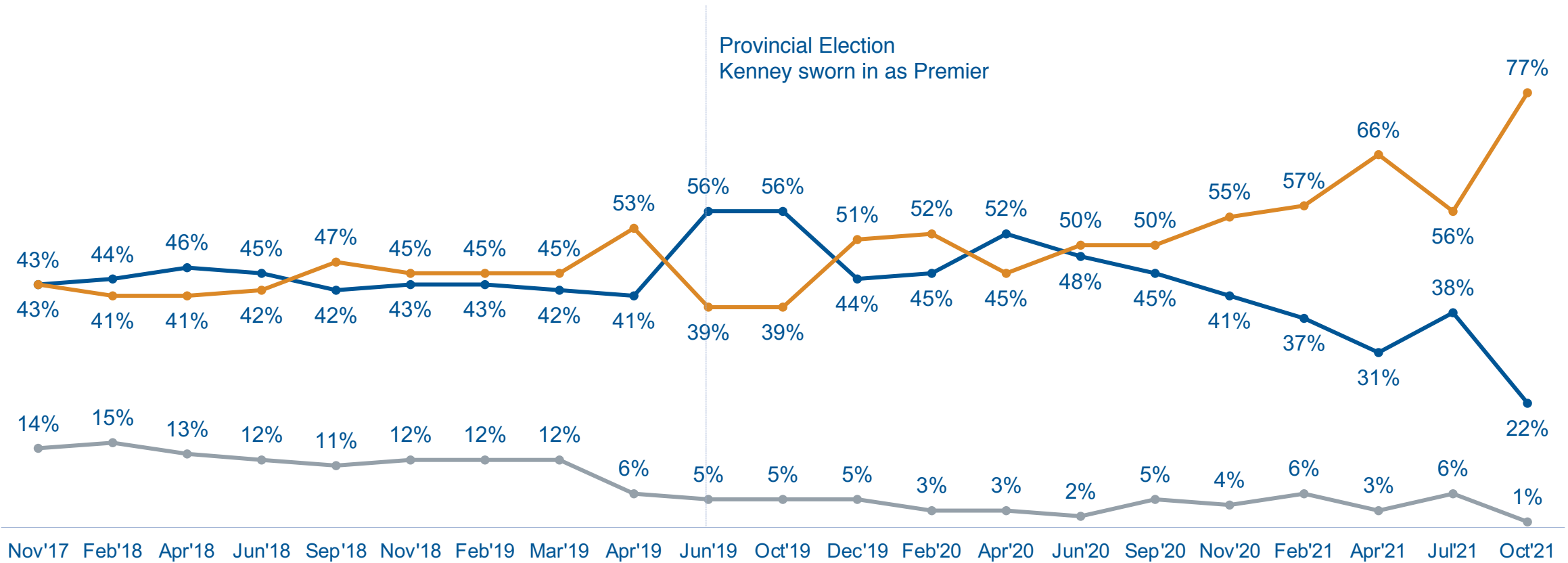


Base: All respondents (n=1,116) | *NET: Approve minus disapprove

Provincial Leadership Evaluation: Jason Kenney's Approval

Would you generally say you approve or disapprove of the performance of Premier Jason Kenney?

— Approve — Disapprove — Unsure



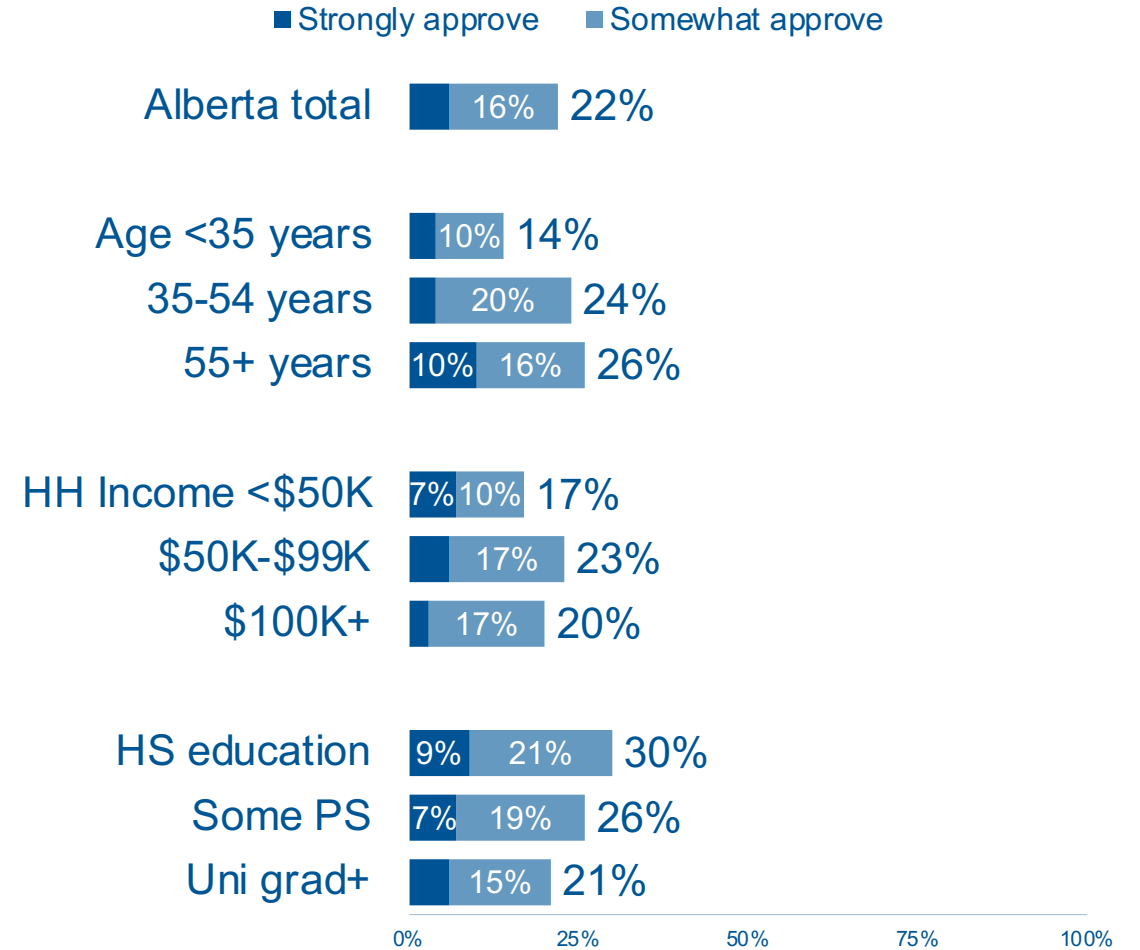
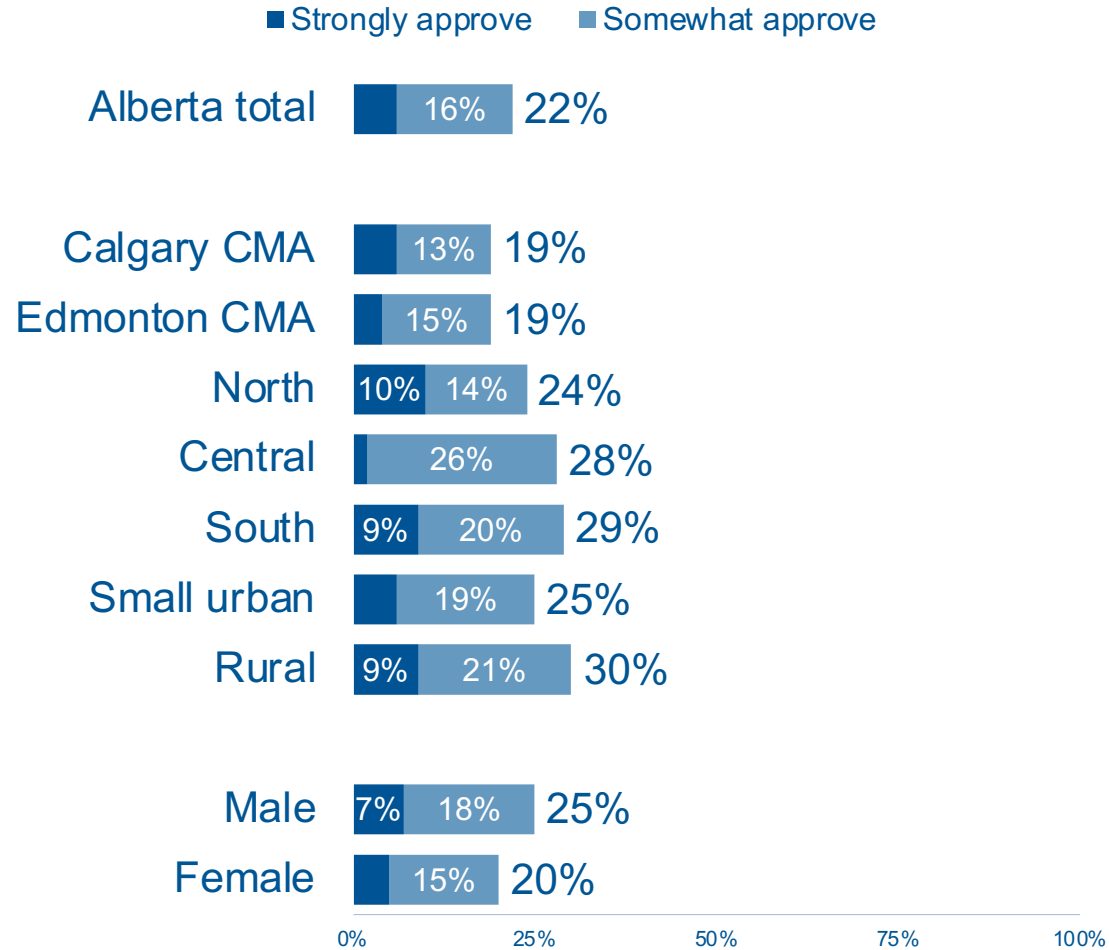
Base: All respondents

Provincial Leadership Evaluation: Jason Kenney's Approval

By Key Demographics



Would you generally say you approve or disapprove of the performance of **Premier Jason Kenney**?



Base: All respondents

Provincial Leadership Evaluations

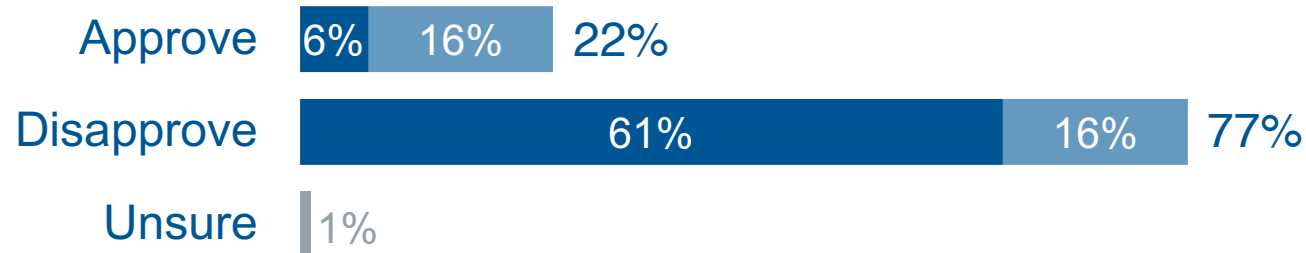
By Last Provincial Vote



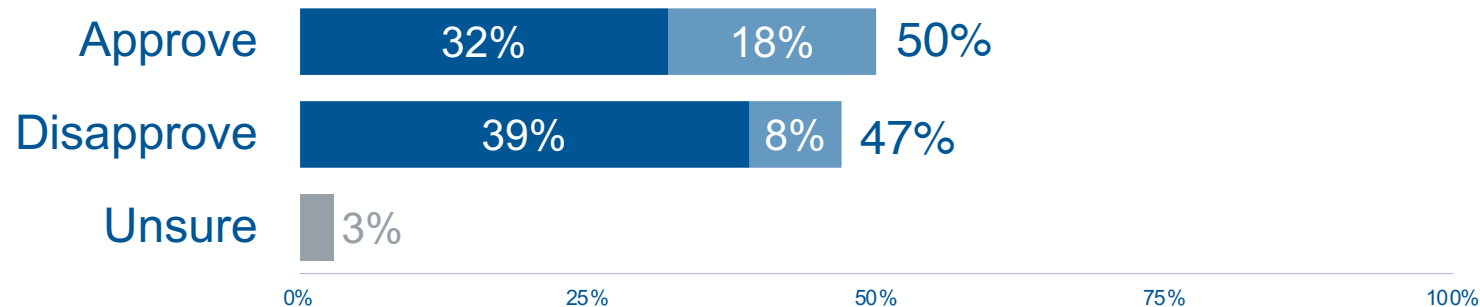
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Jason Kenney: United Conservative Party



Rachel Notley: NDP



Last Provincial Vote

	UCP (n=513)	NDP (n=325)	ABP (n=87)*
Approve	39%	--	8%
Disapprove	60%	99%	92%
Unsure	1%	--	--

	UCP (n=513)	NDP (n=325)	ABP (n=87)*
Approve	18%	97%	66%
Disapprove	80%	2%	32%
Unsure	2%	--	2%

Base: All respondents (n=1,116) | *Caution: Small base size



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