



## Minority government looms in Ontario, poll indicates

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 24, 2011 2:50 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 25, 2011 12:32 PM ET



*The Liberals, led by Dalton McGuinty, and Tim Hudak's Conservatives are deadlocked in popularity, according to results of a massive poll published Saturday in the Toronto Star. (Frank Gunn/Canadian Press)*

A poll of more than 40,000 people indicates the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives are deadlocked and Ontario is headed toward a minority government for the first time in decades.

The Forum Research survey, one of the largest polling samples in Canadian history, was published Saturday in the Toronto Star. It has the Liberals and Tories each claiming 35 per cent in voter support. The New Democrats were at 23 per cent and the Green Party at five per cent.

Because of the large number of voters surveyed — 40,750 — Forum said it was also able to provide riding-by-riding results. If those numbers hold up in the Oct. 6 election, the Liberals and

Tories would be tied at 47 seats with the NDP holding just 13 seats in the 107-member Legislature. However, the research firm says the results for at least 28 ridings are within the margin of error, so seat predictions are not nearly as reliable as the total sample.

But none of the parties appears likely at this point to be able to win the 54 seats needed for a majority government. Ontario's last minority government was in 1985.

The results indicate the race has tightened since Forum's last poll, which was conducted three weeks ago. Then, the Conservatives were leading the Liberals 35-30, with the NDP at 26 per cent and the Greens at six per cent.

The latest poll means Tuesday's televised leadership debate becomes even more important because the party leaders will need a strong performance to make a major move with the election less than two weeks away.

When respondents were asked who would make the best premier, 37 per cent chose Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty, who was up five points from earlier in the summer. Conservative Leader Tim Hudak held steady in the low 30s and NDP Leader Andrea Horwath was in the mid-20s.

The interactive voice-response telephone poll, conducted Thursday and Friday, is considered accurate to within 0.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

At dissolution, the Liberals held 70 seats, the Tories 25, the NDP 10, and there were two vacancies that had been Liberal constituencies.