



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 28, 2005

MAJORITY OF ELECTORATE STILL NOT INFORMED ABOUT STV

Vancouver, BC – A new Nordic Research Group poll shows that 61% of British Columbians do not feel informed about STV and only 15% can name the proposed voting system.

“Awareness of the proposed system is not high,” said Adam Di Paula, Senior Vice President of Nordic Research Group. “We have a situation where only 15% of British Columbians can identify the name of the proposed new system. And with over 60% feeling either not informed or not at all informed, there is a need for explaining the proposal to people so they can make an informed choice on May 17th.”

When respondents were asked the ballot question: *‘Should British Columbia change to the BC-STV electoral system as recommended by the Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform?’* 32% said yes, 16% said no, and 52% were undecided.

An earlier poll conducted from March 28 to April 6, 2005 by Nordic Research showed the yes side at 26%, no at 17% and undecided at 57%. “Those supporting STV seem to have gained some ground in the last 20 days,” remarked Di Paula. “However, in order to reach the criteria for the referendum to pass, the Yes side has a large communications challenge with only 21 days till the vote.” To bridge the gap, said Di Paula, “STV supporters are going to have to better explain the mechanics of the system to voters, as well as the possible benefits.”

Among those (39%) who feel informed, 56% answered “yes” to the ballot question and 20% answered “no”; 24% remain undecided.

“While feeling informed about STV increases both the percent of “yes” and “no” voters, it seems clear at least at this point that more people are being converted to “yes” than “no” as they become informed about the system”, added Di Paula.

Fully 45% of all respondents described their current understanding of STV as not very good, while 27% have at least a good understanding of STV. According to Di Paula, “those who oppose STV are on sound footing when they say that British Columbians do not understand the proposed new voting system.” But, he added, a significant proportion of respondents (75%) did say that they planned to become more aware of the new system before voting day.

“We also asked respondents if they felt it was important to change the current electoral system. 51% said changing the electoral system is either very or somewhat important,” said Di Paula.

In order for the BC-STV referendum to pass, it must receive 60% voter support province-wide and receive more than 50% of the votes in at least 48 of 79 electoral districts.

About the survey

805 randomly selected BC residents, proportionate to the province’s population, were interviewed on the issue of the Single Transferable Vote referendum as part of Nordic Research Group’s monthly omnibus – Ask BC, BC’s leading omnibus. Overall results are accurate to within +/- 3.5%, 19 times out of 20 and were collected from April 22 to April 25, 2005.

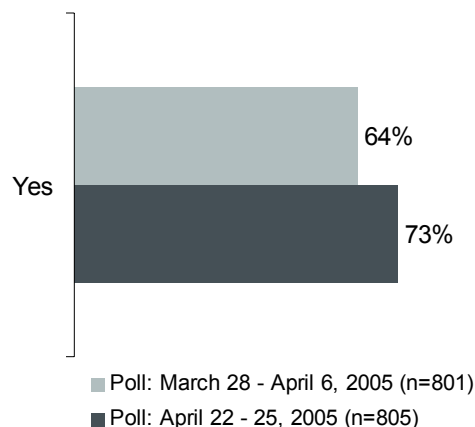
About Nordic Research Group

Based in Vancouver, Nordic Research Group is one of Canada’s leading market and public opinion research firms. Nordic provides both quantitative and qualitative research services through its Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto offices to clients throughout North America and worldwide. Core services include research design, data collection and advanced analytics.

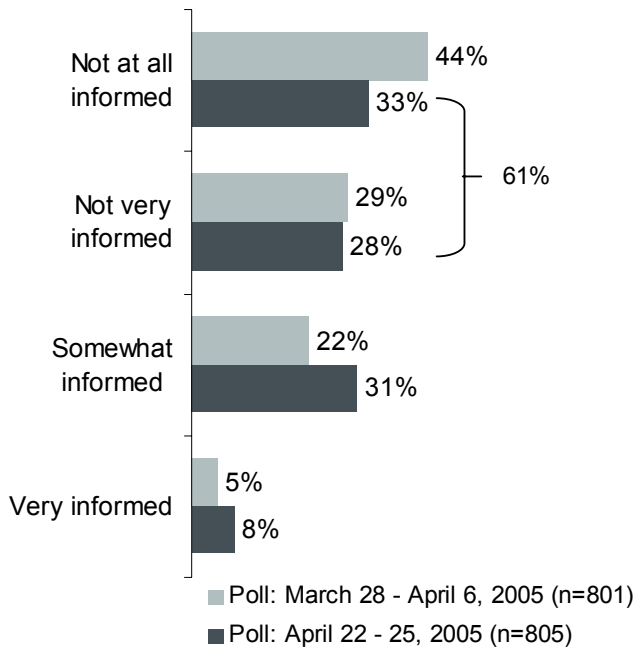
Survey Results

Full poll results and graphs available at <http://www.nordicresearch.net>.

Are you aware that on May 17, 2005, the day of the provincial election, voters in BC will decide whether or not to change to a new electoral system?

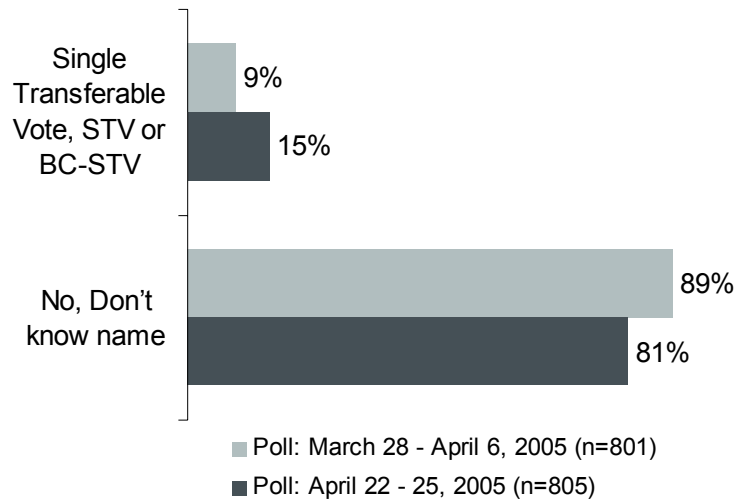


As you may or may not be aware, the BC Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform recommends that BC adopt a new voting system called 'BC-STV'. How informed do you feel you are about this proposed voting system?



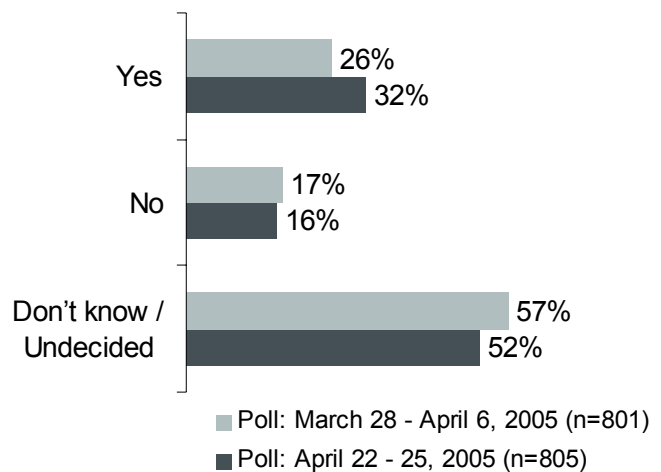
Source: Nordic Research Group

Do you know the name of the new electoral system that is being proposed?



Source: Nordic Research Group

Should British Columbia change to the BC-STV electoral system as recommended by the Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform?



Source: Nordic Research Group

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