



Andrea Perrella, Director  
Laurier Institute for the Study of Public Opinion and Policy  
519-884-0710 ext. 2719 or aperrella@wlu.ca

Kevin Crowley, Director  
Communications, Public Affairs & Marketing  
519-884-0710 ext. 3070 or kcrowley@wlu.ca

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## Laurier institute releases datasets through online portal

WATERLOO – The Laurier Institute for the Study of Public Opinion and Policy (LISPOP) has launched a new data portal that makes the university's data collection publicly available. The public opinion data, donated by research firm Ipsos Reid, was previously restricted to people from Ontario's post-secondary institutions.

"Ipsos Reid is thrilled that this important archive of public opinion data is being made available to as wide an audience as possible," said Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs and a Laurier alumnus. "The LISPOP portal is an ideal way to do this."

The datasets represent a variety of topics, including surveys from federal elections, Ontario elections, housing and Canada's youth, as well as a series of "Canada Day" studies commissioned by the Dominion Institute that measure various levels of knowledge Canadians have about their country. The polling data is also significant because it is among the most detailed research available representing the social and political opinions of specific groups, such as gays and lesbians and supporters of the green movement.

Bricker first donated the opinion-poll data to Laurier in 2007. Ipsos Reid has been providing regular donations since then.

"Once the data has outlived its commercial purpose, it's still very useful for academics," said Andrea Perrella, director of LISPOP. "And this is a growing data collection – we're looking forward to holding an increasingly diverse collection, including datasets from other countries. What started as opinion-poll data has grown to appeal to a much broader audience."

The data collection, which includes more than 100 datasets, can now be accessed for free at [www.lispop.ca/data](http://www.lispop.ca/data).

Users of the Laurier Library can also access the data through ODESI (<http://odesi2.scholarsportal.info/webview>), from which the datasets can be downloaded in a variety of formats or viewed right on the web page.

"New and novice users appreciate this feature because it helps them use survey data without requiring expert statistical knowledge," said Michael Steeleworthy, government information librarian at Laurier. "We can help make the data available in a variety of formats to the Laurier community and to users at other Ontario university libraries. We are also in the process of making the LISPOP data on ODESI available to the public."

### **About LISPOP**

LISPOP is a research centre at Wilfrid Laurier University that studies issues pertaining to the creation, use and representation of public opinion in the policy process. The institute serves as a catalyst to promote individual and collaborative research on these issues. In addition, the institute monitors the practices and claims of the public opinion and interest group industries, and serves as an educational resource to the university and the larger community on questions and issues pertaining to those claims and practices.