

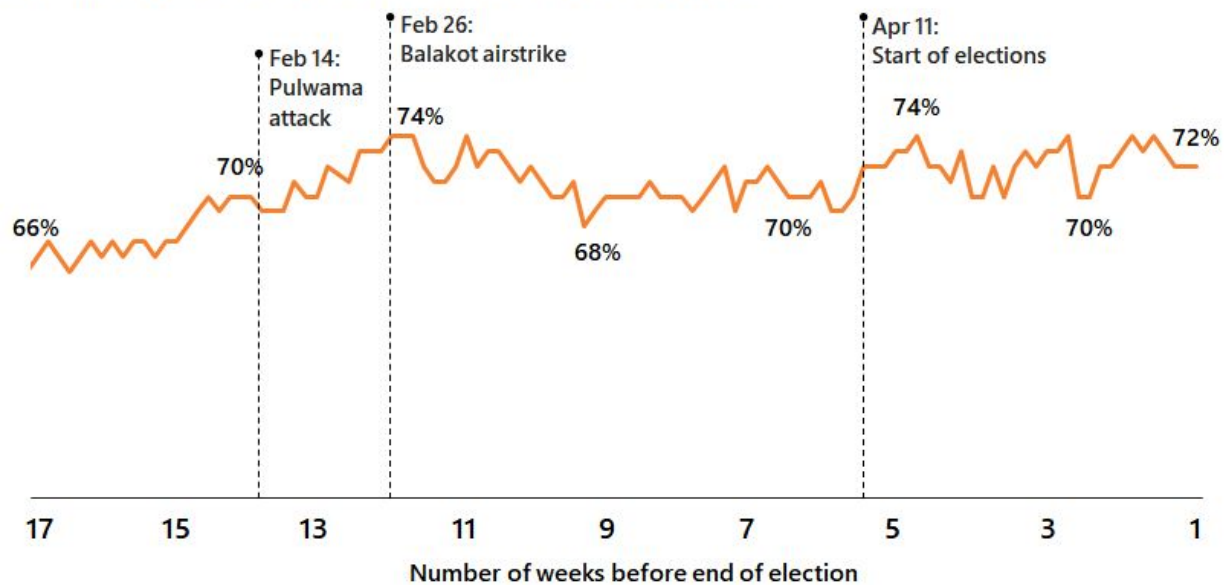
## Broad-based support for Modi re-election in India

April 5, 2019

- **A broad-based, strong and consistent majority of Indian respondents believe Prime Minister Modi will be re-elected in the April-May 2019 general election.**
- **This is consistent with a strong signal of 80 percent believing that the country is headed in the right direction.**
- **66 percent of respondents believed Modi would win at the outset of the campaign, and this confidence in Modi's win grew further in the first few weeks of campaigning.**
- **Belief in Modi's win grew to a peak of 75 percent in the wake of India's retaliation against Pakistan's air strike and returned to a 70 percent average in the last few weeks before the election.**

**Update May 16, 2019:** Continuous tracking in India shows that belief in Modi's re-election has held strong in the weeks following the start of the election. Up until the final week, Modi has enjoyed sustained belief in a win, hovering above 70 percent.

### Share who believe Modi will be re-elected



Source: RIWI data, India tracking, exponentially weighted (3-day) moving average, 8,950 Internet users.

Starting April 11th, the Indian population will begin voting in the general election. This year there are an estimated 900 million eligible voters in India, the largest democracy in the world. Elections will be held across the country in seven waves that span almost six weeks.



RIWI's continuous tracking in India in the 11 weeks before the election shows that people are generally confident that Modi will be re-elected. Modi will be re-elected if his individual or coalition party wins the majority of seats in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of Parliament).

The belief in Modi's win is broad-based across the country and consistently strong over time, growing since the beginning of the campaign period. The signal is based on RIWI technology that includes a diverse range of voices, including those of young people not typically included in traditional surveys, and also of both rural and urban respondents. Almost two-fifths of respondents are rural.

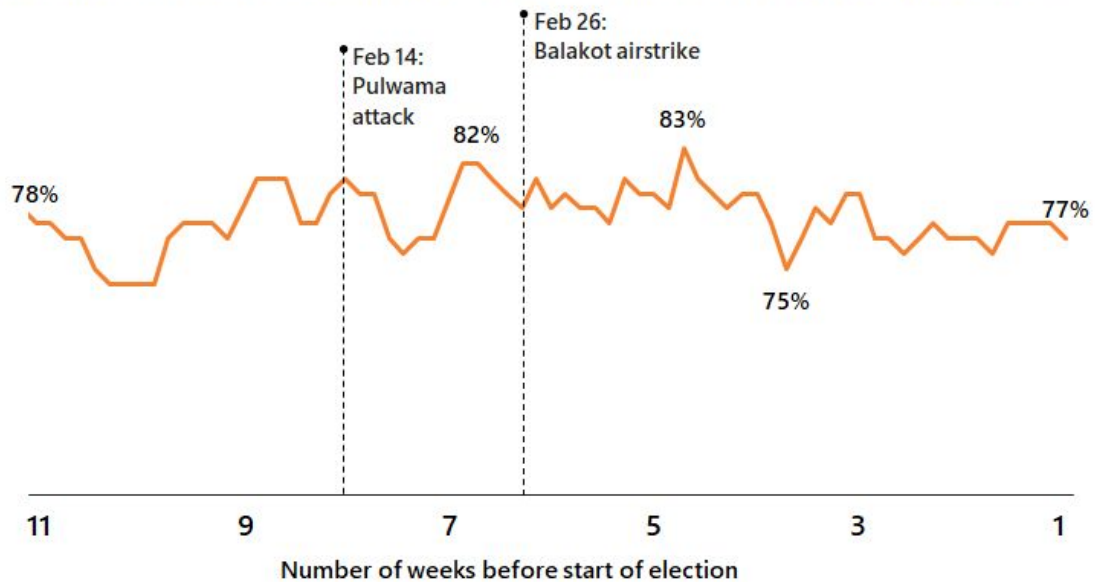
The Prime Minister announced the election on January 12, 2019. Starting January 22, RIWI asked randomly engaged Indian Internet users whether they think Modi will be reelected, regardless of whom they support. Asking respondents who they *think* will win is more predictive than asking for whom they would vote. And examining the stability of the signal over the pre-election period provides a fuller and clearer picture of the likely outcome than point-in-time polls. Over the period ending April 5, RIWI engaged 6000+ respondents, and will continue to engage fresh respondents daily until the election.

Current Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP party beat its main opposing party by 12 percentage points in the last election. RIWI data show that Modi enjoys considerable support in this election as well. Two-thirds of respondents believed that Modi would win as the campaign began. This share grew by a few additional percentage points in the first few weeks of the campaign.

Then on February 14th, a Pakistan-based jihadist terrorist group carried out a suicide bombing in Pulwama, Kashmir - a region claimed by both India and Pakistan. After India retaliated with an airstrike in Balakot, Pakistan on February 26th, belief in a Modi victory peaked at three-quarters of respondents. This signals that the nationalist narrative that fueled Modi's landslide victory in 2014 continues to resonate with the Indian population, despite Modi's failure to address high unemployment. Confidence in Modi's win is at around 5 percent higher than at the beginning of the campaign.

The data show that confidence in Modi's win is broad-based. Across young and old, men and women, and rural and urban respondents, a consistent two-thirds or more believe that Modi will be re-elected. Even nearly two-thirds of unemployed respondents believe Modi will be reelected, despite a high unemployment rate being one of the leading criticisms of Modi and his government.

## Share who believe India is heading in the right direction



Source: RIWI data, India tracking, exponentially weighted (3-day) moving average, 6,654 observations

The signal is bolstered by a consistent around 80 percent of Indian respondents saying that India is heading in the right direction. It is also consistent with in-market polling data that predicts a win for Modi. However, Indian polling agencies report a wide range of point-in-time estimates for BJP's lead in the election from a slim margin of 2 percent to a substantial 12 percent. RIWI data suggests that, consistently and over time, there is a high level of confidence in Modi's win and India's direction. A sustained stable signal over a continuous period provides more certainty in forecasting an electoral outcome than point-in-time data which don't provide a signal on the stability of the sentiment.

Anyone using the Internet - whether by mobile phone or other devices - has a chance of being exposed to a RIWI survey. This expands the potential group of respondents to a vastly wider set of potential respondents in India than traditional methods that depend on a much narrower pool of self-selected respondents. Still, it may not reflect the views of the 60 percent of the Indian population that is not connected to the Internet. We therefore also assign weights to the data to reflect age and gender breakdowns in the latest Indian census data. We find the signal still holds. There is still a risk that the non-Internet using population would send different signals, however.

RIWI will continue to track this up until the start of the election. To access these data, or to learn more about RIWI's predictive work, please contact:

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## RIWI's Approach to Predictive Work

RIWI signals differ from conventional approaches in several key ways, including:

1. RIWI predictors come from a broad and truly random set of the population, and go far beyond those who typically answer surveys or those in urban centres. Over a third of RIWI Global predictors say they have never answered a survey of any kind. In India, this results in a large number of observations from young people, and includes both urban and rural respondents.
2. Since respondents do not always truthfully report for whom they will vote, we ask them which party they think will win and their sense of whether the country is headed in the right and wrong direction. This approach results in more accurate predictions, including RIWI's prediction of the [2016 US election](#), [US 2018 midterm races](#), and many other [recent elections](#).
3. RIWI predictors remain anonymous and RIWI does not collect any personally identifiable data, allowing predictors to provide their views freely and securely, reducing social desirability bias.
4. RIWI respondents are not incentivized in any way (i.e., with cash or coupons).
5. RIWI technology works in all countries, in real-time, and on a continuous basis, in contrast to snapshot data offered by traditional polls.

For more information about RIWI's data quality, privacy, and security certifications and features, see [here](#).