

## ILLEGAL DRUGS

# Majority of Canadians Would Legalize Marijuana, But Not Other Drugs

*Two-in-five respondents believe Canada has a serious drug abuse problem that affects the entire country.*

[VANCOUVER – Apr. 15, 2010] – The views of Canadians on the legalization of marijuana have not shifted over the past two years, with a majority of respondents calling for the substance to be readily available, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,010 Canadian adults, two-in-five respondents (42%, -2 since May 2008) believe Canada has a serious drug abuse problem that affects the whole country.

A similar proportion of Canadians (40%, +5) think the country's drug abuse problem is confined to specific areas and people. Roughly one-in-ten Canadians (11%, -4) believe Canada does not have a serious drug abuse problem.

## Government Proposals

Many Canadians side with two proposals to deal with drug abuse that have been outlined by the federal government over the past four years: the introduction of a National Anti-Drug Strategy, including a nationwide awareness campaign to discourage young Canadians from using drugs (83%) and the plan to ensure mandatory minimum prison sentences and large fines for marijuana grow operators and drug dealers (70%).

## KEY FINDINGS

- **42% believe Canada has a serious drug abuse problem that affects the entire country**
- **53% support legalizing marijuana**
- **70% back imposing mandatory minimum prison sentences and large fines for marijuana grow operators and drug dealers**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From April 8 to April 9, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,010 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

## CONTACT:

Mario Canseco, Vice President, Public Affairs, 877-730-3570, [mario.canseco@angus-reid.com](mailto:mario.canseco@angus-reid.com)

However, just over a third of Canadians (36%) agree with two other ideas: scrapping the previous government's marijuana decriminalization legislation and eliminating "harm reduction" programs, such as supervised injection sites and needle-exchange programs.

### **Legalization**

As was the case two years ago, a majority of Canadians (53%) support the legalization of marijuana. People in British Columbia (61%), Alberta (59%) and Ontario (57%) hold the highest level of support for the legalization of cannabis.

Less than one-in-ten respondents believe other drugs—such as ecstasy, crack cocaine, powder cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine or "crystal meth"—should be legalized. In fact, when the numbers are compared to the May 2008 Angus Reid survey, support for the legalization of these drugs has fallen by at least three percentage points in each case.

### **Analysis**

A high proportion of Canadians are in favour of two of the measures proposed by the current federal government to curb drug abuse in Canada. However, just like in 2008, marijuana is in a class of its own. While the level of support for the legalization of so-called "hard drugs" is negligible—and actually dropped further since the 2008 Angus Reid survey—a majority of Canadians have no qualms about making cannabis legal.

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Illegal Drugs							
Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Canada has a serious drug abuse problem and it affects the whole country	42%	48%	48%	56%	36%	39%	55%
Canada's drug abuse problem is confined to specific areas and people	40%	41%	34%	38%	46%	40%	23%
Canada does not have a serious drug abuse problem	11%	7%	14%	4%	14%	9%	7%
Not sure	7%	3%	5%	1%	4%	11%	16%

Illegal Drugs		
Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?		
	April 2010	May 2008
Canada has a serious drug abuse problem and it affects the whole country	42%	44%
Canada's drug abuse problem is confined to specific areas and people	40%	35%
Canada does not have a serious drug abuse problem	11%	15%
Not sure	7%	7%

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### Illegal Drugs

Do you support or oppose each of these measures proposed by the federal government to deal with drug abuse?

*“Strongly support” and “Moderately support” listed*

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Introducing a National Anti-Drug Strategy, including a nationwide awareness campaign to discourage young Canadians from using drugs	83%	83%	89%	84%	82%	81%	85%
Ensuring mandatory minimum prison sentences and large fines for marijuana grow operators and drug dealers	70%	69%	74%	66%	69%	76%	66%
Scrapping the previous government’s marijuana decriminalization legislation	36%	33%	32%	46%	35%	40%	28%
Eliminating “harm reduction” programs, such as supervised injection sites and needle-exchange programs	36%	36%	33%	48%	35%	35%	30%

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Illegal Drugs							
Do you support or oppose the legalization of each of the following drugs?							
<i>“Strongly support” and “Moderately support” listed</i>							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Marijuana	53%	61%	59%	34%	57%	51%	47%
Ecstasy	6%	9%	5%	7%	6%	7%	1%
Crack cocaine	5%	6%	3%	6%	5%	5%	1%
Powder cocaine	5%	8%	3%	11%	5%	5%	1%
Heroin	5%	11%	3%	7%	5%	5%	1%
Methamphetamine or “crystal meth”	4%	6%	3%	3%	4%	5%	1%

Illegal Drugs		
Do you support or oppose the legalization of each of the following drugs?		
<i>“Strongly support” and “Moderately support” listed</i>		
	April 2010	May 2008
Marijuana	53%	53%
Ecstasy	6%	9%
Crack cocaine	5%	8%
Powder cocaine	5%	9%
Heroin	5%	8%
Methamphetamine or “crystal meth”	4%	7%

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*Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995*

*Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.*

*Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), Springboard America ([www.springboardamerica.com](http://www.springboardamerica.com)) and Springboard UK ([www.springboarduk.com](http://www.springboarduk.com)) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.*

*Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.*

*Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record can be found at:*

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*More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.visioncritical.com/what-we-do/practices/angus-reid-public-opinion/>*

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**For more information, please contact  
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:  
<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>**

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