

GUNS

Canadians Worried About Violence, But Question Long Gun Registry's Efficacy

Just 11 per cent of respondents believe the Canadian Firearms Registry has been successful in preventing crime in Canada.

[TORONTO – Nov. 18, 2009] – While most Canadians think gun violence remains a serious problem in the country, very few respondents believe the Canadian Firearms Registry has been successful in curbing crime, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll conducted in partnership with the *Toronto Star* has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,000 Canadian adults, 80 per cent of respondents consider gun violence in Canada as a very serious or moderately serious problem.

The Long Gun Registry

Just 11 per cent of Canadians think the Canadian Firearms Registry has been successful in preventing crime in Canada, while 32 per cent believe it has had no effect in crime, and 46 per cent brand the effort as unsuccessful.

Even Quebecers, who express high support for stricter measures throughout the survey, think the long gun registry has not been successful in preventing crime.

Half of respondents (51%) support scrapping the long gun registry, while one-third (34%) disagree.

Support for abandoning the registry surpasses the 50 per cent mark in every Canadian province, with the exception of Quebec.

KEY FINDINGS

- **11% think the Canadian Firearms Registry has been successful in preventing crime in Canada, 32% say it has had no effect; 46% brand it unsuccessful**
- **80% consider gun violence in Canada as a very serious or moderately serious problem**
- **Canadians evenly split on enacting a complete ban on handguns**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From November 12 to November 13, 2009, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,000 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.

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Other Measures

Canadians are evenly divided on whether a complete ban on handguns would be justified, with 46 per cent saying it would make sense because current regulations are not working and guns stolen from legal owners are being used in crimes, and 46 per cent claiming that the idea would affect law-abiding Canadians such as collectors and target shooters.

Quebec is the only province where a majority of respondents advocate for a complete ban on handguns, while two-thirds of Albertans reject this notion.

A complete ban on handguns is seen as an effective measure to reduce gun violence by 52 per cent of respondents. Considerably higher proportions believe introducing new outreach programs to steer youth away from gangs (77%), imposing mandatory jail terms for crimes committed with firearms (87%) and taking action to stop illegal gun smuggling from the United States (87%) would be effective.

Almost half of respondents (47%) say it should be legal for ordinary citizens to own firearms, while 39 per cent disagree. Once again, Quebec has the highest level of opposition to this notion, while Alberta boasts the highest level of support.

Urban-Rural Divide

While a majority of respondents who reside in urban areas (50%) and rural areas (53%) agree on scrapping the long gun registry, there is a clear divide on the issue of gun ownership. Urban Canadians are evenly divided on whether ordinary citizens should be allowed to own weapons (43% to 43%), while rural Canadians support the right to own firearms by a three-to-one margin (65% to 22%).

Analysis

Canadians remain preoccupied with gun violence, but few believe the long gun registry has worked to reduce crime. A large proportion of respondents believe that mandatory jail terms, outreach programs and action to stop gun smuggling would be effective tools to deal with this issue.

In Canada, the debate over gun violence is not defined by provincial differences—although clearly Quebec and Alberta stand at opposite ends of the spectrum—but by population size. People who live in urban areas are more supportive of gun control than those who reside in rural zones.

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Guns							
In your view, is gun violence in Canada a very serious problem, moderately serious, not too serious, or not a problem?							
Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Very serious	34%	31%	19%	44%	37%	39%	18%
Moderately serious	46%	50%	52%	44%	47%	42%	43%
Not too serious	15%	16%	22%	5%	11%	12%	34%
Not a problem	3%	1%	7%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Not sure	3%	2%	1%	6%	2%	4%	1%

Guns							
Some people have called for a complete ban on handguns in Canada. Which of these statements comes closer to your own point of view?							
Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
A complete ban would be justified, since current regulations are not working and guns stolen from legal owners are being used in crimes	46%	49%	31%	48%	48%	52%	31%
A complete ban would be unjustified, as it would affect law-abiding Canadians such as collectors and target shooters	46%	49%	66%	44%	46%	35%	60%
Not sure	7%	2%	4%	7%	6%	12%	9%

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Guns			
How effective do you think each of the following measures would be in reducing gun violence in Canada?			
	Very effective / Moderately effective	Not too effective / Not effective at all	Not sure
Enacting a complete ban on handguns	52%	46%	2%
Imposing mandatory jail terms for crimes committed with firearms	87%	11%	2%
Introducing new outreach programs to steer youth away from gangs	77%	21%	2%
Taking action to stop illegal gun smuggling from the United States	87%	11%	2%

Guns							
Do you think it should be legal or illegal for ordinary citizens to own firearms?							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Legal	47%	52%	63%	53%	44%	31%	78%
Illegal	39%	39%	23%	30%	45%	47%	18%
Not sure	14%	9%	14%	17%	11%	22%	3%

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Guns							
The Canadian Firearms Registry, also known as the long gun registry, requires the registration of all non-restricted firearms in Canada. From what you have seen, read or heard, do you think this registry has been successful or unsuccessful in preventing crime in Canada?							
Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Successful	11%	8%	3%	23%	13%	10%	9%
Unsuccessful	46%	49%	55%	39%	46%	42%	47%
It has had no effect on crime	32%	32%	39%	28%	30%	32%	32%
Not sure	11%	10%	4%	11%	11%	15%	11%

Guns							
Do you support or oppose scrapping the long gun registry?							
Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Strongly support	30%	35%	48%	34%	31%	13%	48%
Moderately support	21%	15%	29%	20%	23%	18%	20%
Moderately oppose	15%	21%	6%	9%	15%	19%	14%
Strongly oppose	19%	9%	3%	22%	14%	37%	13%
Not sure	15%	20%	14%	15%	16%	13%	5%

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Guns			
Do you support or oppose scrapping the long gun registry?			
	Total	Urban	Rural
Strongly support	30%	29%	36%
Moderately support	21%	21%	17%
Moderately oppose	15%	15%	18%
Strongly oppose	19%	20%	15%
Not sure	15%	15%	14%

Guns			
Do you think it should be legal or illegal for ordinary citizens to own firearms?			
	Total	Urban	Rural
Legal	47%	43%	65%
Illegal	39%	43%	22%
Not sure	14%	14%	13%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is the public affairs 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 Strategies 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), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (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.

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.

<http://bit.ly/4zxfIS>

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.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://bit.ly/3z0u1l>

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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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