

DRUGS

Britons Worried About Drugs, But Low Support for Legalisation

Most respondents oppose making marijuana legal, as once suggested by the new interim chairman of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs.

[LONDON – Jan. 20, 2010] – People in Great Britain are concerned about drugs, but few believe that legalising specific substances is the best course of action, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,007 British adults, 56 per cent of respondents believe the United Kingdom has a serious drug abuse problem that affects the whole country.

Just over a third of Britons (35%) believe the UK's drug abuse problem is confined to specific areas and people.

Only four per cent of respondents believe the United Kingdom does not have a serious drug abuse problem at this time.

Age Differences

Almost half of respondents aged 18 and 34 (47%) believe the UK's drug abuse problem is confined to specific areas and people.

Conversely, two thirds of Britons over the age of 55 (67%) claim that the UK has a serious drug abuse problem that affects the whole country.

KEY FINDINGS

- **56% believe the UK has a serious drug abuse problem and it affects the whole country**
- **35% are in favour of legalising marijuana; 58% are opposed**
- **More than 75% would not legalise other drugs (such as ecstasy, powder cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and crack cocaine)**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From January 14 to January 15, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,007 randomly selected British adults who are Springboard UK panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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Legalisation

The survey was conducted after the British Home Office announced the appointment of Les Iversen, a former pharmacology professor at the University of Oxford, as interim chairman of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs.

In a 2003 lecture, Iversen declared: "Cannabis should be legalised, not just decriminalised, because it is comparatively less dangerous than legal drugs like alcohol and tobacco."

In Britain, 35 per cent of respondents support the legalisation of marijuana, while almost three-in-five (58%) oppose this idea.

At least three-in-four respondents are also opposed to legalizing ecstasy (76%), powder cocaine (77%), heroin (78%), methamphetamine or "crystal meth" (78%) and crack cocaine (79%).

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Drugs						
Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?						
	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
The UK has a serious drug abuse problem and it affects the whole country	56%	55%	58%	38%	59%	67%
The UK's drug abuse problem is confined to specific areas and people	35%	36%	34%	47%	33%	27%
The UK does not have a serious drug abuse problem	4%	6%	2%	6%	4%	3%
Not sure	5%	4%	6%	9%	4%	3%

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Drugs			
Do you support or oppose the legalisation of each of the following drugs?			
	Support	Oppose	Not sure
Marijuana	35%	58%	7%
Ecstasy	19%	76%	5%
Powder cocaine	18%	77%	5%
Heroin	18%	78%	4%
Methamphetamine or "crystal meth"	16%	78%	6%
Crack cocaine	16%	79%	5%

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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 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/4zxf1S>

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/3z0u11>

- 30 -

**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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