

EUTHANASIA

Two-Thirds of Canadians Express Support for Legalizing Euthanasia

Respondents in Quebec and British Columbia are more likely to favour both legal euthanasia and the decriminalization of assisted suicide.

[MONTREAL – Feb. 15, 2010] – While many Canadians favour legalizing euthanasia, support for amending existing regulations is clearly higher in Quebec and British Columbia, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,003 Canadian adults, 67 per cent of respondents support legalizing euthanasia in Canada, while 23 per cent oppose this notion.

In Quebec and British Columbia, support for legalizing euthanasia stands at 77 per cent and 75 per cent respectively.

Arguments

More than three-in-four Canadians believe legalizing euthanasia would both give people who are suffering an opportunity to ease their pain (85%) and establish clearer guidelines for doctors to deal with end-of-life decisions (76%).

In addition, almost half of respondents (48%) disagree with the notion that legalizing euthanasia would leave vulnerable people without sufficient legal protection. Two-thirds of Canadians think legalizing euthanasia would not send the message that the lives of the sick or disabled are less valuable.

KEY FINDINGS

- **67% support legalizing euthanasia in Canada**
- **43% believe parents who assist a terminally ill son or daughter to die should not be punished**
- **41% think people who help a person to commit suicide should not be prosecuted**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From February 2 to February 3, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,003 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 a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada.

CONTACT:

Jaideep Mukerji, Vice President, Public Affairs, 514-409-0462, jaideep.mukerji@angus-reid.com

Assisted Suicide

Overall, 41 per cent of respondents think people who help a person to commit suicide should not be prosecuted, while 25 per cent disagree and 33 per cent are undecided. While Albertans are almost evenly split on this issue (Yes 31%, No 34%), a majority of Quebecers (53%) and British Columbians (51%) appear to favour the decriminalization of assisted suicide.

In Canada, the debate over euthanasia has frequently involved discussions around the case of Robert Latimer, who was convicted in 1994 of second-degree murder in the death of his daughter Tracy, who suffered from cerebral palsy.

In this survey, respondents were asked to select the appropriate punishment for a parent who is found guilty of assisting a terminally ill son or daughter to die. Two-in-five Canadians (43%) would apply no penalty at all, eight per cent would levy a fine, 20 per cent would prefer a prison sentence at the discretion of a judge, and three per cent would impose a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment.

Once again, some major regional differences are observed. People in Quebec (64%) and British Columbia (50%) are more likely to say that no penalty at all should be applied to a parent who is found guilty of assisting a terminally ill son or daughter to die, while only a third of Ontarians and Albertans concur.

Follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/AngusReidGlobal>

CONTACT:

Jaideep Mukerji, Vice President, Public Affairs, 514-409-0462, jaideep.mukerji@angus-reid.com

Euthanasia

Next, we'd like to ask you some questions about euthanasia. Generally speaking, do you support or oppose legalizing euthanasia in the Canada?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Strongly support	22%	22%	13%	17%	24%	28%	18%
Moderately support	45%	53%	47%	34%	43%	49%	33%
Moderately oppose	11%	8%	15%	22%	9%	9%	9%
Strongly oppose	12%	10%	16%	25%	11%	7%	19%
Not sure	10%	7%	9%	3%	13%	6%	21%
Support – NET	67%	75%	60%	51%	67%	77%	51%
Oppose - NET	23%	18%	31%	46%	21%	16%	28%

Euthanasia

There are many arguments for and against legalizing euthanasia. Do you agree or disagree with each one of the following arguments?

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
Legalizing euthanasia would leave vulnerable people without sufficient legal protection	41%	48%	11%
Legalizing euthanasia would send the message that the lives of the sick or disabled are less valuable	28%	66%	6%
Legalizing euthanasia would establish clearer guidelines for doctors to deal with end-of-life decisions	76%	16%	8%
Legalizing euthanasia would give people who are suffering an opportunity to ease their pain	85%	9%	6%

CONTACT:

Jaideep Mukerji, Vice President, Public Affairs, 514-409-0462, jaideep.mukerji@angus-reid.com

Euthanasia

If a parent is found guilty of assisting a terminally ill son or daughter to die, what do you think should be the appropriate punishment?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
A mandatory sentence of life imprisonment	3%	5%	7%	0%	3%	3%	4%
A prison sentence at the discretion of a judge	20%	12%	21%	25%	26%	10%	27%
A fine, but no time in prison	8%	6%	10%	5%	9%	8%	6%
No penalty at all	43%	50%	33%	35%	32%	64%	35%
Not sure	26%	26%	29%	35%	30%	15%	28%

Euthanasia

Do you think people who help a person to commit suicide should be prosecuted?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Yes	25%	12%	31%	40%	25%	21%	38%
No	41%	51%	34%	27%	38%	53%	25%
Not sure	33%	36%	35%	33%	37%	26%	37%

CONTACT:

Jaideep Mukerji, Vice President, Public Affairs, 514-409-0462, jaideep.mukerji@angus-reid.com

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), 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.

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:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/record-of-accuracy>

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/>

- 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>

CONTACT:

Jaideep Mukerji, Vice President, Public Affairs, 514-409-0462, jaideep.mukerji@angus-reid.com