



## PRESS RELEASE

### Canadians Split on Decriminalization of Possession of Narcotics, Prostitution

Canadians are more decidedly opposed to the decriminalization of the use of narcotics.

**Toronto, ON, January 29, 2020** — The legalization of marijuana has opened further debate about whether Canada should consider decriminalizing other acts that are currently illegal under the criminal code, including the possession or use of narcotics, and prostitution. Decriminalization means to cease treating something as illegal or as a criminal offence.

A new Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News has found that Canadians are divided on the decriminalization of prostitution and the *possession* of a small amount of narcotics, but are more decidedly opposed to the decriminalization of the *use* of illicit drugs (narcotics). Specifically:

- A slim majority (55%) supports (17% strongly/37% somewhat) the **decriminalization of prostitution in Canada**, while nearly half (45%) oppose (23% strongly/22% somewhat) its decriminalization. Interestingly, while on balance more support decriminalization than support it, those who strongly oppose (23%) outnumber those who strongly support (17%) decriminalization. Support for decriminalization is highest in British Columbia (60%) and lowest in Atlantic Canada (51%). Interestingly, men (64%) are much more likely to support decriminalization than women (47%).
- Nearly half (47%) of Canadians support (16% strongly/31% somewhat) the **decriminalization of the possession of a small amount of illicit drugs (narcotics)**, while 53% oppose it (26% strongly/27% somewhat). While, overall, Canadians are nearly evenly split, those who strongly oppose decriminalization of possession outnumber those who strongly support it by a nearly two-to-one margin. While half (51%) of British Columbians support decriminalization, support drops to 43% in Alberta and Atlantic Canada. Support for decriminalization of narcotic possession is higher among men (50%) than women (44%), and higher among those aged 18-34 (53%) than those 35-54 (45%) or 55+ (44%).
- When phrased specifically as the **decriminalization of the use of illicit drugs (narcotics)**, support drops to 36% (12% strongly/24%), while opposition rises to 64% (34% strongly/30% somewhat). Support is highest in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (40%) and lowest in Alberta (31%). Once again, men (42%) are more likely than women (31%) to support the decriminalization of the use of illicit drugs, as are those aged 54 and under (41%) compared to those aged 55+(28%).



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### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between January 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020, on behalf of on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1000 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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