

AS THE SUPREME COURT PREPARES FOR BILL C-23, THE PUBLIC HOLDS COURT ON GAY-MARRIAGE

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Support Same-Sex Marriage In Their Province -- 43% Oppose,
But Deep Regional Divides Exist On This Issue*

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For All Couples – While 45% Want "Marriage" Restricted To A
Man And A Woman*



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Half (52%) Would Accept Decision To Make "Marriage" A Word For All Couples – While 45% Want "Marriage" Restricted To A Man And A Woman

Toronto, ON – As Justices Rosalie Abella and Louise Charron settle in with their new colleagues at the Supreme Court of Canada and prepare for three days of arguments about Bill C-23 and probably months of deliberation about whether the traditional definition of marriage is unconstitutional, a new Ipsos-Reid/CTV/The Globe and Mail poll finds that in the court of public opinion Canadians are somewhat supportive of legal same-sex marriage in their province -- but there are deep regional divides in opinion when it comes to this issue.

Slightly more than half of Canadians (54%) support "same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government" (25% "somewhat support", 28% "strongly support"), while 43% of Canadians oppose this idea (11% "somewhat oppose", 32% "strongly oppose").

Support or opposition to allowing same-sex marriage in their province is largely related to region, with the strongest support coming from regions like Quebec (62%) and Ontario (56%) and the strongest opposition coming from regions like Saskatchewan/Manitoba (60%) and Alberta (55%).

And, if the Supreme Court of Canada does rule that same-sex marriage is constitutional: Half of Canadians (52%) would "accept this decision fully with no restrictions in its application



and that the word marriage be used for everyone”, but 45% of Canadians would want “the Federal Government to do everything it can to make the legal use of the word marriage apply only to heterosexuals in law, that is a man and a woman”.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/CTV/The Globe And Mail poll conducted from October 1st to October 4th, 2004. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1001 adult Canadians were interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.

Slightly More Than Half Of Canadians (54%) Support Same-Sex Marriage Laws For Their Province...

After being offered the information that courts in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and the Yukon, have recognized same-sex marriages in their province or territory and made them legal, Canadians were asked whether they support or oppose same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government.

Slightly more than half of Canadians (54%) support “same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government” (25% “somewhat support”, 28% “strongly support”), while 43% of Canadians oppose this idea (11% “somewhat oppose”, 32% “strongly oppose”). The remaining 3% of Canadians “don’t know” whether they support or oppose same-sex couples being allowed to marry in their province.

- Support for same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government is highest in Quebec (62%), followed by Ontario (56%), British Columbia (53%), Atlantic Canada (48%), Alberta (41%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (39%).



- Support for same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government is highest among younger Canadians aged 18-34 (64%), followed by Canadians aged 35-54 (56%) -- while Canadians aged 55 years and over (41%) are the least likely to be supportive.
- Support for same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government is higher in urban regions of Canada than in rural regions (58% vs. 37%).
- Support for same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government is higher among those with at least some post-secondary education or higher than among those with a highschool level education or less (60% vs. 44%).
- Opposition to same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government is highest in Saskatchewan/Manitoba (60%), followed by Alberta (55%), Atlantic Canada (50%), British Columbia (46%), Ontario (40%), and Quebec (36%).
- Opposition to same-sex couples being allowed to marry and register their marriage with their provincial government is higher among men than among women (51% vs. 36%).



Half of Canadians (52%) Would Accept The Word “Marriage” To Be Used For Everyone, While 45% Want The Word “Marriage” Restricted To Only Heterosexuals...

Supposing that the Supreme Court of Canada rules that same-sex marriage is constitutional, half of Canadians (52%) would “accept this decision fully with no restrictions in its application and that the word marriage be used for everyone”. However, less than half of Canadians (45%) would “want the Federal Government to do everything it can to make the legal use of the word marriage apply only to heterosexuals in law – that is a man and a woman”. The remaining 3% of Canadians “don’t know” whether they would fully accept this position or not.

- Inclination to accept such a decision fully “with no restrictions in its application and that the word marriage be used for everyone” is highest among residents of Quebec (59%), followed by British Columbia (55%), Ontario (54%), Atlantic Canada (46%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (38%), and Alberta (36%).
- Inclination to accept such a decision fully is highest among younger Canadians aged 18-34 (65%), followed by Canadians aged 35-54 (54%) – while Canadians aged 55 and over are the least likely to be fully accepting (37%).
- Women are more likely than men to accept such a decision fully (56% vs. 47%).
- Canadians living in urban areas are significantly more likely than those living in rural areas to accept such a decision fully (55% vs. 40%).
- Inclination to favour a restriction and “want the Federal Government to do everything it can to make the legal use of the word marriage apply only to heterosexuals in law – that is a man and a woman” is highest among residents of Alberta (62%) and



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Saskatchewan/Manitoba (62%), followed by residents of Atlantic Canada (46%), Ontario (43%) and British Columbia (43%), and Quebec (39%).

- Inclination to favour a restriction is higher among Canadians with an annual household income of less than \$60,000 than among Canadians with an annual household income of \$60,000 or more (50% vs. 40%).

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