

**Seven In Ten (66%) Canadians Support  
Decriminalization of Marijuana in Small Amounts**  
*Support for Decriminalization Increases Dramatically Over the  
Past 25 Years, Rising from just 39% in 1987*

Public Release Date: Monday, July 2, 2012, 6:00 AM EDT



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## **Seven In Ten (66%) Canadians Support Decriminalization of Marijuana in Small Amounts**

***Support for Decriminalization Increases Dramatically Over the Past  
25 Years, Rising from just 39% in 1987***

**Toronto, ON** - A new poll finds that a majority of (66%) Canadians 'support' (32% strongly/34% somewhat) action that would see 'the position of marijuana in small amounts decriminalized so that it no longer carries a penalty or fine', according to the 5<sup>th</sup> instalment of a special series examining Canadian values, icons and culture conducted on behalf of Global Television and Postmedia News. Only one in three (34%) Canadians says they 'disagree' (18% strongly/16% somewhat) with decriminalizing the possession of marijuana in small amounts.

Currently, Canadians found in possession of marijuana can face penalties ranging from a small fine to prison time, including up to five years in prison, depending on the amount possessed. In certain circumstances, however, it can also be legally prescribed by doctors to treat an array of illnesses from glaucoma to several forms of cancer.

Ipsos Reid has conducted similar polls on the issue over the past 25 years, and the data reveal that support is considerably higher now than it was in the past. In 2004, 51% of Canadians supported decriminalization, compared to 55% in 2003, and 51% in 1997. All of these show a

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- 1 -

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great deal more support than in 1987, when Ipsos Reid pegged support for the decriminalization of marijuana at just 39%.

While a majority of Canadians from every demographic group studied support the decriminalization of the possession of marijuana in small amounts, some groups are more solid in their support than others:

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (72%), Ontario (69%), British Columbia (69%) and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (69%) are most in favour, followed by those living in Quebec (61%) and Alberta (58%).
- Men (68%) are slightly more likely than women (64%) to support this course of action.
- Those aged 35 to 54 (69%) and 18 to 34 (68%) are significantly more likely than those aged 55+ (62%) to support the decriminalization of marijuana.
- Those with a university degree (71%) have the highest degree of support, followed by those with some postsecondary education (69%), a high school diploma (63%), and finally those who do not have a diploma (58%).
- Those whose family earns in excess of \$100K a year are most likely (77%) to support this action, from among all demographic groups studied, compared to fewer Canadians who earn between \$60K and \$100K (64%), from \$40K to \$60K (61%) or less than \$40K (66%) a year.



*These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between June 20-25, 2012, on behalf of Postmedia News and Global Television. For this survey, a sample of 1,101 Canadians from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. 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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