

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from January 6 to January 9, 2020, among 1,000 adults in Canada. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in Canada. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Regardless of whether or not you think each of the following issues should be legal, please indicate whether you personally believe they are morally acceptable.

Contraception – 75%

Divorce – 71%

Sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman – 70%

Having a baby outside of marriage – 68%

Physician-assisted death – 62%

Sexual relations between two people of the same sex – 61%

Abortion – 56%

Gambling – 50%

Medical research using stem cells obtained from human embryos – 49%

The death penalty – 40%

Pornography – 36%

Prostitution – 33%

Buying and wearing clothing made of animal fur – 32%

Medical testing on animals – 22%

Suicide – 22%

Using illegal drugs – 21%

Cloning animals – 19%

Polygamy – 17%

Married men and/or women having an affair – 14%

Views of Canadians on Moral Issues Vary Greatly by Gender

Men are significantly more likely than women to believe pornography and prostitution are “morally acceptable.”

Vancouver, BC [January 22, 2020] – More than two thirds of Canadians have no moral qualms when assessing four issues related to human relations, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, more than two thirds of Canadians find contraception (75%), divorce (71%), sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman (70%) and having a baby outside of marriage (68%) as “morally acceptable.”

In addition, at least half of Canadians consider the following issues “morally acceptable”: physician-assisted death (62%), sexual relations between two people of the same sex (61%), abortion (56%) and gambling (50%).

“There are some issues where political allegiance leads to severe fluctuations,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “Abortion is morally acceptable for only 45% of Conservative Party voters, but to more than three-in-five Canadians who voted for the Liberal Party (61%) or the New Democratic Party (NDP) (68%) in last year’s federal election.”

More three-in-ten Canadians believe medical research using stem cells obtained from human embryos (49%), the death penalty (40%), pornography (36%), prostitution (33%) and buying and wearing clothing made of animal fur (32%) are “morally acceptable.”

Fewer than one-in-four Canadians think eight other issues are morally acceptable: medical testing on animals (22%), suicide (also 22%), using illegal drugs (21%), cloning animals (19%), polygamy (17%), married men and/or women having an affair (14%), cloning humans (10%) and paedophilia (3%).

There is a sizeable gender gap when Canadians are asked about animals. Men are more likely than women to believe that three issues are morally acceptable: buying and wearing clothing made of animal fur (Men 41%, Women 24%), medical testing on animals (Men 31%, Women 14%) and cloning animals (Men 26%, Women 13%).

Conversely, 45% of men have no moral qualms about pornography or prostitution, but the proportion of women who agree with these views is significantly smaller (28% and 21% respectively).



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Cloning humans – 10%
Paedophilia – 3%

Ethnicity also plays a role in the perceptions of specific issues. While 23% of Canadians of European descent think using illegal drugs is morally acceptable, the proportion drops to 12% for South Asians and 11% for East Asians.

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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Media contact:

Mario Canseco, President, Research Co.
[c] 778.929.0490
[e] mario.canseco@researchco.ca

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mario.canseco
@researchco.ca



mario_canseco



778.929.0490



Mario Canseco