

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from May 12 to May 14, 2022, among 1,000 adults in Canada. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region. The margin of error, which measures sample variability, is +/- 3.1 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

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% (-2)
Sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman – 69% (=)
Having a baby outside of marriage – 69% (=)
Physician-assisted death – 58% (-3)
Sexual relations between two people of the same sex – 57% (-2)
Medical research using stem cells obtained from human embryos – 55% (=)
Abortion – 53% (-2)
Gambling – 52% (=)
The death penalty – 39% (-1)
Pornography – 32% (+1)
Prostitution – 32% (+2)
Buying and wearing clothing made of animal fur – 30% (-6)
Medical testing on animals – 22% (-3)
Polygamy – 21% (+2)
Cloning animals – 20% (+1)
Suicide – 20% (+2)
Using illegal drugs – 19% (+1)
Married men and/or women having an affair – 18% (+2)

Canada's Moral Compass Steady on Humans, Tilting on Animals

There is little change in perceptions on issues like contraception and pre-marital sex, but fewer find fur clothing acceptable.

Vancouver, BC [May 19, 2023] – More than half of Canadians have no moral reservations about specific issues related to human relations, a new Research Co. poll has found.

The online survey of a representative national sample asked Canadians whether they considered 21 different issues as “morally acceptable” or “morally wrong.”

More than seven-in-ten Canadians think contraception (75%, unchanged since a similar Research Co. poll [conducted in May 2022](#)) and divorce (71%, -2) are morally acceptable, and more than two thirds feel the same way about sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman (69%, =) and having a baby outside of marriage (also 69%, =).

More than half of Canadians consider four other issues as morally acceptable: physician-assisted death (58%, -3), sexual relations between two people of the same sex (57%, -2), medical research using stem cells obtained from human embryos (55%, =), abortion (53%, -2) and gambling (52%, =).

“There is a sizeable gender gap when Canadians are asked about same-sex relations,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “While 65% of women find them morally acceptable, the proportion drops to 50% among men.”

Majorities of Canadians of East Asian (60%) and Indigenous origins (55%) believe abortion is morally acceptable. The proportions are lower among Canadians whose descent is European (46%) and South Asian (35%).

Just under a third of Canadians deem pornography (32%, +1) and prostitution (also 32%, +2) as morally acceptable. On each one of these issues, men are more likely to have no qualms (40%) than women (24%).

The most significant year-to-year fluctuation is observed on buying and wearing clothing made of animal fur. Three-in-ten Canadians (30%) think this is morally acceptable, down six points since 2022. Fewer Canadians think two other issues related to animal welfare are morally acceptable: medical testing on animals (22%, -3) and cloning animals (20%, +1).

Fewer than one-in-four Canadians think six other issues included in the survey are morally acceptable: polygamy (21%, +2), suicide (20%, +2), using illegal drugs (19%, +1), married men and/or



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Cloning humans – 11% (-1)
Paedophilia – 7% (+3)

women having an affair (18%, +2), cloning humans (11%, -1) and
paedophilia (7%, +3).

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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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